

# SETTLEMENTS AND TOPONOMY IN THE PĂTÂRLAGELE DEPRESSION: THE PĂNĂȚĂU AND SIBICIU LOCALITIES

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**Villages et toponymie dans la dépression de Pătârlagele: les localités Pănățău et Sibiciu.** Les Subcarpathes sont connues comme une région bien peuplée depuis des temps anciens, mais il est évident que beaucoup de localités sont relativement modernes et reflètent l'expansion de l'agriculture de subsistance des plaines alluviales vers les versants durant une période d'aigüe pression démographique et de restructuration économique lors du XIX<sup>e</sup>, et du XX<sup>e</sup>-siècle. Cette phase de croissance est examinée dans ce contexte dans la dépression de Pătârlagele, spécialement les localités du côté est de la vallée de Buzău: les localités de Pănățău et de Sibiciu. Un intérêt particulier est accordé à la toponymie présente dans les cartes à grande échelle et les textes clés (notamment le dictionnaire de Iorgulescu de 1892) à laquelle on ajoute le témoignage oral très riche. Les auteurs prêtent attention aussi bien aux terrasses qu'aux surfaces affectées par des glissements adjacents, puisque ces dernières ont été bien attrayantes aux pionniers de l'agriculture, à cause de leur fertilité et humidité, dans un temps que les terrasses étaient utilisées presque exclusivement pour une économie de marché. Quelques surfaces utilisées aujourd'hui pour le foin, pour les pâturages et les vergers de prunes étaient bien cultivées, alors que les terrains à fonction céréalière acquis dans la plaine du Bărăgan, par la réforme agraire de 1923 se sont diversifiés du point de vue économique d'une manière accélérée après 1945. La toponymie est considérée par conséquent comme une source majeure dans la compréhension d'une importante phase du peuplement rural. Alors que les noms des lieux éveillent beaucoup d'intérêt pour l'écologie et les études concernant le potentiel de l'environnement tenant compte de la survivance des familles étendues et d'autres petites communautés, il y a peu d'information sur l'origine des localités plus anciennes.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the projects started in the 1990s under a research agreement between the Romanian Academy's Institute of Geography and the Department of Geography at the University of Leicester (UK) concerned the human geography of the Pătârlagele area, having in mind the rural restructuring process (N. Muică & D. Turnock 1997) and the problematic nature of much of the terrain prone to landslides and mudflows (N. Muică & D. Turnock 1994; Cristina Muică & D. Bălțeanu 1995). Historical investigation into this topic was encouraged by the wider studies in Buzău county (Nancu & Alexandrescu 1993), giving rise to case studies of nineteenth century rural strategies of pluriactivity (N. Muică et al. 2000a, 2000b; Muică & Turnock 2000). We have continued our historical research with particular reference to village origins and toponomy and this paper discusses our findings against a background of knowledge emphasising the historical continuity of relatively dense settlement in the Buzău Subcarpathians as a whole (Petrescu-Burloiu 1977, pp. 139–40), although the Pătârlagele Depression was part of Saac county before 1845 which implied associations with areas to the southwest (i.e. towards Urlați and Vălenii de Munte) rather than the lower Buzău valley including Buzău itself. We find that the great majority of settlements date back only to the nineteenth century while proof of settlement continuity is extremely sparse for earlier periods (N. Muică & D. Turnock 2008). The full study area comprises the communes of Pănățău and Pătârlagele, with the latter now an urban area (since 2004) although it has been the functional centre of the district throughout the modern period.

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The area comprises not only the Buzău valley but also adjacent Subcarpathian hill country drained by a number of tributary valley including the Pănătău and Sibiciu streams on the eastern side complemented by Valea Lupului, Valea Mușcelului and Valea Viei on the western side; lying just to the north of the major Bâsca Chiojdului tributary marking the southern boundary of the Pătârlagele Depression (Fig. 1). The larger settlements occupy the main Buzău corridor system but are complemented by smaller villages and hamlets in the hills endowed by their extensive landslide surfaces attractive for small-scale agriculture (though problematic for settlement) and complement the ‘țarină’ lands on the low ground which offer a much better basis for capital investment. This paper is one of four studies dealing with the toponymy of the area which is very rich in view of oral evidence which has been collected to supplement the cartographic and other published sources. It therefore serves to supplement the limited documentation for adjustments to settlement involving occupation of the landslide surfaces during the nineteenth century. This paper deals with the northeastern section of the Pătârlagele Depression. This area comprises a belt of terraces and hills extending for some six kilometers north-south from Valea Sibiciului to the upper and lower Sibiciu villages (Sibiciu de Sus/Jos), Pănătău and Plăișor. Altogether there are eight villages officially recognised for administrative purposes, along with a total of 39 dependent units. They are mapped in Figure 1–2 in the context of the Pătârlagele Depression as a whole, while Table 1 provides a comprehensive categorisation with notes. The paper is complemented three others – for the Mușcel/Viei valleys, the Râpile-Zaharești area and terraces of the Buzău river western bank – currently being published in the geographical annals of the universities of Timișoara, Iași and Oradea respectively.

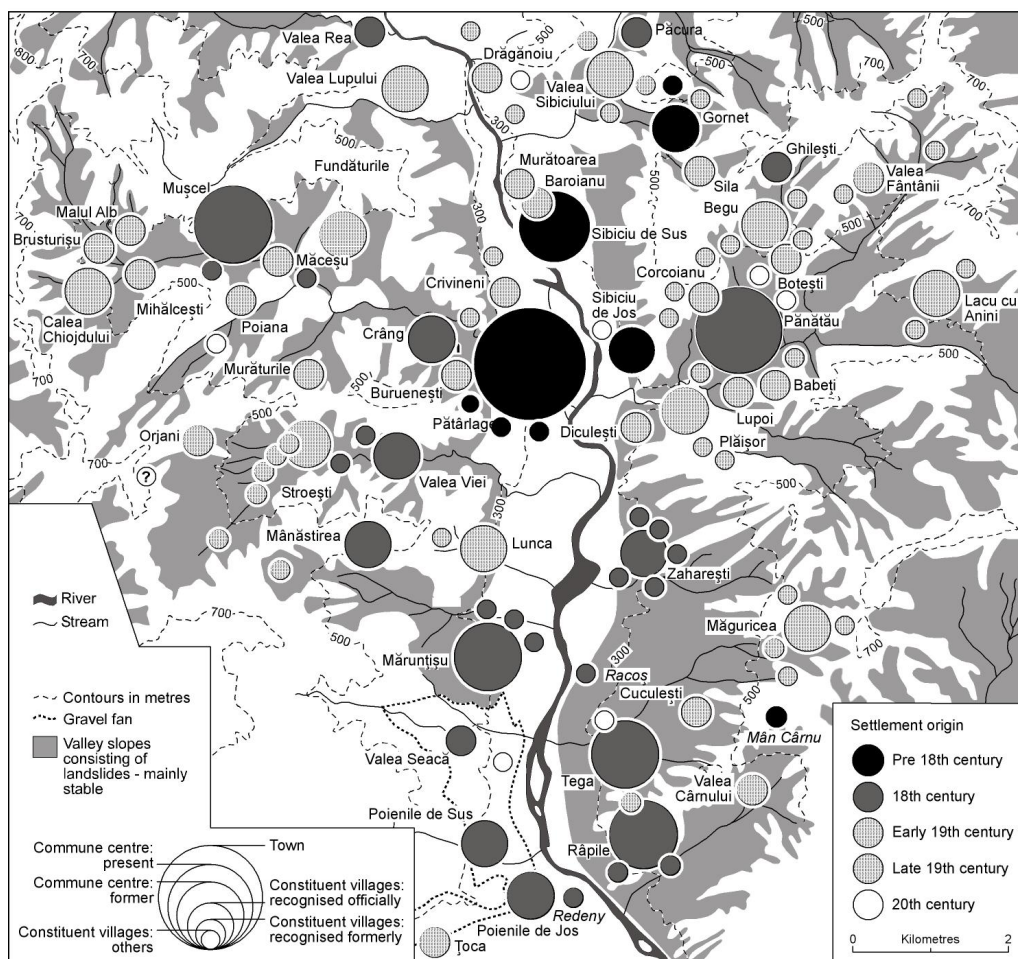


Fig. 1 – The origin of settlements in the Pătârlagele Depression according to the earliest documentary evidence.

Table 1

The principal settlements and their dependents

<b>BEGU</b> Class 3: 4–Băia 1a, 5– <u>Băicuș</u> 1b, 15–Botești 2a (37–La Cătină [Mărăcini] 1b), 33– <b>Ghilești</b> [Chilești, Jilești] 2a.
<b>GORNET</b> Class 3: 78– <b>Peste Izvor</b> 1a, 96–Robu 1b, 101–Sila 2a.
LACU CU ANINI Class 3: 102–Slabi 1a, 118–Vlăicești 1b.
<b>PĂNĂTĂU</b> Class 5: 2–Babeți 2a (3–Băcioi 1b), 7– <i>Balea</i> 1a, 24–Corcoianu 2a (1–Arvunești 1b, 6–Băjenii [Băjenii] 1b, 52–Mărăcineni 1a*), 15–Lupoi 2a, 110–Valea Fântâni 2a (04–La Odae 1a, 85–Poiana 1a, 90–Predeal 1a, 106 <i>Țarină</i> 1b).
<b>PLĂȘOR</b> Class 3: 73– <u>Pe Crivină</u> 1b, 97–Rotărie 1b.
<b>SIBICIU DE JOS</b> [Fășăiți] Class 3: 28–Diculești [Deculești] 2a, 107– <i>Țarina de-din Jos</i> 1b.
<b>SIBICIU DE SUS</b> [Trestioara] Class 4: 10–Băscureț 1a, 29–Baroianu [Baroianu-Mlăcile] 2a, 29–Drăgănoi 2a (58–Mlăcile 1a, 59–Moara Sibicianului 1a), 82– <i>Podul Viei</i> 1a, 60–Murătoarea 2a.
<b>VALEA SIBICIULUI</b> Class 3: 17–Burdușoia 1a, 56– <u>Mățara</u> [Pe Mățara] 1a, 66– <b>Păcura</b> [Treseny] 2a*.
<b>Notes:</b> The officially-recognised settlements are basically Class Three, but Class Four where there is a history of commune status (Sibiciu de Sus) and Class Five where this status still applies today (Pănătău). The dependents are generally Class One (1a for a detached settlement, 1b for a quarter of a larger settlement), but Class Two where there is a history of official recognition prior to 1948 (2a) or 1876–81 (2b). An asterisk denotes a former settlement site now deserted. The prefix numbers relate to locations shown on Figure 2. Square brackets contain alternative names for some of the settlements which round brackets are dependents of the preceding Class 2 settlement. Primary settlements (in existence by 1800) are shown in bold. Those underlined are dated to the early nineteenth century and those shown in <i>italic</i> date to the twentieth century – the others date to the late nineteenth century.

Our study initially used the cartographic sources to help provide a chronology. The ‘Harta Topografică’ by Serviciul Geografic al Armatei (1906) –based on 1895–1898 data – provides a picture for the end of the nineteenth century while the end of the eighteenth century is covered by Specht’s ‘Militärische Carte’ (1790–1791) and von Bauer’s ‘Mémoires Historiques’ (1778). Out of a total of 119 settlements throughout the Pătărlagele Depression (including many that are merely neighbourhoods within larger villages) only 39 can be convincingly dated to the eighteenth century or earlier (N. Muică & Turnock 2009) (Fig. 2). Of these only seven fall to the smaller area which is the focus of this paper. Of course there may be other primary settlements that lack documentary evidence. However taking the selection available, a key point is the apparent focus on the lower ground (and especially the Buzău terraces) with only temporary/seasonal use of the higher ground, which could of course include an element of monastic settlement in the form of hermitages that provide a possible origin for Cârnă monastery in the southeastern part of the depression. The latter is known from the sixteenth century along with a cluster the three leading settlements beside the Buzău river: Pătărlagele, Sibiciu de Jos and Sibiciu de Sus (with which this paper is not directly concerned). At the same time a comparison can be made between the two halves of the nineteenth century thanks to the Russian map or ‘Harta Rusă/Rusească’ of 1853 (Anon. 1853). It is evident that our small study area maintained a share of about 36–38% of the households/population of the Pătărlagele Depression during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries working in the basis of both households (1831–1912) and total population (1912–1966) (Table 2). But since 1966 a combination of depopulation and a growth in what is now the town of Pătărlagele has reduced the share to just below 30%. The study proceeds with short reviews of the physical landscape and the settlement history before offering a detailed study of the toponymy.

Table 2

Population 1832–2002

Main Villages#	1831/2a	1912a	1912b	1941b	1966b	1966c	1992b	2002b	Gndr.
Begu	67	85	406	408	602	91.7	323	272	50.6
Gornet	36	92	404	442	305	69.4	40	24	51.1
Lacu cu Anini		66	294	352	401	90.3	186	167	51.4
Pănătău+	84	241	1014	1148	862	71.7	772	736	50.6
Plășor	16	92	425	472	419	73.7	253	214	51.5
Sibiciu de Jos	45	111	493	443	528	48.7	680	648	52.2
Sibiciu de Sus	72	134	586	614	770	50.7	984	915	51.6

Table 2 (continued)

Valea Sibiciului	81	137	655	635	511	76.9	312	286	52.2
Total (i)	401	958	4277	4514	4398	69.3	3550	3262	51.4
Total (ii)	1095	2536	10986	12252	12911	65.4	11778	11179	51.2
Percent (i)/(ii)	36.6	37.8	38.9	36.8	34.1	n.a.	30.1	29.2	n.a.

a households; b total population; c employment in agriculture (percent). For gender the figures are the female percentages (taking the average for 1912, 1930, 1941, 1956, 1966, 1977, 1992 and 2002). The totals relate to (i) the study area and (ii) the entire Pătărlagele Depression.

+Pănătău includes Valea Fântânii which is now almost totally depopulated but there were 30 families in 1831–1832 and 47 in 1912 while the total population was 220 in 1912 and 290 in 1941 (the last year for which separate data is available).

