

MONOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF CICLOVA MONTANĂ, CARAȘ-SEVERIN COUNTY, ROMANIA

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Abstract

In this paper, the authors set out to describe the main aspects aimed at the monograph of Ciclova Montană in Caraș-Severin County, Romania. It is trying to highlight the natural, cultural, economic, and social potential but also to identify the local specificity. The main methods used to carry out this work are: observation, analysis, synthesis, and graphic interpretation of data. Following the analysis, the authors underline the key-problems facing the village of Ciclova Montană: the presence of weather phenomena with natural risk factors, an aging population that practice most of the agricultural activities, the breeding of animals, and the wood industry, to which also add the lack of water and sewerage infrastructure in some areas.

Keywords: Ciclova Montană, analysis, monograph, tourism

INTRODUCTION

The topic addressed in this paper is "The monographic analysis of Ciclova Montană, Caraș-Severin County, Romania", a topic of great interest because, in the context of socio-economic realities, the sustainable development of rural localities should rely on a strategy for organizing activities, on priority of investments, and on efficient management of existing resources. The achievement of this development strategy implies the existence of a monographic study of the locality, as its basis.

The term "monograph" implies a complete presentation of all aspects, both physical-geographical and economical-social.

The first monographic research in Romania was carried out in 1925, in Goicea Mare (Dolj County), under the careful guidance of Dimitrie Gusti, with the help of a "sociological research team with interdisciplinary skills". [3] Until 1938, monographic research focused on the village, on the rural area as a sum of social frameworks and manifestations.

The rural area includes an interior or coastal area that contains the villages and small cities involved in agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, and fishing; in economic and cultural activities of the inhabitants of these areas (*handicraft, industry, services*); in arrangements of non-urban areas for leisure time and fun (or *nature reserves*); an on other uses. [2]

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The main methods in carrying out this study are observation, analysis, synthesis, data

processing, and data interpretation. The direct observation method was used in the field, and the indirect observation method was used in the study of the bibliographic material and of the scientific data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Short history. Ciclova Montană was mentioned documentary for the first time in 1437, although in the surroundings of the village they identified traces of settlements dated in the 4th, 8th-9th, and 11th-13th centuries, the current locality being founded during the period following the withdrawal of the Ottomans from Banat, after the arrival of the Austrians from the beginning of the 18th century. [1, 7]

According to researchers V. Ioniță, V. Goicu and R. Suflețel, the name of the locality comes from the noun "ciclău" meaning "slightly rounded tip of a hill or mountain", or from the anthroponym "Cicla/Ciclea/Ciclu" (the Romanian form) or "Čiklo" (the Slavic form). In the Hungarian language, Chiglobanya or Siklova, in German, Tschiklova or Csiklova, in the Czech language, Čiklava. [13]

Geographical location. Ciclova Montana is in Caraș-Severin County, in western Romania, at the foot of the Banat Mountains, at an altitude of about 480 m above the sea level, being crossed by the Nera river. It is located at about 12 km from Oravița and 80 km from Reșița, the capital of the Caraș-Severin County



Figure 1. Location of Ciclova Montană on the map of Caraș-Severin County
Source: after [22, 6]

Ciclova Montana is part of the West Development Region, which is one of the eight development regions of Romania; administratively, it belongs to the city of Oravița, which has two sub-component localities – Ciclova Montană and Marila – and four villages – Broșteni, Răchitova, Brădișorul de Jos, and Agadici. [10, 11]

Natural resources. The **relief** of Ciclova Montană is dominated by the Anina Mountains, which stretch for about 50 km in the southwest of Romania. In the northeast part, there are the hills of Băuțarului and Coșuștei covered by forests and that can be used for agriculture and grazing; in the west, there are the Nerei Gorges, a protected nature reserve covering an area of 22 km². Nerei Gorges are known for their spectacular landscapes, which include canyons, waterfalls, lakes, and picturesque forests. In general, the relief of the Ciclova Montană area is characterized by mountain landscapes, with high ridges, valleys, and areas of thick forests. [14]

The **hydrographic network:** Ciclova Montană is crossed by the Ciclova River, which springs from the Anina Mountains and flows into the Nera River. It provides drinking water and is important for irrigation and other agricultural activities. Also, the area is rich in springs and streams that create picturesque landscapes and offers resources for rural tourism. [69]

The **soils** in the Ciclova Montana area are especially of the brown and chernozem types rich in nutrients and that can be used for agriculture and horticulture. They are used especially for the cultivation of vegetables such as potatoes, cabbage, tomatoes, cucumbers, and others.

