

## **Hatzfeld ~ A Synopsis of the History of the Community**

### **3.1. From the First Documented Reference (1333) Until the German Settlement (1766)**

Archeological findings, the oldest of which are from the Bronze Age, point to the existence of human settlement on the site of present day Hatzfeld. During the Middle Ages, the Papal Tithing Register for the years 1332-1337 a community located on this site by the name of Chumbul was documented for the first time in the year 1333. The community, as was the case for all of the Banat, belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary. Up until the Turkish invasion and occupation in 1552 the name Chumbul in various spellings was the recognized name of the community in the surviving archives. The community was completely destroyed during the Turkish conquest. From the end of the 17th Century up to 1766 the locale was designated by various manifestations of Chumbul/Chombol in documents and maps or as an uninhabited place or prairie (land mostly leased to cattle herders to pasture their livestock).

The year 1766 marks a turning point in the history of our home community. At that time, during the second phase of colonization under the Empress Maria Theresia, the town of Hatzfeld was newly created on the site from the ground up under the supervision of Administrative Consul, Johann Wilhelm von Hildebrand with colonists from various regions of the German Reich ~ from Alsace, Lorraine, the Saarland, Luxembourg, Baden, the Palatinate and from Franconia along the Rhine and Main Rivers. Disagreements and disputes among the colonists led to the establishment of two equally large adjoining communities both with their own church known as Landestreu on the eastern portion of the site and Hatzfeld in the western sector. The two communities were unified by an Imperial decree for political reasons and governance issues. The community was named after the Minister of the Interior who served under the Empress Maria Theresia, Count Karl Friedrich Anton von Hatzfeld. There were 402 houses, a church, rectory, school and public house (tavern). Hatzfeld was the largest settlement in the Banat lowlands.

### **3.2. Under Austrian and Hungarian Authority (1766-1918/20)**

Between 1766 and 1778 Hatzfeld was under the direct governance of the Crownland and the Department of the Treasury and Finance of the Temesvar Banat. With the return of the Banat and its incorporation into the Kingdom of Hungary in 1778 and the introduction of the County System of Administration, Hatzfeld belonged to the County of Torontal and brought about the privatization of the State owned estates and domains and a new set of regulations with regard to the rights and privileges of the tenants and was put into effect in the mid 1780s, the so-called "Urbarium Banaticum" a fore runner of the land and tax conscription records. Colonel Josef Csekonics leased the Hatzfeld Domain in 1790 and purchased it outright ten years later. The Domain owner played a major role and provided the impetus for the economic upswing that Hatzfeld experienced up to the end of the First World War.

Only twenty years after the establishment of the community it was elevated to the status of a market town with the right to hold a weekly market. Later in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century it received permission to hold three and then later four fairs per year. In 1823 the local tradesmen were granted the privilege to form a professional guild. These government actions

assisted in the economic development of the community and the well being and standard of living of the population. So that it is really no wonder that when the market town of Hatzfeld is featured in a travel brochure it is described as the most prosperous and richest German community in the Banat Lowlands.

During the Revolution of 1848/1849 which effected all of the ethnic groups in the Banat there is information to the effect that Hatzfeld surrendered fifteen rebels that were taken prisoner by the Imperial forces and later shot at Gross Kikinda. In January of 1849, Franz Maderspach, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Hungarian Revolutionary Army was executed in Hatzfeld. Following the suppression of the Hungarian War of Liberation the so-called “Despoiler of corpses and the wounded” (this is a play on words on the name Haynau and Hyäne) or “The Bloody Judge of Arad” the well-known and famous General Julius Haynau wanted to have the corpse of Maderspach dug up and desecrated and had it not been hindered by the inhabitants of Hatzfeld this shameful act of revenge would have taken place.

In the year 1849 the first attempt on the part of the Swabians of the Banat to seek some kind of political recognition and representation in their two so-called “Swabian Petitions” the first of which were delivered to Emperor Francis Joseph on October 2, 1849 (The Bogarosch Swabian Petition) that was signed by the town council of Hatzfeld as well as the second which was composed in Hatzfeld on November 8, 1849. In the same year the Banat became part of an Austrian Crownland to be known as the Serbian Wojwodina and Temesvar Banat which only lasted until 1860. During that period the railway line from Szeged-Kikinda-Hatzfeld-Temesvar was opened (1857) resulting in a major upswing in the business and economy of Hatzfeld.