# denotes the villages which have official recognition today as components of communes or towns (i.e. Classes 3–5 in Table 1).

Sources: Census returns and administrative handbooks. Also Anon 1892 for 1831–1832 data.

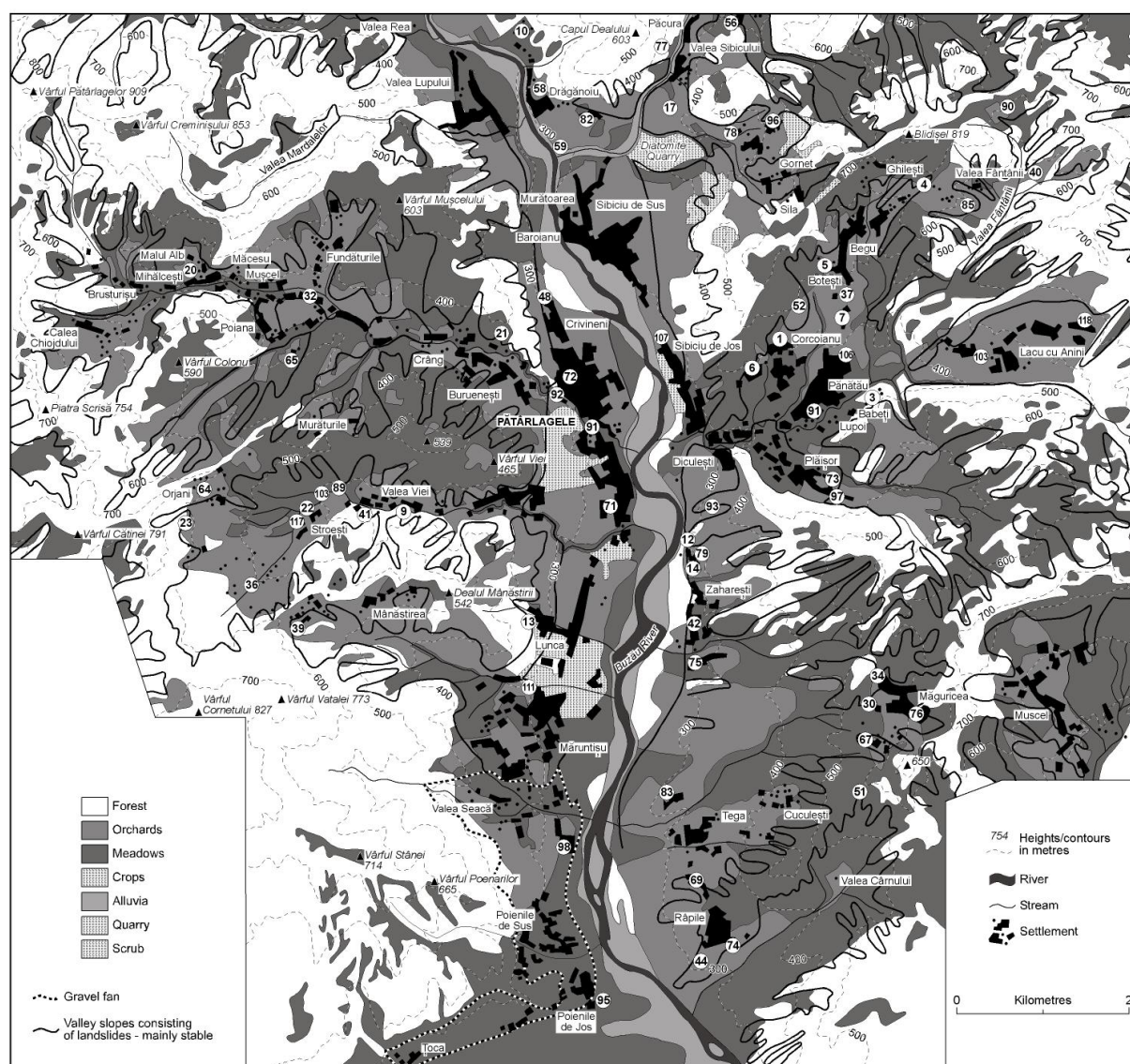


Fig. 2 – The landscape of the Pătărlagele Depression.

Named settlements are those with a history of official existence in administrative handbooks since the late nineteenth century. Those coded by numbers are dependencies: those in the study area are listed in Table 1. The key for the others is as follows



(upper case is used for Class Two settlements): 8 Baroianu; 9 Bărbulești; 12 Bejani; 13 Benga; 14 Bogdănești; 16 BRUSTURIȘU; 18 BURUENEȘTI; 20 Cătunul Bisericii; 21 Cetate; 22 Chelărești; 23 Copăcel; 26 CRIVINENI; 27 CUCULEȘTI; 30 Dubrovești; 32 Gârlă; 34 Gorlani; 36 Ivănești; 39 La Mănăstire în Țigănie; 41 Lemnărești; 42 Linie; 44 Luntrari; 46 MĂCEȘU; 48 Malul Alb; 49 MALUL ALB; 51 Mănăstirea Cârnu; 54 Mărunțișu Jitianu; 55 Mărunțișu Sibiesc; 57 MIHĂLCEȘTI; 61 MURĂTURILE; 62 Murea; 64 ORJANI; 65 Păcle; 67 Panaieți; 69 Păslari; 71 PĂTÂRLAGELE DE JOS; 72 PĂTÂRLAGELE DE SUS; 74 Pe Față; 75 Pe Muchie; 76 Pe Pisc; 79 Peste Izvor; 81 Podosu; 83 Poduri; 84 POIANA; 89 Potorăști; 92 Prundeni; 93 Racos; 95 Redeni; 98 Satu Nou; 103 Șoghiorani; 108 ȚOCA; 109 VALEA CÂRNULUI; 111 Valea Gornetului; 113 VALEA REA; 114 VALEA SEACĂ; 117 Vasiloi.

### THE LOCAL TERRAIN

As the basis of a countryside of depressions and rolling hills at 300–900 m, the complex geology embraces Miocene and Pliocene rocks that vary greatly in their resistance to erosion: ranging from clays and marls to limestones and sandstones. The landscape is remarkably youthful because of the vertical uplift of about 1,000 m during the Quaternary which continues today at the modest rate of 0.5–1.5 mm per annum. Rivers have become ever more deeply incised in an area of steeply-inclined (sometimes near-vertical) strata, while valley deepening also results in a massive and continuing transfer of material from the slopes to the channels. Indeed, mass movement occurs throughout the extensive ‘flysch zone’ of the Carpathians, given the great instability arising from lithological variety as well as tectonic and structural fragmentation conducive to a dense river network. Sedimentary rocks include clays, marls, sands and gravels intercalated with more resistant cemented rocks: sandstone (calcareous, silicious or otherwise depending on the binding material), limestone, gypsum and even conglomerate. Level ground is to be found on the Buzău alluvial lands comprising well-developed terrace systems appearing as steps beginning just 3.0–4.0 m above the floodplain; complemented by fragments of mature relief on the higher ground as well as unstable landslide surfaces comprising many of the hillslopes. The fossil soils of the former (e.g. brown soils found on sands, sandstone and young rendzinas) and the more immature but moist soils of the latter support pastures and hayfields today. Meanwhile, forest may be present on the floodplain as ‘zăvoi’ with species of poplar and willow.

The natural vegetation is beech (*Fagus silvatica*) woodland on north-facing slopes and durmast (*Quercus petraea*) on south-facing slopes: since these trees are close to their respective limits at Pâtârlagele the contrast arising from aspect is greatly accentuated. The area was once covered with a multi-layered deciduous mesophile forest: an ecosystem of great stability and productivity, capable of efficiently protecting the soil against sheet wash and ensure a certain discharge-to-infiltration balance. Meanwhile on lower altitude sunny slopes it was the durmast that prevailed while on shaded slopes above 700 m there was beech forest (occasionally mixed with durmast). In addition some xerophytic elements – pubescent oak and manna ash – were once present on sunny slopes. Today the forest is often young, implying the clearance of natural woodland: beech climax on north-facing slopes, and oak/durmast on south-facing slopes; along with some *Fraxinus ornus*, *Quercus pubescens* and *Ulmus*. There have been some attempts to introduce pine on degraded land beneath the beech as part of a species change strategy, but results have not been too good because of salt in the marl – and also drought on sandy land. Because of the salt content, the stone and sand loses part of its value as construction material. However, the beech is now more highly valued commercially for use at the Nehoiu sawmill and a slow transition of pine plantations to beech and oak may be expected if there is no further interference.

However the fossil soils of the mature relief (brown soils found on sands, sandstone and young rendzinas) and the more immature but moist soils of the landslides support pastures and hayfields today. Meanwhile although the sands yield a thin soil, there is some amelioration through material in suspension: hence the alluvial deposits on top of vertical sandstone/sand deposits on the riverbanks around Pănătău. The result is acceptable cereal land, especially in the case of two extensive terraces at Pâtârlagele. Since the valley land is used as intensively as possible for crops, haymaking is restricted and ‘fân de lunca’ has to be supplemented by ‘fân de deal’ although the latter is tougher and of generally poorer quality.

Meanwhile some woodland may be present on the floodplain as ‘zăvoi’ with species of poplar and willow. Traditionally, torrential rain and heavy run-off has provoked major flooding causing damage to the infrastructure and to cropland that may be covered by a thick layer of sand and gravel. Fortunately these risks have been reduced by the Siriu barrage and similar works in the Bâsca catchment, linked with the generation of hydroelectricity, but the higher land remains unstable and well over half the sloping land may be prone to landslides and mudflows (especially where hills are developed on clays and marls). Mean discharge in the Buzău Subcarpathians is 13t/ha/yr; but rates of over 50 have been recorded. Pine trees, along with acacia, ash, buckthorn (also alder on landslides where there is sandy material) help to maintain stability (Muică Cristina *et al.* 1993, p. 142).

#### HILLSIDE REMNANTS OF OLD RELIEF

This paragraph deals with the highest ground – on both sides of the Buzău – with fragments of an old mature relief linked representing peneplanation associated with the high terreces of the Buzău and other rivers cutting across geological layers of varied resistance and inclination, even including some in a vertical position. There are some ‘poduri’ (terraces) or almost level surfaces isolated as at Blidişel and Capul Dealului (north of Sibiciu de Sus) and at Seciu above Râpile on the eastern side. Hill slopes (‘povârnişurile dealurilor’) extending from the hill summits to the valleys are very varied and some are quite precipitous (‘povârnişuri repezi’). The hills east of the Buzău (north of Zahareşti and east of Valea Fântânii) are typical cuervas with a steep north and northwest (‘dos’) slope – e.g. Dealul Pănătăului/Plăişorului – with a 12–15 deg. structural surface (‘faţă’) to the south and southeast. Some slopes are steep in the upper part (due to erosion) and yet grade into a fan of deposited material lower down. Young soils (even bare rocks) on the slopes therefore contrast with mature/fossil soils on the surfaces associated with old relief. But aspect is also important because it is quite common to see north-facing cuervas displaying contrasting land uses: forest to the north and agriculture, pasture and fruit trees to the south. The wind is channelled down the valley so that trees are slightly inclined in this direction (though the circulation may be diverted due to currents). Where the ridge is forested on both sides it is likely that there will be durmast to the south and beech to the north; also beech above durmast following the system of altitudinal layers (although beech is found below the durmast at the foot of the southern slope in a narrow valley which is heavily shaded and therefore cold). A good example of old relief is Presvale near Râpile with steps occurring consistently through the 500–650m band. Here the layers are vertical whereas on Seciu hill (above Râpile) the surface coincides with the disposition of the geological strata inclining gently to the west. Meanwhile at the very highest level on Blidişel there is a little horizontal surface cutting into layers (of varied resistance) inclined to south with a 25–30 deg. slope. Economic significance is demonstrated by the names indicating agricultural use (discussed below).

Agriculture used structural surfaces in the past and there are many surviving agro-terraces (while landslides tend to occur on the more humid soils lower down) with the best examples occurring at Poduri above Corcoianu and Luncă near Begu with maize still grown in the vicinity. The dry thin soils are generally marginalised today with *Chrysopogon gyllus* or ‘sadină’, which is an indicator of land that has not been used for agriculture for a long time. Meanwhile good grassland is to be found especially on the dark pseudo-rendzina soils derived from marl and on the more stable surfaces where a transition to brown soils can be found; while by contrast a hard vegetation occupies the salty land. Thus the net result of human interventions is a ‘crâng’ landscape of small coppices interspersed with grazings compared with denser, more continuous ‘codru’ forest. Thus Cristina Muică *et al.* (1993, p. 137) underline the reality of ‘the mosaic-like Subcarpathian landscape [which] facilitated a multitude of soil uses’ as forest was greatly reduced. This new mosaic pattern reflects the main scarp and dip slope features linked with a succession of cuervas – with woodland and agriculture – further differentiated by scarps and terraces on the dip slope giving rise to small areas of woodland, with orchards, grazings and hayfields. There may be an alternation of sandstone and marl outcrops across a sloping surface: introducing a corrugated pattern with minor cuervas and contrasting landuses of woodland/scrub and pasture.

