

The Germans in Dobrudscha (Part 8)

The book listed below, containing 248 pages of information, is being translated chapter by chapter and posted as each chapter is completed. Part 1 gives you a summary of each of the 15 chapters in the “Contents” section. The words in the [square brackets] are those of the translator and are not found in the original text.

Translator: Allen E. Konrad
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The Germans in Dobrudscha

**along with a contribution
to the history of the German
migration in Eastern Europe**

**by
Paul Traeger**

**With 73 illustrations in the text and tables
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Settlements in the Bulgarian Dobrudscha

The application of the name Dobrudscha has been fluctuating in terms of its boundaries in earlier time. The Turks had not used it at all for the administration and political classification of the empire. It was the angle between the Danube and the Pontus Rivers without a fixed boundary line for the land area. But one connected the name at the same time with a treeless and waterless steppe country and then extended it until where the steppe formation gradually transitioned into the wooded and water-rich area of the Deli Orman. About up to a line where, from Silistria or a little bit further west, it reached the Black Sea between Balacik and Barna.

Through the Berlin Congress, the name was given a new, political fixed import, and a significantly narrower one. Romania took it as the official name for the newly gained territory. The border now starting a good way east of Silistria and ending somewhat south of Mangalia. What was beyond it was now sovereign Bulgaria. The Peace of Bucharest in August 1913 gave the name again to its approximately old recognized area. As you know, after the unfortunate second Balkan War, Bulgaria had to push back its border on the Danube until west of Tutrakan and on the Black Sea until Ekrene, south of Balcik. After the conquest of Dobrudscha in the autumn of 1916, the earlier border was again restored and the 1913 ceded strip immediately returned again to the Bulgarian administration. Apart from the three year interruption, it has always been Bulgarian country, and the German settlements that arose here are therefore attributable to the Germans in Bulgaria, more so when their spread was not limited to the controversial strip, but also went beyond the border of the Bucharest Peace.

Unfortunately, I was unable to visit these colonies personally. They were not considered for the simple reason that in the course of my first trip here I was only able to become aware of something about them and to collect clues about their situation. In the autumn of 1917, the main task of this stay was to follow through with an archaeological exploration of them. This, however, ended up taking so long that the beginning of winter would no longer allow a further trip. And on my third visit to Dobrudscha in the autumn of 1918, the sudden turnaround of the military and political situation cancelled the plan of closer exploration of these settlements. The following information is also not based on personal observation. But I acquired the material to the greatest extent from people who came from these villages, and I could check it out in many cases by verifying it from different sources and critically sifting through it. No doubt, there will be omissions and errors.

However, I believe that in this writing a short treatment of also these German settlements on Bulgarian soil should not be neglected. They are the immediate continuation of the German migrations which have been described so far, and are based on the same fundamentals, so that they undoubtedly belong to the entire picture of development. In addition, there has been no knowledge at all in Germany of farming German colonies in Bulgaria. The *Handbook of the Germanness Abroad*, by Arthur Dix in 1917, knows nothing about it, and even a special essay about the Germans in Bulgaria disavows the existence of rural settlements. He has not even heard of the older, some quite sizable colonies in the old Bulgarian interior near Plevna, Jamboli,

Schumla, Biela Slatina, and south of Rahova.¹ Under such circumstances also incomplete and not error-free reports are certainly of some value.

A connection of the newly mentioned settlements in the Bulgarian interior with those of Dobrudscha is only detectable in one case by way of certain tradition. As of 1896, the above mentioned about 40-45 family-strong Caracienla Colony unraveled, some of them migrated to Bulgaria and settled in the area of Plevna, about 5 km [3.1 miles] from Levski. The Catholic colony of Endze near Schumla, consisting of approximately 70 families and maintaining a small German school, is the coming together of immigrants from Austria-Hungary (Banat) and colonists from Dobrudscha.² The colony near Biela Slatina, Brdarski-Geran and the approximately 30 families at Jamboli are to have come from the German settlement area in South Hungary.

There is a whole series of localities along the Bulgarian Dobrudscha soil in which German farmers have established themselves. Most of them are located just behind the 1878 border and in the vicinity of Dobritsch, some even further westward. The nature of their distribution, at first fairly close together, then scattered with greater spaces in between, indicates how the farmers are gradually always pushed further ahead.

In many cases, we find only a few families who have apparently embarked together in the migration when they saw their expectations in Romania disappointed. But also a number of completely German colonies arose here. **Ciobankujus** is portrayed as a beautiful German village of over 20 families, about 18 km [11.2 miles] south of Cara Omer, close to the railroad line to Dobritsch. It maintains a school with a teacher from Germany.

About 15 km [9.3 miles] west of here are 2 Catholic colonies: **Ali Kalfa**, where only Germans live, and **Kalfakioi**, also a purely German village of approximately 20 families. These are to have come directly from Bessarabia, many being wealthy, big farmers who bought land here, some 200-300 hectares [494-741 acres]. The great prosperity of the small colony is evident by the fact that it has built a beautiful church and has its own pastor, as well as a school and teacher.

A German village near the border, **Cepangchioi**, is mentioned as already connected to the Constanta Parish in 1910. At that time, it numbered 12 families with 60 souls and possessed a German school.³

Immediately on the old border, south of Mamuzlu Colony, lie the villages of **Musubej** with 6 German families and a German mill; **Karali** (2 families); **Durbali** (2 families of 17 souls and a German mill); **Hasirlik** (3 families with 19 souls); **Koroceko** (3 families with 20 souls); **Arboceko** (1 family of 7 persons); **Kasimkioi** (several families, a German mill).

There are 15 to 20 families in **Dobritsch**. In the nearby vicinity, 2 families in **Gelindje**, in **Emirler** 1 family of 7 persons, a German steam mill. At a further distance from Dobritsch, 3 or

¹ Das Deutschtum im Ausland, 1917, Heft 31.

² There is a brief report by Priest Franz Krings about this colony in the Monatsschrift "Die katholischen Missionen," 38. Jahrg. 1909-10, S. 219/20.

³ Hauskalender des Deutschen Volksbildungsvereins 1910, S. 98.

4 families live in **Serdimen**, and heading all the way to the south end, in **Baladja**, 4 families, and in **Balcik** a German mill owner and several families.

In Bulgarian Dobrudscha, as far as these certainly incomplete data indicate, at least 4 completely German colonies arose, and in at least 13 areas there are currently isolated German farmer families or smaller groups in settled places. The total number is likely not less than 150 families with approximately 800 souls.

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