The **flora and fauna** are very diversified. As for the flora, the species of plants found include sessile oak, oak, beech, spruce, raspberry, blueberry, and currants. As for the fauna, the area is inhabited by wolves, wild boars, deer, roe deer, foxes, hares, and birds such as woodpecker, partridge, and pheasant. [7]

Analysis of the demographic resources of Ciclova Montană. Ciclova Montană was founded in the 18th century (1718-1739) by colonists from the Oltenia region – from Mehedinți, Gorj, Dolj, and Vâlcea counties – when Oltenia was under Austrian rule. The Austrian rule used the refugees from Oltenia in the coal mines and in the companies established in this region. Later, the number of inhabitants of Ciclova Montană increased by colonization with Czech and German ethnics.

During the period **1735-1780**, other families from northern Oltenia, from Izverna and Baia de Aramă, came to Ciclova Montană. [6]

Table 1

Evolution of population in Ciclova Montană during the period 1839-2022										
Year	1839	1863	1870	1880	1900	1930	1992	2002	2011	2022
People	1,777	2,279	2,206	2,118	2,305	1,918	2,160	636	420	570

Source: after [6]

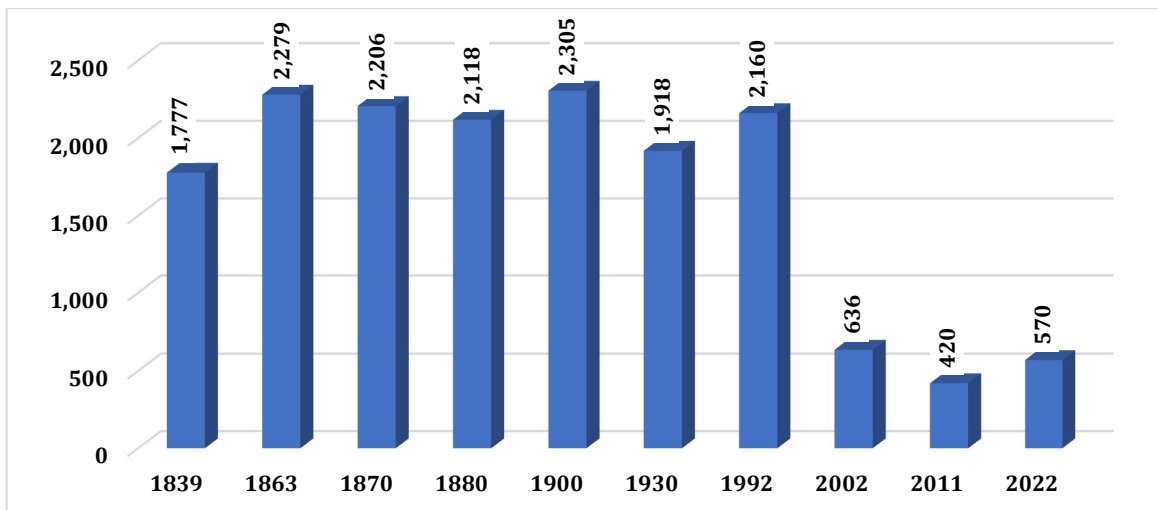


Figure 2. Evolution of population in Ciclova Montană during the period 1839-2022

Analysis of the statistical data shows that Ciclova Montană had 636 inhabitants in **2002**, 420 inhabitants according to the **2011** census, and reached 570 inhabitants in **2022** (after a slight increase).

The distribution of the population by sex in the commune of Ciclova Montană is relatively balanced.

Regarding the religion, statistical data show that, in 1839, Ciclova Montană had the following religious structure: 257 Catholics and 1,520 Orthodox; in 1880, there were 181 Catholics and 1,937 Orthodox; at present, of the 570 inhabitants, 75% are Orthodox and 25% are Catholics. [6]

Regarding the ethnic structure, in 1930, the commune had 1353 Romanians, 62 Germans, and 3 Hungarians; the Romanians predominate with 80%, followed by the Roma with 20%.

Economic analysis of Ciclova Montană.

Regarding the economy of Ciclova Montană, agricultural activities predominate: viticulture, animal husbandry, hay making; however, small industrial activities, primary wood processing,

as well as activities in the services sector – agri-tourism and trade with agricultural produce – are also present.

The last 50 years of evolution of the city of Oravița have materialized in the establishment and development of the exploitation of Banat-Oravița Mining, whose main specialised activity is the extraction of uranium; there are also the exploitation and primary processing of the wood through the former Oravița Forestry and Transport Unit, small craft workshops and services in the cooperative system, thus providing jobs for the inhabitants of Ciclova Montană.