## THE LANDSLIDES

Unstable terrain is a feature of the Subcarpathians wherever four to five degree slopes occur and much emphasis must be given to landslides ('pornituri') which are very characteristic of the Curvature Carpathians with much instability especially where Pliocene clay and marl can slip on underlying Miocene sandstone. Despite the agricultural potential the landslides have always posed risks for settlement. And these hazards have become more significant today in the context of increasing investment in housing and infrastructure (Bogdan & Bălțeanu 1986). By contrast where marl outcrops between vertical sandstone strata mudflows often occur: they tend to break out after heavy rainfall in spring when the stability arising from winter freeze has been lost. They move downhill like glaciers at rates of up to 20–40 m daily. Both landslides and mudflows occur are almost impossible to control, given the complex geology and the instability arising from the continuing tectonic activity (Muică & Zăvoianu 1996, p. 210). They are basically natural: a response to downcutting by the Buzău river, possibly coupled with tectonic uplift. A tree cover may make for greater stability but it cannot prevent readjustment permanently. Indeed, mass movement has been occurring for 2000–5000 years at least, though many landslides have been stable for a long time – even since prehistory, as indicated by the extent of soil development. However landslide material varies considerably in character. The main ingredients are clay, marl and sandstone, but the proportions vary as does the amount of lubrication (for heavy rain may well provoke sudden changes in the speed of advance), while fragments of hard rock may occasionally predominate. The depth of the landslides varies considerably: most are quite shallow (0.4–0.8 m) – typically on the steeper slopes – but some reach as much as 10.0 m and occasionally 20 m. The shallower landslides tend to be the more extensive: emanating from amphitheatres (formed by partial slumping of the hillside) to occupy as much as two-thirds of a hillslope. As material is torn away to form a landslide source area a quite large steep-sided 'detachment cup' may be created to resemble a glacial cirque.

Clearly stable landslides have great significance for agriculture because although sliding interrupts soil formation, fertility and moisture content is enhanced by mixing linked with a natural 'churning' process. After major landslide activity, the soil develops relatively quickly (faster on sands and sandstones than on marls) because the water washes out the salt and creates a good agricultural soil. The peasant's eye will select the most suitable of the gentler slopes that may be cleared for grazings and orchards (the latter often established at the lower end of landslides) and there may also be fans of alluvial material where minor tributaries change course through landsliding and the old course can be used for fruit trees. The lack of extensive smooth surfaces with easy access – so important for commercial agriculture – is no great handicap for subsistence farming when people are able to live in close proximity. And since they offer moisture retention (particularly valuable during dry periods) and remove salt from the soil, even the shallowest landslide tongues ('limbi de pornituri') have been widely used for crops in contrast to the pasture and forest prevailing elsewhere. Haymaking and fruit growing are prominent while (crucially in an age of subsistence) maize grew well on reasonably mature landslides, though less well on the hill with thin soil on the impermeable marl. Given the agricultural potential along with access to woodland and grazing it is conceivable that these surfaces were exploited during the period of Cuman-Petcheneg pressure. But there is no evidence of this and all the indications suggest nineteenth century exploitation when whole settlements were driven on to these surfaces: Gornet, Lacu cu Anini and Măguricea to the east of the Buzău and Calea Chiojdului, Fundăturile, Mănăstirea, Orjani and Stroești to the west. The dangers were considerable since houses on landslides may eventually be undermined (say once each century). Still today, the risk of renewed instability can never be overlooked and in many areas it may well be prudent now to restrict agriculture to grazing and haymaking. Meanwhile, mudflows may stabilise and support a grass cover, although it is not good for hay because the surface is so rough the grass is difficult to cut. The ground is also very humid and may have a high salt/sulphate content. So the land is best used for grazing.

At the southern edge of the study area i.e. from Izvorul Chiliei northwestwards to Izvorul Șughiței (the lower part of Valea Fântânii and the Pănătău stream) SSE-trending hillslopes are almost in complete concordance with the surface of the geological layers inclined at 13–15 degrees. There are landslides on these slopes but they are not very thick and not so clearly visible in the relief. But towards the north and northwest, on the contrary, there are steep slopes of 35–45 degrees – even 90 degrees – frequently with the name ‘mal/maluri’ (a very old word in the Romanian language) with young soil or without any soil or vegetation at all. Slopes extend uninterrupted from the hill summits to the watercourses as in the case of Dealul Pănătăului on the left side of the Pănătău stream and the northwest part of Dealul Plăișorului on the left side of the Plăișor brook; or with landslides on the lower southeastern part of Dealul Plăișorului. Only to the west of Slabi, on the left side of the Sila, is there a great landslides tongue fed by material from the north and with the name Poiana Silei with Podișor higher up to the north. Another interesting case is Dealul Plăișorului where an old landslide tongue has been destroyed by erosion in its frontal part between deep valley left of Izvorul Plăișorului and right of Izvorul Croitorului (reminiscent of the old torrential gravel fan of Mărunțișu already referred to). Moving on towards the Sibiciu stream, landslide fans and tongues occur frequently on the lower hillslopes e.g. Valea Fântânii, with landslides on the strata inclined as much as 35 deg. with steps (reflecting resistant strata) that provide sites for the villages of Begu, Corcoianu and Ghilești. Even the landslide surfaces are more inclined because of the high content of sand or even sandstone blocks.

Moving to the area between Sibiciu de Jos and Sibiciu de Sus, there are many landslide fans on the six–eight meter terrace of the Buzău. They are very clearly recognisable, some united in the lower part while others are suspended. To the north, towards the Sibiciu stream, there are three basins: (a) Gornet, with a great landslide tongue 2.5 kms long and a great fan/delta in the lower, frontal part on the right side of the Sibiciu stream showing some hydrographic modification (N. Muică 1977, p. 109). This landscape sustains the settlements of Sila and Gornet above and (formerly) Burdușoaia below since the land is good for agriculture despite the instability. The second basin (b) is Fulgoaia, with a long 2.5km landslide tongue with many branches flowing very slowly to the Sărățel valley and its confluence with the Sibiciu brook. The landslide originates at a col WSW of Blidișel on the other side of the summit from Ghilești, with much source material derived especially from four little valleys or ‘groape’. Lower down the landslide tongue becomes almost a kilometer wide and is difficult to delimit given the many recent ‘rupturi’. Further down the tongue narrows to accommodate the very narrow gorge SSW of Fulgoiu (only 200 m wide but more than 500 m long) while the valley then widens out below the gorge and a landslide fan develops to support the hamlet of Păcura on the right side and Mățara on the left; for only this lower part is good for hay and pasture with fruit trees as well around the hamlets. Thirdly (c) we have the Sărățel (or Goșa) landslide which is very extensive with origins near the Predeal col (north of the Valea Fântânii source) and the confluence of the two tongues at the salt spring of Balta Sărată which is the source of the Sărățel or salt brook. Just below on the right side, another landslide tongue arrives from the Valea Dulce: i.e. the sweet little brook, because it is without salt. But with many branches and recent ‘rupturi’, the landslide area is again difficult to delimit exactly, as at Fulgoaia. Below the confluence area, the Sărățel narrows considerably and the landslide material is transported by water. Indeed both the Fulgoaia and Sărățel basins are quite similar to the upper part of the Valea Viei basin (on the western side of Buzău) with mobile landslides and salty land suitable only for pasture and hay. The three basins are separated by prominent hills: Muchia Bordușoaiei left of the Gornet basin, Muchia Roșiilor between the Gornet and Fulgoaia basins, Fulgoiu between the Fulgoaia and Sărățel/Goșa basins and Goșa hill to the right of the Sărățel basin. Finally, immediately above the landslide zone the terrain known by the natives as ‘chichilaie’ (plural ‘chichilăi’) with 30–40 deg. slopes (or steeper) and a thin soil carrying woodland or a pioneer vegetation.

From the mosaic-like distribution of soil types, reflecting the complex geology with varied structural characteristics and lithological sequences, it is possible to recognise five levels of natural potential for agriculture (Table 3). This picture arose out of a major terrain mapping exercise carried out by the Romanian Academy’s Geography Institute during 1977–1979 (C. Muică *et al.* 1979; N. Muică



*et al.* 1981). The very good land clearly comprises the Buzău terraces while the poorest land is predominantly the wet ground beside the various watercourses, along with the rocky summits and the very salty ground. The intermediate categories cover the landslides and the smoother structural surfaces with the varying potentials contributing to the ‘mosaic’ character of the landuse according to the steepness of the slopes, the degree of stability and the quality of the soil. It is clearly important that farmers should carry out their activities with these varied potentials in mind and agricultural advisers are needed to help farmers consider the possibilities.

Table 3

## Natural potential of the land

<b>VERY GOOD (7.3%):</b> Areas with insignificant degradation: stable ground with slopes of less than five percent; suitable for multiple uses (agriculture, settlements and communications).
<b>GOOD (20.4%):</b> Areas with insignificant degradation: gently sloping land including structural surfaces; also stable landslides with mature soil: suitable for crops, pasture and meadow.
<b>AVERAGE (50.3%):</b> Areas of moderate degradation: higher ground and medium/steep slopes with podsolised brown soils and acid brown soils mainly used for agriculture (crops, hay and orchards); also stable landslides with a woodland cover.
<b>POOR (7.8%):</b> Areas of significant degradation: steeply-sloping land with eroded soils and bare rock; typically invaded by brambles (‘mărăcișuri’); also alluvial lands regularly flooded and used only for grazing and scrub.
<b>VERY POOR (14.2%):</b> Areas very heavily degraded: very steep slopes with immature soils and rocks; also with erosion and mass-movement affecting valleys and cuestas; eroded lands with plantations; former quarries; and mobile alluvium on the plain.

Source: N. Muică *et al.* 1981.

## THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS

The area is generally believed to be long-settled in view of the historic importance of the Subcarpathians as a refuge during the migration period but it is evident that many of the smaller settlements are comparatively recent dating to the nineteenth century: a period of population increase when capitalist farming on the Buzău terraces drove subsistence farmers further into the hills where the landslides and structural surfaces were more intensively used. We decided make a distinction between settlements that were clearly in existence by 1800 – a primary group – and those established later – a secondary group. The former were recognised from documents, including the records of church building; but especially cartographic sources with Bauer (1778) and Specht (1790–1791) as particularly important sources. Meanwhile the secondary phase could be split between the nineteenth and twentieth century with the appearance of the first Romanian topographical series in 1906, based on data collected during 1895–8. Additionally the Russian Map (Harta Rusă/Rusească 1853) could divide the nineteenth century into two halves. Most of our primary settlements are invisible before the eighteenth century and much of the published historical record is highly speculative with some dates apparently picked at random: thus Petrescu-Burloiu (1977) proposes a seventeenth century tag for Gornet and Valea Sibiciului; while equally mysteriously, Burlacu (1979) sees ‘schituri rupestre’ emerging at Begu and Valea Sibiciului during 1100–1500 while Iorgulescu (1892, p. 334) supplies a speculative date of 1640 for the latter. More reasonably for Begu, Gâlmeanu & Ionescu (2002 p. 283) claim an origin before 1700 and while 1714 is quoted for the first Sf.Nicolae church, an earlier date is by no means improbable given the name of the village as a sheltered refuge and the quality of the land in the vicinity. Nevertheless the claim is unsupported.

However there is some firm evidence for Sibiciu de Jos/Sus. The assumption of an ‘Ungureni’ connection with the Transylvanian town of Sibiu has been challenged by the idea of ‘Sibiu’ as a personal name Drăganu (1933, p. 553) claimed that both Sibiciu and Sibiu are derived from the Slav name for the cornel tree (‘sibinieja’ in Bulgarian). However there are traces of old cemeteries (Constantinescu 1941a, pp. 369–370) and there is no doubt that the two villages are the oldest in the study area. At Sibiciu de Jos

the name Sibitscheni de Schos is recorded by Bauer (1778) and Schibiczou de Sjos by Specht (1790–1791) – also Sibiesel by Ruhedorf in 1788 – after the first church dated c. 1750. But the record can be taken further back by documents for 1669, 1679 and 1684 – discussed by Cocora (1979 pp. 68/84) – referring to land transactions by local people in respect of their estate at Gura Teghii (lying well to the north beyond Nehoiu) and suggest that the Pătârlagele Depression was a base for the settlement of adjacent mountains forming part of the Carpathians proper. Additionally, for Sibiciu de Jos there is a 1669 document alluding to ‘Făsăiți’ and still earlier in 1583 a document mentions ‘Sibiceu’ for Sibiciu de Jos (N.A. Constantinescu 1941b, pp. III–IV). More specifically we have a reference in 1515 for Sibiciu de Sus including the words: ‘până la hotarul Sibiceului’ (Roller *et al.* 1951: vol 1, p. 108); while a 1534 document sees the ‘voevod’ declaring Sibiciu as part of an estate: ‘dat-am această poruncă ... ca să fie lor Sibiciu părțile lor de moșie’ (Ibid: vol. 2, p. 165). For 1568 there is a reference to the Fugești family denouncing two nephews of people with the names of Sibiu and Lera: ‘și așa au pârat Fugeștii pe nepoții lui Sibiu și ai lui Lera’ and again ‘poruncă domniei mele lui Sibiu cu frații lui’ (Ibid: Vol. 3, p. 267). Further, in 1584 the voevod Pătru’s declaration involves Ivan and Sibiu with their respective brothers: ‘dat-am domnia mea această poruncă pentru a domniei mele lui Ivan cu frații săi și Sibiu cu frații săi’ (Ibid: Vol. 5, pp. 169–170). In all these cases the Sibiu name is being used in the sense of a family group or clan (‘cete de moșneni’) owning lands collectively i.e. ‘în devălmășie’. Hence we can regard the two Sibiciu villages as reliably documented from the sixteenth century.

But there is another interesting scenario concerning the hill village of Gornet where a hermitage church is dated 1645–1646 (Stoicescu 1970, p. 578) and we think that the relevant document also refers to people owning land nearby. This record has some incidental support from a legend relating to a former resident who claimed to have seen a manuscript on the history of Gornet describing the activities of a monk who enjoyed local support for a cell established in c.1640, subsequently replaced by a ‘schit’ in 1707 using local oak timbers. Gâlmeanu & Ionescu (2002, p. 70) also claim documentary evidence for 1515 although this is not substantiated. Thus we have the paradox of early chapels in the hills when the main settlements were on the lower ground: a theme reinforced by the early origins of Cârmănaș monastery although lies just to the south of our area. Incidentally, at Gornet (including the quarter of Peste Izvor) a church in 1772 (extended with the tower in 1835) followed the earlier church and we may quote the words of Stoicescu (1970, p. 578): ‘biserica de lemn Sf.Gheorghe 1770–1772, fost schit’. We also have Specht’s (1790–1791) reference to Kornet while Gojinet was used by von Bauer in 1778.