Following the reincorporation of the Banat into the Kingdom of Hungary in 1860 and the establishment of the Imperial Royal Dual Monarchy (Austria-Hungary) as the result of the Austro-Hungary Compromise of 1867 whereby the two States Austria and Hungary had equal rights domestically and external affairs, finances and the war department were the prerogative of the Emperor of Austria and the Apostolic King of Hungary. This led to the intensification of the Hungarianization of the minorities that primarily had the greatest effect on the educational system and cultural life of the people. The official name of the community now became Hacsfeld in an attempt at Hungarianization and was later changed to Zsombolya in 1899. During the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the community saw the arrival of numerous Hungarians. Many of these Hungarians had their origins in the Doroszma, the area that had been heavily flooded around Szeged in 1878 and many found employment in the Bohn brickworks. At that time a quarter for workers known as Futok was established to accommodate them. Both the size of the community and its economic importance led to Hatzfeld becoming the capital of the District (the Járás in Hungarian).

Agriculture, the work of the tradesmen and merchants, the formation of banks and other credit institutions all experienced a dramatic upswing in their development at this time. The first Farmers Union was founded in Hatzfeld in 1875 and was the first in the Banat and ten years later the Southern Hungarian Farmers Union was established here but the Ministry of Agriculture in Budapest denied its ratification. In 1893 a professional organization of farmers known as the Komposses Council came into existence which had a great deal of success in terms of its goals and activities up until its dissolution in 1944. The tradesmen of Hatzfeld formed a corporation in

1884 that resulted in considerable and notable achievements. In 1869 various bank and credit institutions were established that further promoted the economic prosperity of the whole community. The last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century also marked the beginning of industrialization. Next to the Bohn brickworks, which had developed into a major industrial enterprise, other brick operations were also established, as well as several mills and hat factories. At the turn of the century additional railway lines went operational (1895 Hatzfeld-Pardan; 1898 Hatzfeld-Gross Betscherek; 1910 Hatzfeld-Lovrin) as well as the introduction of electrical power in 1909.

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century saw the blossoming of the cultural life of the community. The merchants and tradesmen formed a choral group for men in 1865 and in 1893 a mixed choir while the farmers founded a Reading Circle whose facility later became known as the Farmers Home. Through the opening of the high school (1872), the trade school (1885) and the Jesuleums private school (1902) greatly improved the educational possibilities available to the youth of the community both girls and boys. In 1883 the first weekly newspaper went to press and the Hatzfeld News began to publish in 1888 and became the most loved newspaper in the history of the community. It was suspended by the government in 1941.

### **3.3 Under Serbian Authority and Jurisdiction (1918/20-1924)**

During the First World War (1914-1918) Hatzfeld suffered the loss of 153 men both killed in action and missing. At war's end the community was involved in a territorial change and citizenship. Troops from the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes occupied Hatzfeld in November of 1918. It was the first step that led to its incorporation into the future Yugoslavia as it was later called. It was result of the Treaty of Sevres signed on August 20, 1920. Hatzfeld was now given the name Dzombolj.

For the first time in its history the community found itself in the role of border town. As a result a new chapter in its history began. The *wandering border* ~ Hatzfeld became part of Romania a few years later ~ made the community and its population undertake new activities and work. Hatzfeld lost its former markets and had to search for new outlets and customers for its agricultural and industrial products. Along with this the Csekovics domain was dismantled and the decades of systematic agricultural development came to an ignoble end.

Hatzfeld now became the centre of the German movement in the Yugoslavian Banat. In December of 1922 "The Party of the Germans in the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes" was constituted in Hatzfeld. In 1919 an eight class junior college came into existence and the same year saw the founding of a Choir and Sports Association: Landestreu.

#### **3.4.1 In the Kingdom of Romania (1924-1944/47)**

As a result of the agreement reached by the Serbian-Romanian Border Regularization Commission in November of 1923, Hatzfeld became part of Romania on April 10, 1924. The community's name was changed once again and was officially called Jimbolia. Hatzfeld once again became the capital of the District and in terms of governance belonged to the District of Temes-Torontal. Under Romanian authority the community experienced an influx of Romanians forming a sizable portion of the population.

Economically Hatzfeld also experienced a renewed upswing in its economy which continued unabated even in the face of the world wide depression of the 1930s. Agriculture and livestock rearing flourished and produced high incomes for the farmers. Both the tradesmen and merchants did well and the local industries made great progress. As a result Hatzfeld was an important business and industrial centre in western Romania.

In the period between the two world wars a lively cultural life developed in the community and German organizations and associations would reach their zenith. There were numerous and significant cultural achievements and accomplishments in terms of the community's inhabitants whose influence was felt beyond the borders of Hatzfeld. There was the poet and journalist Peter Jung, the artist Stefan Jäger, the music teacher, choir leader and composer Josef Linster and Emmerich Bartzler and the editor Karl von Möller. In 1932 a Roman Catholic German boy's High School was established and two years later the Romanian population and other minorities were the recipients of a Middle School that went out of existence in 1938.