Of economic importance for the locality was the brewery of Ciclova-Montană, a strong local brand, which provided beer for the Vienna Imperial Court. The construction of the brewery started in 1726, and in 1728 the factory began to produce beer. Initially, it was subordinated to the Roman Catholic monastery in the locality, near Moara Seydl, under a rock near the monastery where its ruins can be still seen today. Subsequently, the factory was rebuilt on the place where it is found nowadays. [6, 17]

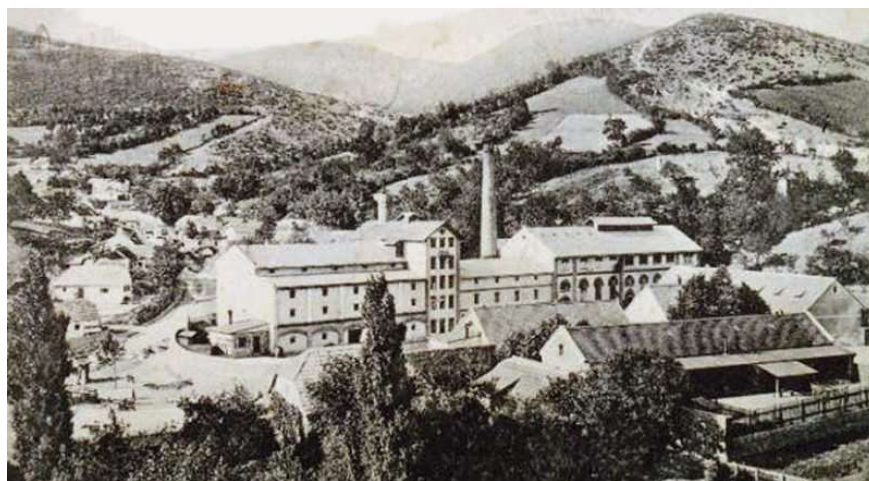


Figure 3. The brewery from Ciclova Montană

Source: [12]

The beer of Ciclova was marketed especially Biserica Albă and Cuvin Cristian Franț ([Berea Ciclova, un brand extrem de puternic care a murit subit](#), [adevarul.ro](#), 24 iunie 2013).



Figure 4. Ciclova beer labels

Source: [18]

After the heavy economic crisis period of 1929-1933, the factory faced hard times. Its financial situation was precarious, which determined the owner at that time, respectively Casa de Păstrare S.A. from Oravița, to sell it to the brewery in Timișoara. The company "Timișoreana" bought the small brewery from Ciclova Montană, closed it, and transferred all the equipment to Timișoara. In 1975, the same company, "Timișoreana", which became a state-owned enterprise, reopened the brewery in Ciclova Montană as a branch of the central brewery in Timișoara. In 1989, the brewery was privatized, attracting German investors over time. After a period of economic success (1995-1996), the company was closed following scandals and, thus, the brewery in Ciclova Montană entered desolation. In 2014, an investor bought the brand and the ruins of the factory, planning the resumption of production, based on the good quality of the water in the area and the fame of the Ciclova beer brand, but it remained at the plan stage. [6, 7]

Ciclova Montană is part of the beneficiaries of the support granted to milk producers and to agricultural producers to increase meat production and livestock.

Tourism. The area in which Ciclova Montana is located is a beautiful and picturesque one, being known for its mountain landscapes and for the tourist attractions in the area, such as the Nerei-Beușnița Gorges National Park, the Bigăr Waterfall, or the Ciclova Forest Reserve. (N. Ilieșiu, *The Historical Monograph of Banat*)

Piatra Rolului is one of the most valuable tourist attractions, and a walk on its heights should not be missed by any nature lover or hiking lover aiming at enjoying the beauties of the area. [19]

The Călugăra Monastery is located on the Ciclovei Valley and was founded in 1859 on the site of an old monk's cells.

In the village, the ruins of the brewery (1727-1728), the "Iosif Crețu" Culture House, the thermal beach, the house in which the writer

Damian Izverniceanu was born, and two churches – one, Orthodox, the Assumption of the Virgin, and a Roman Catholic one, ST Mary – draw tourists. [19]

The waters of the thermal-mineral spring that fills the basins of the thermal beach are recommended in the treatment of different conditions. The properties of the water in the area have been acknowledged by the National Institute of Recovery, Physical Medicine, and Balneo-climatology within the Ministry of Health. Beyond the beneficial properties of the waters, Ring Thermal Beach is an oasis of relaxation. [5]

The Catholic Monastery Maria Ciclova, also known as the “Cleanț Monastery,” was built around 1727 and it represents another important tourist objective in the area.

In the middle of the village, there is the Orthodox Church with the dedication “Assumption of the Virgin Mary”. The church has three copper bells of different sizes. The Romanian Orthodox Church in Ciclova Montană was built in 1783 by the inhabitants, with personal financial contributions and with their own labour. [8]

In Ciclova Montană, there are also some tourist pensions, which offer accommodation and food services to tourists visiting the area.