There is also evidence for early settlement in the Valea Sibiciului locality, although Burlacu’s (1973) idea of a Medieval hermitage is pure speculation and an intriguing date of 1640 by Iorgulescu (1892, p. 334) is not tied to any specific document. The church was not built until 1892, but there was definitely a wooden church there before this (although the date of construction is unknown) and the village name was first recorded in 1818. However, the Specht map of 1790–1791 shows a settlement called Treseny: a name derived from ‘trestie’ meaning a common reed of the type commonly found on landslides which would fit very well with the right side of the Sărățel brook (close to the confluence with the Sibiciu) opposite the village of Păcura (after a local oil spring) which is only documented from the 1870s and is now deserted. Evidently Treseny is the primary settlement in this locality and it may be that a natural disaster (such as a flood) provoked a partial shift to the present Valea Sibiciului site (though we cannot be absolutely sure that this was not also being used for a time as an alternative to Treseny). But there could also have been with a subsequent adjustment at Treseny in favour of the young landslides on the opposite side of the Sărățel brook stream: recorded from the 1870s as Păcura. Alternatively, a period of total desertion at Treseny could have been followed by reoccupation on the opposite side of the stream in the 1870s when a significant population took advantage of the oil spring (after which the village was renamed) and also the moist landslide material that is still used for hay and fruit.

Pănătău is another interesting case because we have Iorgulescu’s (1892, pp. 378–379) speculation linking seventeenth century Ungureni ‘coloni’ with the founding of the village, apparently after they had already gone to Begu and Sibiciu: an unlikely scenario of ‘sequent occupance’ but one that seems to have inspired Petrescu-Burloiu’s (1977) colonisation theories. At the same time, documentary evidence is

claimed for 1515 (Stoicescu 1970, p. 472) although this relates to a territory or estate ('moşie') with the judgement: 'şi iarăşi să fie Pănătăul până unde se împreună cu hotarul Târcovului': again I say to be Pănătău's territory until the boundary with Târcov. And there is a further reference of the same kind in 1583 about the extent of the estate 'din apa Malu Dârstei până în Vf. Pănătăul': from the Malu Dârstei stream to Pănătău peak (N.A. Constantinescu 1941b, pp. III–IV). However an estate is not necessarily a village and no settlement appears on eighteenth century maps: indeed Pănătău's church is known only from 1851. However there is a cross dated 1790 which could be linked with an older church in this village (probably a cemetery as well) and oral evidence (retained by the present priest, Alexei Lucian) insists on an earlier church – albeit unrecorded – that was similar to the first church in Valea Viei in general appearance and mode of construction (i.e. wattle and daub). Finally we may mention the nearby Begu locality for which Gâlmeanu & Ionescu (2002 p. 283) claim an origin before 1700. However there are no documents and the first Sf. Nicolae church, finished at Ghileşti in 1714 (Stoicescu 1970, p. 62) cannot be taken back to the previous century with any certainty although it is by no means an improbable scenario given the name of Begu village as a sheltered refuge and the quality of the land in the vicinity. It was evidently during the nineteenth century that a relocation took place with a new church in Begu which (along with the oldest quarter of Băicuş) remains invisible until this time: the change could have occurred as part of a so-called refurbishment in 1807–1809 or 1887–1889 on account of the instability of 'pământ mişcător' at the old site.

#### SECONDARY SETTLEMENT 1800–1945

There was evidently an explosion of settlement in the nineteenth century on the basis of a comparison between the Bauer/Spocht sources and the Romanian topographical map of 1906. There was clearly a rapid growth of population because the survey of households in the 1830s may be compared with the Colescu survey of 1899 which was published in 1905 and subsequently mapped by Baranovsky & Ştefănescu (1965) while the first official census of 1912 covered both households and total population. Despite the growth of Pătârlagele itself our district was able to increase its share of households from 36.6% in 1831–1832 to 37.8% in 1912 while the share of total population was slightly higher at 38.9%. This growth reflected some expansion of commercial activity in the main centres like the Sibiciu villages but also the emergence of new communities. The latter appear to have been less nucleated because clearly the priority was not the growth of central places but the needs of subsistence farmers seeking a niche in the age of capitalism – typically in relatively remote areas on landslides as well as fragments of 'mature landscape' on the higher ground. Indeed we would underline the quite remarkable situation in which the hillslopes – extensively covered with relatively fertile landslide material – offered much support to scattered subsistence communities comprising the core of an alternative socio-economic system to the emerging capitalism of the central zone supported by the rich agriculture of the Buzău terraces as well as a modern infrastructure based on road and rail communications along the main valley contrasting with the crude 'drumurile accidentate' (Petrescu-Burloiu 1977, p. 146) on the higher ground, with erosion increased by deforestation that restricted woodland to the steepest slopes, as noted by N. A. Constantinescu (1938). This centre-periphery dualism would have been accentuated following the abolition of feudalism, leaving estate owners free to concentrate on commercial farming on the river terraces while much of the subsistence farming was transferred to the landslides. Although relatively remote and inherently unstable, intensive use of the hills was certainly maintained until alternative cereal lands were allocated in the Bărgăan as part of the 1923 land reform; continuing on a considerable scale until the collectivisation in the 1960s brought a measure of resettlement. Of course we are not suggesting a clear watershed in 1800 between the primary and secondary phases of settlement. Petrescu-Burloiu (1977, p. 145) refers to a seventeenth-nineteenth century expansion of agricultural land at the expense of woodland; guided by the potentials for settlement in an age of population growth boosted by Habsburg mercantilism in the imperial

borderlands as ‘Ungureni’ immigrants were able to negotiate a stake in ‘moşneni’ landholding and either join existing communities or establish new settlements in the hills as part of the ongoing process of ‘roirile pastorale’. The nineteenth century trend is therefore an acceleration of what has been noted for the eighteenth century but with permanent settlement in landslide areas much more accentuated through fragmented settlement outside the main villages. All over the hills it seems that new land was being broken up as ‘mosaics’ of mixed agricultural activity extended across the landslide tongues covering which had previously seen only grazing and haymaking on the ‘conac’ model without the subsistence crops, plum trees and permanent settlements as subsistence farmers sought a niche in the age of capitalism.

Unfortunately, very little documentation is available to expand and illustrate this scenario of settlement advance and retreat over a relatively short period of time, although in our sub-region the expansion appears to have been much more evident in the late nineteenth century, with two notable exceptions. The first was Plăişor (lying just above Pănătău) where the first church was built in 1838: there is a cross dated to 1793 but no documentary evidence to suggest the settlement existed at the time. Meanwhile, a second new village took off at Valea Sibiciului: presumably as a consequence of problems at the older settlement of Treseny already discussed. As a result of this growth the established villages became surrounded by new hamlets. Thus Valea Sibiciului was not only surrounded by a mosaic of small fields and gardens but complemented by a wider colonisation of the valley slopes that were good for fruit (especially plums), pasture and hay: hence the hamlets of Burduşoaia, Măţara and Peste Gârlă; with similar development around Begu, Pănătău (including Corcoianu) and Sibiciu de Sus. The results east of Pănătău were particularly impressive with relatively large communities emerging at Lacu cu Anini and Valea Fântâni. Much of the dispersal has survived although some places have almost completely disappeared through landslide damage and resettlement projects in the communist period when subsistence farming went into decline. Services were evidently concentrated on the low-ground settlements with church and school provided at each of the two Sibiciu villages as well as Pănătău and Valea Sibiciului while Plăişor had a church, as already noted (albeit dramatically replaced – following a devastating fire in 1939 – by transfer of a redundant church from Pătârlagele de Jos five years later) (Damé 1894). Up in the hills both Begu and Gornet had their churches and also schools while Corcoianu and Lacu cu Anini also had schools; arising in part in the inter-war period through gifts made by benefactors. The priest Tr. Georgescu provided land at Lacu cu Anini (Slabi), where the villagers provided the labour; while another priest Nicolae Negulescu gave land and money at both Corcoianu and Valea Fântâni (though in the latter case there was no successful outcome and a local school never achieved any continuity). Today only Begu school remains in the hills although both churches are still used. Finally it will be noted from Table 2 that a few new settlements appeared in the twentieth century: these all relate to the communist cooperative farm when a considerable number of families were resettled on lower ground on some of the arable areas previously used for commercial farming: hence the ‘Țarina’ names which provide direct link with arable land.

#### VILLAGE NAMES

Finally in this section we mention the village names which all have some meaning apart from Măţara. Some are contested like Sibiciu (occurring three times through Sibiciu de Jos/Sus and Valea Sibiciului) where the ‘Sibiu’ element was highlighted by Iorgulescu (1892 pp. 453–454) in terms of presumed immigration by Sibiu people arriving as ‘moşneni’ colonists with joint property (‘în devălmăşie’) not only in Sibiciu de Jos/Sus but also in Begu, Lacu cu Anini, Pănătău, Plăişor and Valea Fântâni. However a Transylvanian influence should not be denied entirely because Băjăni relates to fugitives who could have been people who arrived as escapees from Hungarian jurisdiction, although this can only be a speculation. Many other names relate to families: Balea (the name is thought to be very old – even predating Roman colonisation), Baroianu (Baroi – a name of Roma origin), Boteşti (Botea), Diculeşti (Dicu), Drăgănoi (Drăgan), Ghileşti (Ghilea), Lupoi (Lupoiu), Slabi (Slobu) and Vlăceşti (Vlaicu/

Vlăicescu). Some others may derive from nicknames: Arvunești, Babeți, Corcoianu and Fășăiți, maybe Baroianu and Lupoi as well, while Lupoi is very likely based on ‘lup’ or ‘lupoi’ – a male wolf (since the female form ‘lupoia’ is used separately in a document of 1903). Băcioi and Baicuș could relate to pastoral activity with ‘baci’ a shepherd, while La Odae refers to a sheep farm and Țarină indicates arable land as already noted. Murătoarea alludes to salt springs significant for pickling while Moara Sibicianului is Sibeau’s mill and Rotărie means a wheelwright. Robu provides a reference to servile status under feudalism, while Predeal is a boundary, Pripor is a road or track on a steep slope and Păcura means oil (from the Latin ‘picula’). Begu may derive from the Slav word ‘begate’ meaning a refuge or hiding place (which could be linked with the issue of security in the migration period), while Pănătău is highly problematic: a Gothic influence has been seen in the elements ‘pene’ and ‘tae’ to mean a hiding place on the edge of a great forest, which has some documentary support from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Stoicescu 1970, p. 472). But other interpretations argue for a Slavonic base with Greek and Hungarian influences to produce ‘Păneto’ although this name has no meaning (N.A. Constantinescu 1938, pp. 268–275).

Physical features are often involved: Plășor is derived from ‘plai’ meaning a flat mountain surface (likewise names with a ‘pod’ element such as Podul Viei). Lacul cu Anini is the ‘lake with alders’ (although the lake has long since dried up), while La Cătină indicates buckthorn scrub; Trestioara derives from the reed plant ‘trestie’ (*Phragmites australis*); and Mărăcineni (linked with the Mărăcineanu family) is a name derived from ‘mărăcini’ meaning brambles. Mlăcile comes from ‘mlaca’ (a marshy place), Gârla refers to wet ground and Pe Crivina refers to moist soil, from the Serbian ‘krivina’ (Candrea 1931, p. 355). The notion of distinct communities situated on the side of a stream is relevant to Peste Gârlă and Peste Izvor while Valea Fântânii is the ‘valley of the fountain’ and Burdușoia refers to loose spongy ground. Sila indicates a small woodland while Gornet refers to durmast trees and Poiana is a clearing. Corcoianu has an uncertain derivation, although ‘corcă’ is known in Banat as a raven (despite the normal use of ‘corb’ in Romanian for such a bird) and in Moldavia as an old wine container. Băia is problematic: it could refer to a spa or mine though neither make any sense in the local context. It could be related to Slavonic (Iordan 1963, pp. 144–5), the phonetics suggest that it could be much older (even pre-Roman), with possible associations with words such as ‘Balea’ and ‘Boli’ from Romanians in the West Balkans (Capidan 1931, pp. 174–5). Of course the accuracy of these names is always questionable although some do fit the local situation very well. Treseny’s link with the common reed found on landslides fits very well with the site on the right side of the Sărățel valley close to its confluence with the Sibiciu; while loose spongy ground at Burdușoia fits in well with the landslide on which this tiny hamlet was once situated. On the other hand Gornet does not have physical conditions suitable for a durmast wood (beech trees are more appropriate for the moist soils developed on landslides) and hence the more likely connection with the Slavonic word ‘gor’ meaning a mountain. As we must reiterate that while names may be suggestive they cannot be accepted alone as a firm basis for settlement history although they may provide incidental support for certain interpretations. For example the notion of refuge at Begu is *per se* no real justification for supposing that the village sheltered a native population in the migration period; while hints about fugitives cannot seriously advance the thesis of Ungureni settlement in the sense of fugitives arriving from Transylvania.