During the Second World War the community suffered a high toll of the losses. Serving in both the Romanian and German armies there were 340 men who lost their lives (Romanian citizens who were of ethnic German origin were conscripted into the Waffen-SS as a result of the German-Romanian Accord of May, 1943). At the end of the war the majority of the surviving men became prisoners of war and following their release from capture a large proportion of them chose to remain in Germany and Austria.

### **3.4.2 In Communist Romania (1944/47-1989)**

With Romania's switching sides in August of 1944 and the establishment of the Communist dictatorship a new chapter in the history of our home community began. It began as a radical revolution in economic, social and cultural life. But in addition there were grievous changes in the structure of the community and its population and the mentality that went with it set the future in motion.

In the first years after the war the German population in particular suffered from discrimination. A portion of the German population fled to the West in the face of the advancing Red Army in the autumn of 1944. Hundreds of young men and women were deported to slave labour in the Soviet Union in January of 1945 where they suffered immensely due to the inhumane treatment they received for five years. There were 110 among them who died there as a result. In June of 1951 one thousand inhabitants of Hatzfeld (Germans, Romanians from Bessarabia and Macedonia) were deported to the Baragan Steppe.

In 1950 Hatzfeld was officially declared a city. In terms of governance it belonged to the newly created region of Temesvar and the District of Rayon. From 1956 until 1960 Hatzfeld was the capital of the Rayon District. In 1968 as a result of a territorial and administrative shuffle the city of Hatzfeld once again found itself to be in the Temesvar District.

The Agricultural Reform of March 1945 led to the confiscation of all of the land belonging to the German population as well as their livestock. This was followed by the nationalization of all of

the industrial and commercial operations in the community including the banking and credit institutions. The Collective Farm was established in June 1949 along with the introduction of the centralized five year plan. The economic life of the city was changed from the ground up. The most important industries ~ no thanks to the Peoples Democratic Republic ~ were nationalized and the traditional names of the firms were simply renamed ~ so that alongside of the “Ceramica” brickworks, the largest new undertakings were the shoe, button and hemp factories. The craftsmen were organized into a cooperative association. Agricultural work and livestock rearing were carried out by the Collective Farm and two other State owned and operated undertakings. As a result of the economic and business changes the occupational pursuits of the population also changed. The following pattern emerges: in 1971 75% of the working population was engaged in the secondary sector, 15% in the primary sector and 10% in the tertiary sector.

As a result of the State regulated resettlement policies Hatzfeld would see the arrival of workers from other parts of the country in the 1970s and led to the beginning of the emigration of the German population and the ethnic makeup of the population was drastically changed. This is substantiated by the official census of 1930, 1977, 1992, 2002 and 2011 in the following table.

Census	Total Population	Germans		Hungarians		Romanians	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1930	10,873	7,640	70.26	2,097	19.28	660	6.07
1977	14,682	5,021	34.19	2,896	19.72	6,065	41.30
1992	11,830	1,112	9.39	1,961	16.57	7,901	66.78
2002	11,113	511	4.60	1,645	14.80	8,045	72.40
2011	10,808	310	2.86	1,169	10.81	7,856	72.68

In addition to the above mentioned ethnic groups living in Hatzfeld there were also Jews, Gypsies (Roma in today’s official rendering), Serbs and Slovaks.

In 1981 Hatzfeld’s population reached 15,259, the highest in its history.

The school and educational reforms of 1948 led to the establishment of seven grade elementary schools with Romanian, Hungarian and German as the languages of instruction which in a single decade became totally Romanian. In 1955 the Hatzfeld Junior College with a Romanian, German and Hungarian department was established. An agricultural college was established on the site of the former trade school in 1955 and the Ceramica school also shared the site beginning in 1963.

The cultural institutions and associations that were permitted by the Communist government were to provide a culture that was socialist and patriotic in form. Despite the ideological

constraints the various nationalities had the possibility of fostering and preserving their culture and customs.

### **3.4.3. Following the Turning Point of 1989**

The transformation process that took place after the revolution of 1989 was both political and economic and resulted in massive difficulties that were associated with them. There was the mass emigration of the German population; the decline in production; the closing of the Ceramic; the privatization of the State owned and operated businesses and industries; massive unemployment; a decline in population; a whole galore of social problems. But slowly and surely the implementation of democratic reform and values and the gradual restoration of the economy and cultural life will lead to the betterment of the standard of living and social situation of our community's resident population.