Houses and housing. Ciclova Montană is a sub-component village of Oravița. It is led by the mayor and local councillor of Oravița. The form of organization of the village of Ciclova Montană is based on a traditional structure, with an older centre, called “old village” or “upper village”, and a number of newer neighbourhoods, built around the centre, such as “Cartierul Nou” or “Cartierul Băii”. The typology of housing is predominantly rural, based on individual households and traditional wood and brick houses. They are located on large grounds and are surrounded by gardens and orchards. [4]

In Ciclova Montană, there are 800 homes and 750 households, according to a study by the National Institute of Statistics in 2011. [23]

In the construction of the houses, various building materials are used, depending on their availability, local traditions, financial resources, and owners’ preferences.

Traditional houses are, generally, built of wood and stone, materials that are found in the area in large quantities. The exterior walls are made of massive wooden beams, and between the beams, there is a clay or straw filling which

plastered and painted with lime; some houses include carved doors and frames. The roof is also made of wood and is covered with shingle. Currently, most of the built houses use modern construction materials but they are trying to keep the traditional elements and their design.

Technical equipment of the locality. In Ciclova Montană, water and sewerage supply are provided by Aquacaraș. [20] Most inhabitants are connected to the public network, and those who are not connected, use wells. Water quality is monitored periodically and corresponds to European standards. As for the sewerage, there is a sewerage network that covers most of the locality, but there are also areas where there is no sewerage network, and the wastewater is collected through septic pits. The local administration has started projects for the extension of the sewerage network to cover all the inhabited areas of the locality.

The distribution of electricity is provided by the electricity supplier in the area, namely Enel Distribuție Banat. [21]

Currently, Ciclova Montană is not connected to the natural gas supply network. Thus, most inhabitants use thermal energy produced by their own thermal power plants, based on wood or other sources of fuel. In some cases, there is also the possibility to use gas cylinders to meet heating or cooking needs.

Ciclova Montană is covered by the landline telephony network of telecommunications companies, which means that the inhabitants can benefit from landline telephony and cable internet services. In addition, there is also coverage for mobile services through various mobile telecommunications networks.

The access roads to Ciclova Montană are, generally, in a good state, especially the main ones that connect with the neighbouring cities and communes. They are administered by the local authorities and are periodically maintained to ensure a proper level of traffic safety. Regarding secondary roads and access roads to farms and agricultural lands in the area, they are less developed and can be affected by extreme weather conditions, such as abundant floods or snow. In these cases, the local authorities and the local community are involved to quickly repair any damages and to ensure access to properties and land. [information provided by the inhabitants]

In recent years, efforts have been made to modernize and expand the road network in the

area, including by financing the infrastructure projects of the European Union.

Education. Education in Ciclova Montană is documented in 1781, when there were already two schools, namely: one Romanian, having as a teacher Gheorghe Iancovici, and one German, with teacher Karol Ze.

Emperor Joseph II, who ruled the kingdom between 1765-1790, asked for education to become mandatory, just like going to church and serving in the army, for all the subjects of the province. [9]

Currently, the locality is short of schools: there is only one kindergarten and an

institution for children with disabilities. Most of the public institutions serving the residents of the village are in Oravița.

Ecological aspects. Regarding the ecology of the locality, not having a high-performance agriculture, and the industrial activity being almost non-existent, the locality does not face pollution phenomena.

At the end of the study, based on the multicriterial analysis carried out, the authors comply with the SWOT analysis of the locality Ciclova Montană identify the strengths, the weaknesses of its development as well as the possible dangers.

Table 2

SWOT analysis of Ciclova Montană

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very beautiful natural landscape; • Diversified natural resources; • Preserved traditional architecture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low number of inhabitants; • Lack of sewerage; • Lack of jobs; • Lack of medical institutions; • Lack of educational institutions.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Călugăra Monastery as a tourist attraction; • Renovation and reopening of the brewery; • Capitalization of the rare ciclovite mineral and rare mine flowers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ageing population; • Increased emigration.

CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusions resulting from the analysis carried out in the work are the following:

- The natural landscape is particularly beautiful, natural resources are diversified, the village preserves traditional architecture, there are numerous tourist objectives in the neighbourhood, which could be a starting point for the development of rural tourism and agri-tourism.

- As for the population, its number drastically decreased from 2,160 inhabitants in 1992 to 570 in 2022.

- The economy of the locality is poorly developed; agricultural activities predominate, especially the breeding of animals and small craft activities.

- The locality benefits from coverage in landline and mobile telephone networks, as well as television and internet services.

- The sanitary field is not well represented in the locality because there is no medical dispensary, pharmacy, or permanence centre.

- Local folk traditions and customs are well kept.

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