## TOPONOMY

The paper moves on to consider other names, the vast majority of which can be accepted as genuine toponyms grounded in local usage. A general review of the evidence for the area as a whole is provided in Turnock & Muică 2010. However it should be stressed that some names have clearly been invented: most surprisingly perhaps by Iorgulescu in his book of 1881 where certain streams are named after the adjacent villages in preference to local usage (perhaps to simplify the text for elementary educational use). Thus Valea Sibiciului de Jos (possibly) for Pănătău stream although the latter name is also quoted. The only



other cases we know concern Dealul Geroasa and Valea Geroasă used in 1980 and 1961 (also DI/Valea Gerósa in 1900 and DI.Gerósa in 1892) suggesting that Iorgulescu initiated this practice for what was shown just an unnamed peak of 686 m in 1941 and 1906. The name actually relates to an estate, rather than a physical feature, and it the cartographers who have adopted it for a small hill and a valley. The area includes 225 named features and of these almost exactly half 112 have no documentary references and are known only from oral evidence. 68 features have just one reference while another 24 have between two or three and nine have between four and five. The best-referenced are Gârla/Izvorul Croitorului, Malul/Muchia Roșiilor, Malul Roșu and Sărățel with six, Valea Fântânii and Gârla/Izvorul Plășorului with seven, Piatra Dascălului with eight; Blidișel, DI. Pănătăului and Muchia/Vf. Pănătăului with nine, Sibiciu with 10 and Vf. Goșii with 11. The documentary references come from 21 different sources. Most prominent by far are Iorgulescu's two works: 1892 with 84 references and 1881 with 19. Another six score double figures: the topographical maps of 1900: Institutul Geografic al Armatei (a provisional edition) with 46 references; 1961: Ministerul Forțelor Armate Direcția Topografică Militară, with 21 references; 1980: a new edition by Ministerul Forțelor Armate Direcția Topografică Militară with 14 references; 1916: Serviciul Geografic al Armatei, with 11 references; and 1941: Institutul Geografic Militar, with 10 references; also the Bălțeanu work of 1983 with 11 references. Five to nine sources each come – in descending order – from 1864: the Szathmary 'Charta României Meridionale' using 1856 data and the 1912 'Dicționar' by Ministerul Agriculturii și Domeniilor 'Dicționarul Statistic al României' published in 1914. Another five sources supply between four and two references each: four each by Frund'escu's books (1871 and 1870, both entitled 'Geografia fizică și politică a României'), three each by the 1:100,000 topographical map of 1906 (based on the data from 1895–1898) and Petrescu-Burloiu (1977). Finally, single references relate to 1583 (Berechet 1918), 1778 (Bauer 1778); 1825 (Stoicescu 1970); 1861 ('Harta Terri Romănesci') and 1874 (the Austrian 'General Karte von Central Europe')<sup>1</sup>.

Some names appear more than once in the area: Izvorul Glodului (a mud spring) occurs at both Predeal and Valea Fântânii; Mălaia, which refers to former cereal cultivation, is known in the vicinity of both Lacu cu Anini and Plăișor; while Pripor (referring to a road or track on a steep slope) is known at Lacu cu Anini, Pănătău and Plăișor. At the same time, several features have more than one name. Izvoru/Valea Ghimpelui (the valley of the thorn) is quoted in 1900 and 1961, following Limpede I. (clear water not coloured by sediment) in 1892. Piatra Dascălului – the stone of the psalm reader – appears as Pt.-dascălului in 1871, and Pt. Dascălului in 1900, 1961 and 1980, as well as Pt. Dascălului in 1861 in error while Pt. Moșești (the stone of Moșești) is used in 1874. Vârful Blidișel is used in 1961, 1977 and 1980 but Blidișelu-Ps. in 1892, Blidișelu in 1900 and 1977, as well as DI.Blidișelul in 1912; while Pănătăul appears in 1881 as a generalised reference to both Blidișel and Vf.Pănătău taken together as one mountain. Izvorul Glodului (already noted) is also known as I. La Mihai in the case of its occurrence in Valea Fântânii, while Valea cu Plopi (the valley with poplar trees) is also known as Izvorul Văcăriei (the valley of the cows) and Muchia Pridvale (the summit of Pridvale, possibly derived from an Old Slav word for landscape) is also known as Presvale (the summit before the valley). Muchia Risec (Risec's summit) at Lacu cu Anini is also known as Mu. Râșca (Râșca's summit). At Valea Sibiciului Muchea Roșiilor (Roșiile Hill, alluding to the reddish strata) is also Vf. La Rugi ('at the blackberries' which is also a very appropriate name). I. Begu (Begu brook) is now known as Izvorul La Șapte Meri (the brook of the seven apple trees, which no longer exist at this location) while Valea Cămăruței (the valley of the little room) is also known as V. Epei (mare's valley). Crucea Predealului (Predeal cross) is also Crucea Goșii (Goșa's cross). The case of Muchia/Vf. Michia for Muchia/Vf. Pănătăului will be referred to in more detail below. There is an error in the case of Vf. Juncului used as an alternative for Vf. Camaruței in 1881 since Vf. Juncului is really a separate feature and the two should not have been combined. Meanwhile Vf. Cămăruței (so used in 1900) appears in several other forms: Cămăruții-Vf. in 1892 and Vf.Cămării in

<sup>1</sup> The paragraphs below include some of the toponyms which were copied from the maps with the same abbreviations that often do not follow the current rules for abbreviation.

2002. Most complex is the combination of Vf. Gornetului with Vf. Begului, La Maiag and Vf. Silei. Three names are used simultaneously in 1892 (Begu-M., Gornetului-Vf. and Silei-Vf.) partly due to confusion as to whether there is a single feature or a long mountain with several separately-named eminencies (Iorgulescu 1892, p. 260); but there are also references to Gornet and Begu in 1881 with the former name used by people from Gornet and Sibiciu de Sus, while the latter was adopted at Begu and Sibiciu de Jos. Another variant – La Maiag – relates to a surveyor's marking but is not documented.

References may often be presented in an identical form, especially when there are just two e.g. Valea Gornetului 1900 and 1977 – or three in the cases of Valea Begulești (1900, 1961 and 1980), Valea Pastramei (1900, 1906 and 1961), Muchia Risec (1900, 1916 and 1941) and Valea Malul Roșu (1900, 1961, 1980). Indeed there are cases where four reference are identical: Dl.Dârstei (1900, 1906, 1916 and 1941) and La Meri (1900, 1906, 1916 and 1941) and one case with six: Malul Roșu 1895, 1900, 1916, 1941, 1961 and 1980. However it is common to find variations e.g. Catanei-V. in 1892 but V.Catanei 1900 and 1961; Ochiului-V. in 1892 but V.Ochiului 1900. Other cases are more complex: Burdușoe-M in 1892 but Mu. Burdușoru 1900 and Burdușoara in 1977 and 1983 (also with Culmea in the latter); again Valea Croitoru in 1983 after Croitoru-I. in 1892 – but also Izvorul Croitorului in 1900, 1906, 1916 and 1941; and in another case: V. Fontănei in 1900, V. Fântănei in 1906, 1916 and 1941 but V. Fîntînei in 1961 and V. Fîntînii in 1980 and 1983. Another complex case is Vf.Goși (so-styled in 1900, 1916, 1941, 1961 and 1980) which becomes Dl. Goșii 1977 after Goșa-M/Vf. Goșei in 1892 and Goși (in error for Goșa) in 1881. Errors also occur in the case of Vf. Fulgoe (1892) which is presented as Vf. Fulgoiu in 1900 and 1906 but quite incorrectly as Fufulgoiu in 1881 and Culmea/Muchea Fulga in 1983. Spot heights may be added in some cases: e.g. Cp. Delului in 1906 and 1912 but Cp. Dealului in 1900 and spot heights only in 1961 (689 m) and 1980 (677 m). Woodland may also enter the picture so that the wood Chichilaia in 1881 becomes Chichilaea-Goșa-Pă. in 1892. A particularly complex case is Mu/Vf. Pănătăului where is difficult to separate the ridge or crest (Muchia) from the highest peak (Vârful) which unusually in this case are named after the village of Pănătău: usually there are quite separate names for a ridge and its individual eminencies. However in addition Dl. Pănătăului is used for the two features in 1912 and 1977 (although Dl. Pănătăului also exists as a quite separate feature) while the spelling Pănăteu is used in 1861 and 1864, with the latter reference combining not only the ridge and peak but the adjacent mountain of Blidișel as well (a situation that also arises under the name Pănătăul in 1881). Mu. Michia is an alternative name used in 1980 but in error as Muchia in 1912. The modified name of Michia (Vălenca) appears in 1892, along with Pănătăului-Vf., and as variety of spot heights – ranging from 746 m to 752 m – are also used on five occasions. This is a quite exceptional case for a feature with a total of 12 references as already noted.

#### PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY: HILLS

The high ground including hills, summits and ridges has 33 names (Table 4) of which eight are from Lacu cu Anini with six from Valea Fântânii, five each from Gornet and Plăișor and three each from Pănătău, Sibiciu de Jos and Valea Sibiciului. Culmea/Muchia Blidișelului alt. Muchia Goșii: (a) Blidișel summit/ridge northeast of Begu: a long crest between Muchia Mustoii and Predeal col marking the boundary between Pănătău and Sibiciu communes (now between Pănătău commune and Pătârlagele town). The name incorporates the diminutive form of 'blid' referring to small bowls and is thought to relate to the undulating surface of the summit plateau. Unusually the highest peak uses the same name: Vf. Blidișel although local people may corrupt this slightly to Bridișel or Pridisel. Its height was originally quoted at 825 m (1900–1917), 821 m in 1961 and 819 m in 1980. Slightly lower is Vf. Goșii (755 m in 1961 and 754 m in 1980): Goșa's peak lying northeast of Valea Sibiciului, while there are several in the 600–700 m bracket: Vf. Gornetului (Gornet peak at 687 m) is known alternatively in different villages as

Vf. Begului (particularly by Sibiciu de Sus people) and Vf. Silei while the presence of a topographical landmark produces the further variant of La Maiag: with relatively gentle slopes on the northern side, the scrubby woodland around the col negotiated by the Begu-Sila path has significant value for pasture. Meanwhile Muchia Burduşoaiei is the name of a 491 m hill northeast of Sibiciu de Sus which has certainly been lowered by the quarrying of diatomite during the communist period to provide material for the production of building blocks in Pătârlagele. Vf. Dosului – standing east of Pănătău with a height of 662 m in 1906 and 663 m in 1941 drastically revised to 612 m in 1980 – is the peak of the north-facing precipice, although it is actually a ‘şeş’ on account of its hill-top plateau. It is the highest summit of Muchia Icoanei (the summit/ridge of the icon) following the usual practice of separate names for mountain ridges and specific peaks. The only other significant hill with a spot height is Dl. Dârstei at 442 m: Dârste’s hill lying southeast of the Sibiciu de Jos hamlet of Diculeşti. As for the other eminencies Băia is hill of Băia (east of Begu): a ridge descending from Blidişel with col negotiated by the Begu-Valea Fântânii route. The name is taken from the hamlet but has no known meaning. Muchia Bisericii is the low summit at Pănătău on which the church stands. Chichilaia is a steep hillslope behind Sibiciu de Jos; though usually such a feature is linked with a specific name e.g. Chichilaia Corcoianului (incorporating a village name) i.e. Corcoianu’s ‘chichilaia’: a south-facing steeply-sloping landslide surface to the north of the village; also Chichilaia Goşa, relating to a wooded area near Predeal named after a family and their former estate. Coccoşa – deriving from ‘cocoşă’ meaning a hump – is a peak southeast of Babeţi (Pănătău), while Muchia Pietrelor is the summit of the stones above Corcoianu and Muchia Predealului is a rocky hilltop above the Predeal close to the source of Valea Fântânii (note also Pietrele Predealului nearby: the stones of Predeal relating to a sandstone surface). Vf. Şopârlei is the lizard’s peak, lying to the southwest of Blidişel above Sila. Muchia Şughitei is Şughita’s summit (another personal reference) south of Valea Fântânii; while Pe Haturi (meaning literally ‘on the boundary’) refers to structural steps above Diculeşti which resemble man-made agroterraces. Finally precipices are widely named: În Fund Pe Maluri means ‘on the precipice near the edge’ relating to a section of bare precipice in the eastern part of Dosul Pănătăului; while Malul cu Cătină is the precipice with buckthorn northeast of Sibiciu de Sus.

Table 4

Toponymy: Physical Features.

**HILLS:** Băia: hill of Băia; **Vf. Begu/Begului:** Begu peak; **Muchia Bisericii:** summit with church; **Culmea/Muchia/Vf. Blidişelului:** Blidişel summit/ridge/peak; **Muchia Burduşoaiei:** summit/ridge of Burduşoaia; **Vf. Cămării/Cămăruţei:** peak of the little room; **Chichilaia:** a steeply-sloping hill; **Coccoşa:** peak *der. ‘cocoşă’: a hump*; **Curmătura:** col; **Corneţel:** little hill *dim. ‘cornet’ with ‘corn’ (i.e. cornel) trees (Cornus mas)*; **Dl. Dârstei:** Dârste’s hill; **Piatra Dascălului:** a rocky peak called ‘the stone of the psalm reader’ *after a former owner who was a known psalm reader*; **Capul Dealului:** top of the hill; **Vf. Dosului:** peak of the north-facing precipice *actually a ‘şeş’ or hill-top plateau*; **Vf. Fulgoiu:** Fulgoiu mountain/peak; **Vf. Gornetului:** Gornet peak; **Chichilaia Goşii:** Goşa’s ‘chichilaia’; **Muchia Goşii:** summit of Goşa; **Vf. Goşii:** Goşa’s peak; **Muchia Icoanei:** icon summit/ridge; **Vf. Juncului:** peak of the young bullock; **Vf. Linţei:** Linţa’s peak; **Dl. Lupoiu:** wolf’s hill; **La Maiag:** at the Maiag *topographical landmark*; **Chichilaia Mare/Mică:** great/small ‘chichilaia’; **Muchia/Vf. Michia:** Michia summit/ridge *referring to the old estate of Michia in Cozieni commune*; **Moşoroaie:** mole hill; **Muchia Mustoii:** summit of Mustoia; a. damp place; **Dl. de la Păcură:** hill near the black oil; **Dl. Pănătăului:** Pănătău’s hill; **Muchia Pănătăului:** Pănătău summit; **Vf. Pănătăului:** peak of Pănătău; **Muchia Pietrelor:** summit of the stones; **Dl. Plăişorului:** Plăişor hill; **Pleşuva:** summit with pasture; **Predeal:** col at Predeal *with sense of boundary*; **Muchia Predealului:** Predeal hilltop; **Piatra Predealului:** sandstone surface of Predeal; **Presvale/Muchia Pridvalei:** Presvale/ Pridvale summit; **Muchia Priporului:** summit with pripor *i.e. negotiated by a track on a steep slope*; **Muchia Repausului:** summit of rest *relating to the former Sibiciu de Jos/Pănătău boundary*; **Muchia Râşca/Risec:** summit of Râşca/Risec; **Malul/Muchia Roşiilor:** Roşiile hill; **Vf. La Rugi:** peak at the blackberries; **Chichilaia Sibiciului:** Chichilaia of Sibiciu de Jos; **Dl. Spoelii/Spoeli:** hill of Spoelii; **Piscul lui Stan:** Stan’s peak; **Şerbeticu:** Şerbeticu’s hill; **Serpăria:** place with snakes *a rocky slope*; **Vf. Şopârlei:** lizard’s peak; **Muchia/Vf. Şughitei:** Şughita’s summit/peak; **La Tise/Pe Tise:** at the hill with a yew tree (*Taxus baccata*); **Muchia Turburei:** summit of Turburea (a turbid brook); **Vf. Tăcnei:** Tăcna’s summit; **Ţurţudău:** knoll *ironically implied*; **Muchia Văcăriei:** summit of the cows, with pasture.

Table 4 (continued)

<p><b>LANDSLIDES/PRECIPICES:</b> <b>Malul Alb/Râpa Albă</b> and <b>Malul Albu</b>: white cliff; <b>Coasta Babeților</b>: Babeți precipice; <b>Burdușoia</b>: swollen land; <b>Malul cu Cărțile</b>: precipice with the books; <b>Malul cu Cătină</b>: precipice with buckthorn; <b>Cuculețu</b>: small cuckoo (<i>for a hill with a precipice</i>); <b>Chichilaia Corcoianului</b>: Corcoianu's 'chichilaia'; <b>Malul Diaconesei</b>: Diaconeasa's precipice; <b>Vf. Dosului+</b>; <b>Malul Fătului</b>: psalm reader's precipice <i>after a psalm reader known locally</i>; <b>Fulgoaia</b>: large valley/clearing with young, unstable landslides <i>der. 'fulgoi': a large snowflake</i>; <b>Chichilaia Fulgoii</b>: Fulgoaia's forested steep slope; <b>Pe Gârlici</b>: entering a cellar <i>cart track on landslides between two steep hills</i>; <b>Pe Groapă</b>: in the hollow <i>depression in landslides</i>; <b>Gropi</b>: the hollows; <b>Gropșora</b>: little hollow <i>dim. 'groapă'</i>; <b>Pe Haturi</b>: on the boundary <i>referring to structural steps of agricultural significance: also with the appearance of agroterraces</i>; <b>La Humă</b>: at the blue clay or marl (<i>'humă' means violet blue clay</i>); <b>Între Chichile</b>: between the steep slopes (<i>'chichilăi'</i>) of Chichilaia Mare and Chichilaia Mică; <b>Malul Lung</b>: the long precipice; <b>Pe/Sub Maluri</b>: on/under the precipice; <b>În Fund pe Maluri</b>: on the precipice/near the precipice edge; <b>La Mărăcineni</b>: at Mărăcineni, landslide on an old surface; <b>Mustoia</b>: small valley damp in spring; <b>Muchea Mustoii+</b>; <b>Podișor</b>: small surface <i>dim. 'pod' (tableland)</i>; <b>Coasta/Groapa Pomilor</b>: slope/hollow of the fruit trees; <b>Malul Roșu</b>: red precipice; <b>Piatra din Rotărie</b>: the stone from the wheelwrights; <b>În/La Ruptură</b>: in the area of recent landslides; <b>Malul Sârbului</b>: precipice of Sârbu; <b>Ruptura Simei</b>: Sima's rift; <b>Malul Spoelii/Spoelui</b>: precipice of Spoelii; <b>Ruptura Tălpilor</b>: landslide at the base (i.e. below the slope).</p> <p><b>DRAINAGE:</b> <b>Lacul Babeților</b>: lake of Babeți; <b>Izvorul Băjenarilor</b>: Băjeni valley; <b>Izvorul Baroianului</b>: spring/brook of Baroianu; <b>Bășcuretu</b>: intermittent brook of Bășcuretu; <b>Izvorul Begu</b>: Begu brook; <b>Izvorul La Begulești</b>: brook/spring on the land of the Begulești; <b>Izvorul Brânzei</b>: cheese valley; <b>Căldura/Valea Căldurei</b>: valley of warmth; <b>Izvorul La Caloeni</b>: brook/spring of the Caloeni; <b>V. Cămaruței</b>: valley of the little room; <b>Izvorul Catanei</b>: Catana's brook; <b>Izvorul Cojocarului</b>: furrier's/skinner's brook; <b>Lacul lui Coman</b>: Coman's lake; <b>Gârla/Izvorul Croitorului</b>: tailor's brook; <b>V. Dobreștilor</b>: Dobrești's valley <i>from Dobrescu or Dobre</i>; <b>V. Dogăriței</b>: valley of the female cooper; <b>V. Epei</b>: mare's valley; <b>Izvorul/V. Fântâni</b>: brook/valley of the well; <b>Izvorul/V. Fulgoaia</b>: Fulgoaia's spring/brook; <b>Izvorul Fulgoii</b>: Fulgoii brook; <b>V. Ghileștilor</b>: Ghilești valley; <b>Izvorul/V. Ghimpelui</b>: valley of thorn; <b>Izvorul/V. Gornetului</b>: Gornet valley; <b>V. Grecului</b>: valley of the Greek; <b>La Lacuri</b>: at the lakes; <b>Izvorul Limpede</b>: clear brook; <b>V. Mutului</b>: valley of the dumb; <b>V. Neacșei</b>: Neacșa's brook; <b>V. Ochiului</b>: valley of the eye (probably a small lake); <b>Gârla/Izvorul Pănătăului</b>: Pănătău stream; <b>V. Pastramei</b>: valley of Pastramă; <b>Gârla/Izvorul Plășorului</b>: Plășor brook; <b>Valea cu Plopi</b>: valley with poplar trees; <b>Izvorul/V. Podișorului</b>: valley of the small tableland; <b>Izvorul Podului</b>: bridge brook; <b>V. Poroșnic</b>: ~Poroșnic valley; <b>Izvorul La Roșii</b>: brook at the red slope; <b>Sărățel</b>: little salt brook; <b>Izvorul Scursurii</b>: brook of the flowing; <b>Valea Seacă</b>: dry valley; <b>Sibiciu/V. Sibiciului</b>: Sibiciu stream/valley; <b>V. Sibiciului de Jos</b>: Sibiciului de Jos valley; <b>Izvorul La Șapte Meri</b>: brook/spring of seven apple trees; <b>Izvorul Șughiței</b>: Șughița brook; <b>V. Tălpei</b>: valley of the 'talpa' i.e. below the slope; <b>Izvorul Turnăriei</b>: brook/spring of Turnăria; <b>Izvorul Văcăriei</b>: brook/spring of the cows; <b>Izvorul Vărzăriei</b>: cabbage garden brook; <b>V. Veghiului</b>: valley of Veghiu; <b>Izvorul Vulpașului</b>: brook/spring of Vulpaș' (or reference to a male fox).</p> <p><b>VEGETATION:</b> <b>Malul cu Cătină+</b>; <b>Cornețel+</b>; <b>Dutina</b>: forested place of Dutina; <b>Pădurea Fulgoaia</b>: forest of Fulgoaia; <b>Izvorul/V. Ghimpelui+</b>; <b>Fața cu Gorâni</b>: sunny slope with durmast; <b>Fagu'ăl Mare</b>: the great beech; <b>La Mesteceni</b>: at the birch trees; <b>Nicioaia</b>: wooded area based on a nickname; <b>Valea cu Plopi+</b>; <b>Plopu-ăl Mare</b>: the great poplar tree; <b>Gorunii Popii</b>: priest's durmast forest; <b>Sălciiș</b>: forest of willow trees; <b>Pădurea Ștubeu</b>: hollow tree forest; <b>La Tise/Pe Tise+</b>; at the yews; <b>Pădurea Vărzăria</b>: cabbage garden forest.</p> <p><b>WILD LIFE:</b> <b>Serpăria</b>: place with snakes' <b>Vf. Șopârlei</b>: lizard's peak <i>quite plausible (in the area generally) under dry conditions</i>; <b>Izvorul Vulpașului</b>: (a) fox's brook.</p>
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## PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY: LANDSLIDES

Names linked with landslides total 36 of which 11 each fall to Gornet and Pănătău, with six from Plășor and four from Sibiciu de Sus. These are widely covered in various ways; not least the names for estates or farms: thus Fulgoaia north of Gornet is a large valley and clearing on large young and unstable that remains in agricultural use; like Goșa or Poiana Goșii, lying close to Valea Sibiciului. Gently-sloping 'tablelands' are also liable to include a landslide cover e.g. Izvorul Podișorului (the valley of the small tableland) in the Sila valley while Podișor, which also uses the diminutive form, applies to a similar feature near Lacu cu Anini (in V. Fântâni above Poiana Silei). Landslides may also be described in relation to other physical features e.g. Între Chichilăi: between the steep slopes or 'chichilăi' – referring to a landslide above the Goșa clearing northwest of Predeal lying between two steep slopes. Also Ruptura Tălpilor indicates a landslide below a slope (actually located near Lacu cu

Anini in the upper part of Gâ. Pănătăulu while Ruptura Simei is Sima's rift: relating to young landslides in Gârla Croitorului above Rotari (Plăișor). Another significant theme for landslide surfaces is the notion of 'waves' or 'swellings' best expressed through Burdușoia (from 'burdușit' meaning swollen, loose or spongy, which applies to a landslide tongue of some 2.0kms that is a constant threat to the road from Pătârlagele to Valea Sibiciului and Colți) but also good for fruit trees as well as hay and pasture: indeed it supported a small hamlet with the same name in the nineteenth century (while Gornet remains in the upper part where there is greater stability). Hollows and depressions may be highlighted e.g. Groapa Baciului – Baci depression from 'baci' meaning a shepherd in charge of a sheepfold – relating to small depression north of Sila caused by a landslide in 1960; while Pe Groapă means 'in the hollow' northeast of Corcoianu and Gropi ('the hollows') concerns four small valleys northwest of Blidișel and east of Gornet, with pasture on landslides. Hollows may be relatively warm through their sheltered nature: hence Căldura or V. Căldurei: a warm place situated in a small depression on landslides east of Pănătău that is like a 'groapă' and particularly good for hay. Hollows may well be damp: hence Mustoia: a small damp valley east of Sila; using the verb 'a musti' (to spread) suggesting both soil spread with landslide movement and also water trickling from a spring in wet periods. Hollows with springs are indicated by Saramura Goșii: Goșa's small hollow with a saltwater spring; Izvorul Băjenarilor: a valley with an intermittent brook on the south side of Dl. Pridvale near Băjeni; and V. Fulgoaia: Fulgoaia's spring or brook originating in the upper part of Poiana Fulgoii north of Gornet.

#### PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY: DRAINAGE

There are 28 references in this category: six from Valea Fântâni, five from Pănătău and four each from Begu and Plăișor. The names relating to drainage are typically diverse. As regards the physical characteristics we have Căldura/V. Căldurei: valley of warmth; V. Cămăruței: valley of the little room; Izvorul/V. Ghimpelui: valley of the thorn; La Lacuri: at the lakes; Izvorul Limpede: clear brook; V. Ochiului: valley of the eye (probably a small lake); Izvorul/V. Podișorului: valley of the small tableland; Valea cu Plopi: valley with poplar trees; Izvorul La Roșii: brook at the red slope; Sărățel: little salt brook; Izvorul Scursurii: brook of the flowing; Valea Seacă: dry valley; Valea Tâlpei: valley of the 'talpa' i.e. below the slope. Several names relate to settlements Lacul Babeților: lake of Babeți; Izvorul Băjenarilor: Băjenari valley; Izvorul Baroianului: spring/brook of Baroianu; Băscuretu: the intermittent brook of Băscuretu; Izvorul Begu: Begu brook; Izvorul/V. Fântâni: brook/valley of the well; V. Ghileștilor: Ghilești valley; Izvorul/V. Gornetului: Gornet valley; Gârla/Izvorul Pănătăului: Pănătău stream; Gârla/Izvorul Plăișorului: Plăișor brook; Sibiciu/V. Sibiciului: Sibiciu stream/valley; V. Sibiciului de Jos: Sibiciului de Jos valley. Others refer to people: Izvorul Catanei: Catana's brook; Lacul lui Coman: Coman's lake; V. Dobreștilor: Dobrești's valley (from Dobrescu or Dobre); Izvorul Fulgoii: Fulgoii brook; V. Neacșei: Neacșa's brook; V. Pastramei: valley of Pastramă; V. Poroșnic: Poroșnic valley; Izvorul Șughiței: Șughița brook; Izvorul Turnăriei: brook/spring of Turnăria; V. Veghiului: Veghiu's valley; and Izvorul Vulpașului: the brook/spring of Vulpaș' (or reference to a male fox). Some relate to groups of people: Izvorul La Begulești: the brook/spring on the land of the Begulești; and Izvorul La Caloeni: the brook/spring of the Caloeni. And several concern particular trades, nationalities or conditions although in no cases can these be validated as accurate: Izvorul Cojocarului: furrier's/skinner's brook; Gârla/Izvorul Croitorului: tailor's brook; V. Dogăriței: valley of the female cooper; V. Grecului: valley of the Greek; and V. Mutului: valley of the dumb. Finally a small group concerns local agriculture: Izvorul Brânzei: cheese valley; V. Epei: mare's valley; Izvorul Podului: bridge brook; Izvorul La Șapte Meri: brook/spring of seven apple trees; Izvorul Văcăriei: brook/spring of the cows; Izvorul Vărzăriei: cabbage garden brook.



## PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY: VEGETATION

Names connected with vegetation total 17, with four from Gornet and three each from Lacu cu Anini, Plăișor and Valea Fântânii. Apart from Malul cu Cătină – the precipice with buckthorn at Sibiciu de Sus – the references deal with woodland which may frequently be linked with estates or owners like Dutina and Nicioaia: the latter being a woodland lying to the southeast of Pănătău and linked with Coasta Babețului; referred to by Iorgulescu (1892, p. 356) as part of a great forest which also included Căldura and Maluri. There is also Pădurea Fulgoaia (the forest of Fulgoaia) at Gornet and Chichilaia Fulgoii (Fulgoaia's forested steep slope) although much has actually been cleared. Meanwhile Pădurea Chichilăii Goșii is the forest of Chichilaia Goșii lying east of Valea Sibiciului: a north-facing forest extending from the Goșa clearing towards the Predeal col. Again, Gorunii Popii is a forest of durmast (*Quercus petraea*) once owned by a priest on Dl. Plăișorului (southeast of Plăișor) with dry soil good for this type of woodland. Indeed, specific types of tree are often cited: thus Sălcioș refers to a forest of willow trees in a moist area of the Plăișor basin southeast of the village; while La Mesteceni means 'at the birch trees' on Vf. Silei southwest of Begu. Valea cu Plopi (also known as Izvorul Văcăriei) is the valley with poplar trees which still exist on landslides in this valley southeast of Lacu cu Anini, while Plopu-ăl Mare is a great poplar tree which actually exists east of Gornet in a forest on landslides in Chichilaia Fulgoii. However Pădurea Ștubeu – meaning hollow tree forest at Sibiciu de Sus – is enigmatic while some references cannot always be taken literally: Fagu'ăl Mare indicates a single large beech tree in woodland above Poiana Goșii (northwest of Predeal) that was however largely destroyed in a storm in 2007; while La Tise or Pe Tise refers to the hill with some yew trees (*Taxus baccata*) that no longer exists. Meanwhile there are just a few references to animals, birds and plants: Șerpăria is a place with snakes: a rocky slope southeast of Lacu cu Anini; Vf. Șopârlei is lizard's peak above Sila; and Izvorul Vulpașului is fox's brook east of Babeți. It is not known if these are or have been particularly appropriate but the relationships are certainly possible. Meanwhile Cuculețu is a hill near Gornet named after a diminutive of 'cuc' (cuckoo) while Moșoroaie is an area with mole hills at Plăișor.

## HUMAN GEOGRAPHY: PEOPLE

There are some 45 names connected with people with bulk of them from Plăișor (12) and Pănătău (eight), followed by Valea Fântânii (seven), Gornet (six) and Begu and Lacu cu Anini (four each). Several family names are linked with specific villages or collective names for people who are native to particular villages: e.g. Izvorul La Begulești (referring to brook or spring on the land of Begulești) relates to people from Begu; while La Bozioreanu concerns a landowner from Bozioru; and Izvorul La Caloeni at Begu is brook/spring of the Caloieni (singular Caloianu). Other family names crop up in the cases of Lacul lui Coman (Coman's lake) at Valea Fântânii; Odaia lui Dabija (Dabija's sheep farm near Predeal), involving a rich family from Valea Sibiciului; V. Dobreștilor (Dobrești valley) at Lacu cu Anini, from the name Dobrescu or Dobre. Goșa – deriving from the Bulgarian 'goșa' (N.A. Constantinescu 1963, p. 286) – appears in many contexts in connection with a former estate in the Valea Sibiciului area (Chichilaia Goșii, Crucea Goșii, Muchia Goșii, Pomul Goșii, Poiana Goșii, Pădurea Chichilăii Goșii, Bâlca Saramurii Goșii and Vf. Goșii) and is probably the female equivalent of the family name Goșu which is no longer present in the area but is known from documents relating to the Telega area of Prahova. Other examples are: Izvorul lui Matei (Matei's spring) at Sila; Piatra Moșești (the stone of Moșești: probably a former landowner) recorded at Plăișor in 1874; Malul Sârbului (Sârbu's precipice, a name of Serbian origin) at Begu; and Moara Sibicianului (Sibicianu's mill) west of Sibiciu de Sus, derived from the placename Sibiciu (after a person named Sibiu or Sibii, but not from 'sibicean': a man from Sibiciu); while Crucea Doamnei at Plăișor – dated 1825 by Stoicescu (1970, p. 490) and declared a historic monument in 1970 –

is understood as Lady Chiajna's cross. Meanwhile, personal names appear as Malul Diaconesei (Diaconesei precipice, northeast of Pănătău) which is a woman's name relating to a deaconess (in the ecclesiastical hierarchy). Meanwhile other such names include Vf. Linței is Lința peak (another woman's name) at Begu; Poiana Manii (Manea's clearing) at Plăișor; V. Neacșei (Neacșa's valley) at Valea Fântânii. Male examples are: Izvorul La Mihai (Mihai's spring) at Valea Fântânii, Izvorul lui Stan (Stan's spring) at Corcoianu and Piscul lui Stan (Stan's peak) at Plăișor, Valea Poroșnic (a Slavonic name) at Sibiciu de Jos and Ruptura Simei (Sima's rift) at Rotari (Plăișor). Meanwhile there are several names that could be either family or personal names: Dutina: a location at Lacu cu Anini; În/La Popa Gheorghe ('at the priest Gheorghe's land') at Corcoianu; Izvorul Turnăriei (Turnăria's brook or spring) at Valea Fântânii; and La Veghi: from 'veghe' meaning a guard (Academia 1996/8 p. 1154) at Plăișor (as well as Valea Veghiului in the same area).

Table 5

## Toponymy: Human Geography

<b>SETTLEMENTS:</b> Coasta /Dosul/Lacu Babeților; Izvorul Băjenarilor; Băia/Crucea Băii; Izvorul Baroianului; Izvorul/Vf. Begu; Fața Begului; Izvorul/Malul/Muchea Burdușoaiei; Izvorul/V. Fântânii; V. Ghileștilor; Izvorul/Valea/Vf. Gornetului; Crucea Mățării; Dosul/Fața Muscelului; Dl/Dosul/Gârla/Izvorul/Muchea/Talpa/Țarina Pănătăului; Vf. Pănătau; Între Pănătae; Dl/Dosul/Gârla/Izvorul Plăișorului; Predeal; Muchea/Piatra/Vâna Predealului; Moara Sibicianului; Chichilaia/Gârla/V. Sibiciului; V. Sibicilului de Jos; Izvorul/Vf. Silei.
<b>PERSONS:</b> Fântâna lui Baltă: Baltă's well; Izvorul La Begulești#; La Bozioreanu: at Bozioreanu; Izvorul La Caloeni#; Lacul lui Coman#; Odaia lui Dabija: Dabija's sheepfarm; Dl. Dârstei#; Piatra Dascălului#; Malul Diaconesei#; Crucea Doamnei: Lady Chiajna's cross; V. Dobreștilor#; Dutina#; Malul Fătului#; Fulgoaia# (also Pădurea Fulgoaia, Izvorul/V. Fulgoaia, Chichilaia Fulgoii, Drumul Fulgoii, Izvorul Fulgoii and Vf. Fulgoiu); Goșa: Goșu family (also Chichilaia Goșii, Crucea Goșii, Muchea Goșii, Pomul Goșii, Poiana Goșii, Pădurea Chichilăii Goșii, Bâlca Saramurii Goșii and Vf. Goșii); V. Grecului#; Vf. Linței#; Poiana Manii: Manea's clearing; Izvorul lui Matei: Matei's spring; Izvorul La Mihai: Mihai's spring; Piatra Moșești: stone of Moșești; V. Neacșei#; Nicioaia#; La Pastramă: at Pastramă; În/La Popa Gheorghe: at the priest Gheorghe's land; V. Poroșnic#; Muchea Râșca/Risec#; Malul Sârbului#; Moara Sibicianului: Sibicianu's mill; Ruptura Simei#; Izvorul lui Stan: Stan's spring; Piscul lui Stan#; Șerbeticu#; Șughîța: Șughîța's pasture/estate; Șughîța Cailor: Șughîța of the horses; Muchia/Vf. Șughîței#; Crucea lui Talete: Talete's cross; Vf. Țăcnei#; Izvorul Turnăriei; La Veghi: in Veghi's 'are'; V. Veghiului#; Pe Vulpaș: on Vulpaș' land; Izvorul Vulpașului#.
<b>ASPECT/DEFORESTATION:</b> Dosul Babeților: north-facing hill of Babeți; Fața Begului: south-facing slope of Begu; Curătura and În/La Curături+: at the recently-deforested land; Fântâna din Dos: well on the north-facing slope; Vf. Dosului#; Pe Față: on the south-facing slope; Fulgoaia#; Fața cu Gorâni#; Poiana Goșii+: Lazuri: indicating deforestation; Poiana Manii#; Poiana Mare: great clearing; Fața Mușcelului: the face of Mușcel; Dosul Pănătăului: Pănătau's north-facing slope; Dosul Plăișorului: north-facing slope of Plăișor; Dosul Silei: north-facing slope above Sila.
<b>FARMING:</b> Sub Arie: below the threshing floor; Groapa Baciului: shepherd's depression; Izvorul Brânzei#; Odaia lui Dabija+; V. Epei#; Goșa/Poiana Goșii: Goșa estate/clearing; Pomul Goșii: fruit tree of Goșa; Pe Haturi#; Țarina>de-din Jos: lower agricultural surface; La Inuri: at the flax; Inurile: the flax; Vf. Juncului#; Mălaia: 'mălaia' strictly with no meaning but deemed locally to indicate former cereal land; La Meri: at the apple trees; La Orzari: at the barley or barleymen; Țarina Pănătăului: Pănătau's agricultural land; La Pastramă+; În Plai: tableland on the hill: a gently sloping agricultural surface; Pleșuva#; Pe Poduri: on the tableland or old surface; Coasta/Groapa Pomilor#; Râșca/Risec; La Rotocol: a 'round' area: <i>a gently-sloping surface with pasture</i> ; Izvorul La Șapte Meri#; Șețu'al Mare/Mic: great/little 'step' <i>der. 'șes' (a plain)</i> ; La Șira/Șiră#; Șughîța#; Țarina de Sus/Țarina de-din-Sus: higher agricultural surface; Văcăria: hill grazing for many cows; Izvorul Văcăriei#; Muchia Văcăriei#; Vărzăria: cabbage garden <i>with no local significance</i> ; Izvorul Vărzăriei#; Pădurea Vărzăria#; La Veghi+; La Vii: at the vineyard; Podul Viei#.
<b>HANDICRAFTS:</b> Izvorul Cojocarului#; Gârla/Izvorul Croitorului#; După Cuptoare: after the oven; V. Dogăriței#; Piatra din Rotărie#; Moara Sibicianului#; Varniță: limekiln.
<b>WATER SUPPLY:</b> Fântâna lui Baltă#; Izvorul Burdușoaiei, Fântâna din Dos; Izvorul Dulce: sweet spring; Vîna Mare: large spring; Murătoarea: very salty water for pickling; Vâna Predealului: Predeal spring; Vâna Rece: cold spring; La Ștubeu: at the fountain.
<b>OTHERS:</b> Crucea Băii: Băia's cross; Muchia Bisericii#; Vf. Cămării/Cămăruței#; Izvorul Catanei#; La Ciumați: at the burial place of plague victims; La Comori: at the treasure; La Cruci: at the crosses; Crucea Doamnei+; Drumul Fulgoii: cart track to Fulgoaia; Crucea Goșii: Goșa's cross; Linia: cart track; Crucea Plaiului: cross of the 'plai'; Crucea Predealului: Predeal cross; Pripor: road on a steep slope; Muchia Priporului#; Muchia Repausului#; La Maiag#.

Nicknames are also much in evidence: the feature Piatra Dascălului – the stone of the psalm reader is appropriately named after a former landowner who was known to be psalm reader; while Malul Fătului (the psalm reader's precipice) relates to an alternative name for a psalm reader. Fulgoaia (also appearing as Pădurea Fulgoaia, V. Fulgoaia; Chichilaia Fulgoii, Drumul Fulgoii, Izvorul Fulgoii and Vf. Fulgoiu) is an estate near Gornet which is named after a woman referred to as a large snowflake (with 'fulg' a snowflake). La Pastramă ('at Pastramă', encountered in the upper part of Gârla Pănătăului) is probably the nickname of a former female owner associated with smoke-dried salted meat. Șerbeticu (with no meaning) is encountered as Șerbeticu's hill at Sila; Crucea lui Talete is Talete's cross from Valea Sibiciului on the road between Fulgoaia and Goșa clearings. Finally, Vf. Țăcnei (at Gornet) is probably a woman's nickname based on the word 'țâfnă' used by Iorgulescu to indicate anger or irritability; while at Babeți, Pe Vulpaș (on Vulpaș' land) and Izvorul Vulpașului (Vulpaș' brook) probably relate to a fox. Several other names could be nicknames or personal names: Fântâna lui Baltă (Baltă's well) near Corcoianu; V. Grecului (valley of the Greek) near Pănătău; Muchia Râșca/Risec at Lacu cu Anini (which could also be a family name); and Șughița (Șughița's pasture/estate) which crops up east of Plăișor at the V. Fântânii/Izvorul Turnăriei confluence.

#### HUMAN GEOGRAPHY: AGRICULTURE

There are 60 references to farming (including deforestation and aspect): 18 from Pănătău, 11 from Lacu cu Anini, eight from Plăișor, seven each from Begu and Valea Fântânii, four from Gornet. Agricultural land is conventionally referred to in terms of Țarină: e.g. Țarina de Jos/Țarina de-din-Sus: lower/higher agricultural surfaces recognised at Sibiciu de Jos, but largely developed for new houses and gardens after the 1960s collectivisation. Pe Luncă is used at Begu for the gently-sloping land (suitable for crops and fruit trees) between this village and Corcoianu, because although this expression is linked with alluvial land (or river terraces) it may also imply a plateau in the old sense. Other expressions are În Plai for a gently-sloping surface above Lacu cu Anini; Șețu'al Mare/Mic: the great and little 'steps' (from 'șes' meaning an almost level plain) near Pănătău on the eastern part of Dosul Pănătăului; while Pe Haturi also refers to structural steps above Diculești with the appearance of agroterraces and which are actually of agricultural significance. Such names could be used for relatively long-established cropping areas but also for nineteenth century extensions; including new land relating to settlements dated entirely to post-1800. Cropland could also carry settlement names e.g. La Mărăcineni ('at Mărăcineni') for agricultural land based on gently-sloping landslides above the source of the Catana brook along the Begu-Corcoianu; also Poiana Silei (referred to below) while Predeal occurs in the context Pietrele Predealului ('stones of Predeal') relating to a sandstone surface above Valea Fântânii practically devoid of soil and vegetation: such references remind us that despite the reclamation undertaken during the nineteenth century there were some areas that could not be improved.

But much of the higher ground did have agricultural potential without major reclamation other than felling trees which the peasants could undertake themselves. Hence the clearance names such as Poiana Goșii for a large clearing on young unstable landslides above Valea Sibiciului on the Goșa estate; also Poiana Mare (the great clearing) east of Plăișor in the upper part of the Gârla Croitorului basin; and Poiana Silei (Sila's clearing) on some old landslides in Valea Fântânii. Even forest names took on a new meaning with Pădurea Fulgoaia (the forest of Fulgoaia, recalling a family/estate name) relating to some 340 ha of forest (Iorgulescu (1892, p. 231) on Capul Dealului including a large clearing used by the villagers of Sibiciu de Sus. The name Lazuri points to deforestation northeast of Begu, while Pleșuva – from the Bulgarian 'plesiv' (Academia 1996/8, p. 807) – is a summit with pasture above the Fulgoaia clearing and the Linia cart track: although windy conditions constrain tree growth poplar trees were present at one time. Attention was also given to landslide depressions highlighted by such names as Căldura or V. Căldurei for a warm place or a 'valley of warmth' for a gently-sloping depression on

landslides east of Pănătău; also Mustoia (from ‘a musti’) for a small valley at Sila damp in spring. Names for farms or estates were applied to specific landslide areas e.g. Bozioreanu west of Begu; Fulgoaia for a large valley and clearing on young, unstable landslides in the Fulgoaia basin; while La Veghi referred to Veghi’s land east of Plăișor; and Pe Vulpaș/Izvorul Vulpașului related to Vulpaș’ land east of Babeți. There was also Șughița east of Plăișor for land on the right side of Izvorul Croitorului; while Șira/La Șiră (at Șiră’s place) at Plăișor derived from the Serbian ‘sirm’ and Bugarian ‘siru’ (Candrea 1931, p. 1250) alludes to a great haystack with a rectangular base (as the word is also understood locally). The lower, smoother hilltops were also available e.g. Dl. Dârstei (442 m) with gently slopes above Diculești attracting mixed agricultural uses including some cropping and pasture. Thus Șerbeticu refers to a small hill of some four hectares with mixed uses; likewise Muchea Pridvalei alt.Presvale: for a summit above Sibiciu de Jos at the western limit of Chichilaia Corcoianului; Vf. Șughiței (Șughița’s peak) for the hilltop close to the V. Fântâni/ Izvorul Turnăriei confluence. Of course aspect influenced landuse with Fața Begului (the south-facing slope of Begu, lying above the village to the north) and Fața Muscelului (the face of Mușcel: relating to Muscelu-Țigan on the edge of the area); also Fața cu Gorâni (the south-facing slope with durmast forest) at Lacu cu Anini and Pe Față (on the south-facing slope) at Plăișor. On the other hand the north facing slope is highlighted with specific reference to particular villages through Dosul Babeților, as well as the equivalents for Pănătău (also Vf. Dosului) and Plăișor as well as Sila where Fântâna din Dos is the well on the north-facing slope. Some names emphasized private land which could not be entered. Thus we have Braniștea Mare – derived from the Bulgarian ‘braniste’ (Academia 1996/8, p. 410) – for the great/high ‘braniște’: a gently-sloping hilltop above Babeți, with the smaller Braniștea Mică lower down.

As for crops there are specific references to cereals: La Orzari (‘at the barley’ or ‘at the barleymen’ deriving from ‘orz’ which is barley (*Hordeum sativum*) laying west of Begu near Măracineni. But there is also the use of ‘mălaia’: it has no meaning in Romanian but there is a mountain with this name in Buzău county and local tradition associates it with cereal cultivation at Lacu cu Anini an also southeast of Plăișor; even though ‘La Mălae’ or ‘Mălaele’ (known in the Pănătău area) appears more meaningful and carries the authority of Iorgulescu (1892), mălaia can be accepted as a valid derivation from ‘mălai’. Threshing places for rye, barley and oats provide further evidence e.g. east of Plăișor on the Punga road near the Cozieni boundary; while there is also reference in the toponymy to textile plants: e.g. La Inuri (‘at the flax’) north of Corcoianu on an old hill surface; also Inurile (with the same meaning) north of Lacu cu Anini. Vegetables are rarely remembered, but near Predeal – in Goșa clearing beside the Sărățel brook – there is a place called ‘Vărzăria’ (a cabbage garden) also with Izvorul Vărzăriei: cabbage garden brook and Pădurea Vărzăria in the vicinity. Fruit growing is evident through La Meri (‘at the apple tree’) northeast of Lacu cu Anini on south-facing farmland along the upper Pănătău stream; also Coasta Pomilor (‘the slope of the fruit trees’) northeast of Sibiciu de Sus on old landslides that especially good for plum trees; and Groapa Pomilor: (‘the hollow of the fruit trees’) in the same area at ‘La Cuptoare’, which along with După Cuptoare (‘after the oven’) points to the former oven-drying of the fruit. Pomii Goșii (‘the fruit tree of Goșa’) is remembered at Valea Sibiciului with respect to plum trees on the south side of Goșa hill; while Podul Viei (‘the tableland with a vineyard’) relates to a former vineyard on gently-sloping ground 20–30 m above the Buzău river north of Sibiciu de Sus. We may also note La Vii (‘at the vineyard’) north of Corcoianu: a south-facing slope above Izvorul Catanei and the Sibiciu-Begu track. Valuable pasture areas are indicated by such names as Fulgoaia: a large valley and clearing on young, unstable landslides close to Gornet and Sila; and Șughița Cailor (‘Șughița of the horses’); while Muchia Văcăriei is the summit of the cows with pasture: a north-facing cuesta east of Lacu cu Anini where the names Văcăria and Văcăriei are also known lower down associated with Valea cu Plopi and the Pănătău brook. There are few references to sheep but Odaia lui Dabija: Dabija’s sheepfarm is remembered northwest of

Predeal as the property of a rich family from Valea Sibiciului. V. Epei (mare's valley) lies on the edge of the area close to Predeal.

Today farming is much less intensive since the land is somewhat degraded and the human impact has moderated. Dabija's sheep farm is used only for hay while former pasture has often been invaded by scrub e.g. on the slopes Vf. Gornetului around the col used by the Begu-Sila path; and again Chichilaia Corcoianului (Corcoianu's 'chichilaia' above the village) now with scrub and poor eroded pasture. Abandonment can also be seen at Malul Diaconesei with the former agriculture below; while pasture at Muchia Pridvalei is damaged by the many pathways that accelerate erosion. Another case is Dl. Plășorului (Plășor hill: curiously named after the village when the village is already named after the hill as a small 'plai') which includes the land between Gârla Croitorului and Gârla Plășorului, now menaced by erosion and landslides. Meanwhile the former cropping areas are used for hay/pasture and fruit trees, as can be seen on the old barley at Mărăcineni where the communist cooperative plant fruit trees round the former settlement Fulgoaia; likewise the old threshing places for rye, barley and oats (e.g. the area east of Plășor on the Punga road near the Cozieni boundary) and clearings on unstable landslides like Poiana Goșii and Poiana Silei. The pasture may be significant in villages like Gornet and Sila even in winter but buckthorn is usually present. The vegetation succession has often gone beyond buckthorn to the return of the forest e.g. Valea Dobreștilor northeast of Lacu cu Anini where there is now a mixture of forest and pasture; while Șerbeticu is now a 4.0 ha wood/pasture zone extending to Dl. Cornețel. Particularly evident on the north-facing slopes like Dosul Babeților (with scrub and forest) and Dosul Pănătăului, with pine plantations. Dosul Silei now has some c. 4.0 ha woodland, while Lazuri (referred to above in connection with deforestation on the southeastern flanks of Blidișel) saw its degraded land converted to pine forest during the communist period.

#### HUMAN GEOGRAPHY: HANDICRAFTS, WATER SUPPLY

There are nine references, divided among Plășor, Sibiciu de Sus, Valea Fântâniei and Valea Sibiciului, relating to other activities which extend to milling in the case of Moara Sibicianului (Sibicianu's mill) near Sibiciu de Sus; while Piatra din Rotărie (the stone from Rotari) takes the name of a hamlet of Plășor village which refers to wheelwrights although no such craftsmen are remembered in the locality and the stones were plainly transported by landslides. We have a reference to 'varniță' (a limekiln, from 'var' meaning lime) northeast of Sibiciu de Sus but this a curious case because there is no lime in the area and although it is possible that there was a small furnace drawing raw material from Poienile (the nearest source) there is no documentary or oral evidence to support this. După Cuptoare ('after the oven') is a clear reference to the oven-drying of fruit at Sibiciu de Sus; while lakes such as Lacul Babeților (the lakes of Babeți: a cluster of some ten former lakes on landslides south of Babeți) were important in the past for retting flax and hemp (and likewise Lacul lui Coman – Coman's lake – on old landslides in Valea Fântâniei).

Water supplies may also be mentioned: Fântâna lui Baltă (Baltă's well) northwest of Corcoianu; Izvorul Baroianului is the spring of Baroianu near Sibiciu de Sus; while Izvorul Burdușoaiei is a mineral spring named after large Burdușoaia landslide and recorded by Frundescu (1870/1871): in reality two springs at one time but only one existing now. Another reference uses the name Vâna Puturoasă for the 'stinking spring' relating to 'apă de feru carbonatu'. Other cases are Fulgoii spring: a sulphurous spring near Mățara (Valea Sibiciului); while La Ștubeu means 'at the fountain' northeast of Sibiciu de Jos: a source much used by the communist state farming organization Gostat; and Vâna Rece is an accurate reference to a particularly cold spring east of Begu. Saltwater sources were also important for local people if not for animals. Saramura Goșii: Goșa's small hollow with a saltwater spring appreciated for kitchen use while Murătoarea was a name referring to some very salty water



available near Sibiciu de Sus and used for pickling. Again, Sărățel refers to a little salt brook: although employing the diminutive it is natural that a minor source should be highlighted given that there were relatively few sources in an area where most of the intermittent streams do not contain salt. Altogether there are 16 references to springs and wells including four at Valea Fântânii, three at Gornet and two each at Begu and Pănătău.

#### HUMAN GEOGRAPHY: ROADS AND TRACKWAYS

There are several references to roads and tracks e.g. Drumul Fulgoii: the cart track to Fulgoaia which follows a difficult route northeast of Gornet passing above the Goșa/Fulgoaia clearings on the northern side of Muchia Blidișelului, while Linia is the name of a cart track from Begu to the eastern part of Muchia Blidișelului and Pe Gârlici is an interesting feature referring literally to a cellar: the idea derives from a landslide surface with cart track passing between two steeply-sloping hills close to the Fulgoaia 'stâna' northeast of Gornet. Another indicator is 'pripor' which derives from the Bulgarian 'pripor' and the Ukrainian 'prypor' (Academia 1996/8, p.851) and means a road on a steep slope e.g. northeast of Lacu cu Anini at the source of Valea cu Plopi, but also at Pănătău southwest of Muchia Bisericii and east of Plăișor in the valley of Izvorul Croitorului. Muchia Priporului is the summit negotiated by a track on a steep slope: actually east of Plăișor on a trackway to the hayfields around Dosul Mușcelului (referring to Muscelu Țigan) marked by a stone of 1825 that is a now recognised historic monument (Stoicescu 1970, p.490): it is known as Crucea Doamnei which is connected with Lady Chiajna, as the founder of Cânu monastery. Other wayside crosses include: Crucea Băii (Băia's cross) at the col on Băia hilltop (east of Begu) negotiated by the trackways from Begu to Predeal and Valea Fântânii; Crucea Goșii (or Crucea Predealului to people of Begu and Valea Fântânii) which is Goșa's cross on the track from Valea Fântânii to the Goșa clearing; and another example in the same area is Crucea Plaiului (the cross of the 'plai') at a col crossed by the path from Valea Fântânii to Bălănești (lying outside the area in Cozieni commune). Finally, Crucea lui Talete is Talete's cross situated close to Valea Sibiciului on the trackway between the Fulgoaia and Goșa clearings. And although there is no cross, Muchia Repausului – the summit of rest – is recognised as a low hill of resistant strata (extending from Chichilaia Corcoianului to the Pănătău stream) which used to mark the boundary between Sibiciu de Jos and Pănătău and now separates the village of Sibiciu de Jos into the main western section with the church and school from a smaller eastern section. We conclude with some names of historical interest which cannot however be confidently linked with any known events. Vf.Cămării or Cămăruței (at 801m) is the so-called 'peak of the little room' relating to a small cave on a rocky ridge northeast of Predeal used as a legendary refuge from the Tartars; while La Comori 'at the treasure' is an agricultural area on Presvale (north of Sibiciu de Sus) where valuables are thought to have been hidden from invaders. La Ciumați is associated with pest although no such event can be specified and there is disagreement over the precise location below Gornet (above or below the road); while Izvorul Catanei (Catana's brook, east of Corcoianu) has been linked with the Hungarian 'katano' meaning a soldier (Candrea 1931, p. 234) although it cannot be connected with any known event.

#### CONCLUSION

The paper has outlined the settlement history and toponymy of a section of the Pătârlagele Depression comprising a large part of the eastern side of the Buzău valley. In addition to river terraces at Sibiciu there are extensive landslides and structural surfaces which provided a base for subsistence farming in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when the demographic strength of the area increased in both absolute and relative terms despite the growth of Pătârlagele and Măruntîșu on the opposite side of the river. However documentary evidence of a substantial demographic advance on the

hillsides is relatively limited and hence the rich placename evidence – based on oral sources as well as maps and handbooks – is of particular importance. We hear much about agriculture and farming people, although sadly most of the names are no longer recognised and we cannot be sure as to the precise period involved.

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