

Aspects of Everyday Life and Natural Phenomena as Recorded in the Chronicle of the Elsen Family from Reghin (1704-1853)

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THE AIM of the present article is to reveal the manner in which the authors of this chronicle viewed the world and the environment, on the one hand, and to analyze the perception of natural phenomena in a family chronicle, on the other.

The chronicle of the Elsen family, entitled “Familienbuch und Hauschronik des Herrn Samuel Elsen, Tischlermeister (und Turner) in Sächsisch-Regen,” extends over the period 1704-1853, and it is authored by several of its members. There was a copy of the original manuscript which was initially owned by Professor Hellwig¹, but which later came in the ownership of Helmut Czoppelt.² The latter, during his large-scale data collection on the town of Reghin, managed to make a transcription of the manuscript on four A3 format typewritten sheets. The new manuscript can be found at the Siebenbürgische Bibliothek/Archiv, **Nachlaß Helmut Czoppelt, Sächsisch-Regen**, Band 8, A VIII 169, A₂₂₄₄.

The carpenter Samuel Elsen arrived in Saxon-Reghin in December 1731, three years after the founding of the Carpenters Guild.³ At the time, Reghin, which was part of Turda County, was described in a lexicon as follows: “[...] a small town in Transylvania, built on the banks of the river Mureş not far from the Gurghiu fortress, and situated in a picturesque region on a hill with beautiful vineyards.”⁴

Because it is written in the first person singular, at a first reading the chronicle gives the impression that it was written by only one author. The one who started it in 1704 was Samuel Elsen’s great-grandfather, Andreas Kraus, who kept it until 1740. From 1741 until 1769, it was continued by Samuel Dienesch, the grandfather of Samuel Elsen and the father-in-law of Stephanus Elsen, Samuel Elsen’s father. Beginning with 1769, it seems that Stepahus Elsen took over

the task of recording the family events, which he carried on until around the year 1769. Between 1805 and 1853, the events were recorded by Samuel Elsen, the latter year being the last one in the family chronicle.

The information in round brackets belongs to Prof. Wilhelm Hellwig, while that in square brackets represents additions of missing parts from the text and belongs to the undersigned, the same as the footnotes.

The chronicle of Samuel Elsen holds great importance to the history of the town of Reghin, because it recounts events from the period that preceded the great fire from 1848.⁵

Elsen is the only eighteenth-century chronicler from Reghin who mentions the visit of Emperor Joseph II to the town, and provides fascinating information on the attitude of the townspeople towards the burning of the imperial edicts by the Hungarians.⁶

Elsen provides important data on medical history (the recount of two cholera outbreaks in 1831 and 1836), economic history (raft manufacturing on the river Mureş⁷), and the history of the Evangelical Church (being related to some of the members of the parochial council of this Church) in Reghin and the surrounding Saxon localities of Batoş and Dedrad. Moreover, the data he provides has genealogical relevance as well. Other interesting parts are those that recount the fires from Saxon-Reghin and Ideciul de Sus, as well as unusual weather phenomena: drought, floods, etc. The recount of the massive rains that fell in 1843, causing the Rozelor rivulet to flood and destroy houses and pigsties, seems exaggerated. However, given that at the time construction materials were very fragile,⁸ and therefore made a house more prone to destruction, the account could be truthful. His notes on meteorology are nonetheless important to economic history, because they can contribute to the writing of a history of viticulture in the region in the nineteenth century.

Below, we will publish the text of this chronicle, as translated from German:

THE FAMILY CHRONICLE AND HOUSE BOOK OF MR. SAMUEL ELSSEN, MASTER CARPENTER (AND GLASSBLOWER) IN SAXON-REGHIN

This little book is dedicated to the memory of my late grandfather Andreas Kraus, born in Mediaş; he was my mother's father.

This little book is dedicated to my late great-grandfather who was a minister in Petelea; his name was Samuel Dienesch.

April 18, 1704: Tarazkay and Gaspar Pal came with some thousand Hungarians called kuruc⁹ and tried to take over the town through the Forkesch gate,¹⁰ but were repelled by the townspeople.¹¹

In 1705 the kuruc came on Good Friday and besieged the town, and on Holy Saturday they started the cannonade; until close to St. John's Day, the town was mercilessly plundered.¹²

December 2, 1731: I came from Mediaș to Reghin where I stayed.

July 8, 1738: I married the virtuous maiden Catharina Dienesch.

November 16, 1739: We settled in this house; may the Lord let us grow old in good health.

November 15, 1740: my father-in-law tragically passed away in a random fire between six and seven o'clock.¹³

January 28, 1741: My brother-in-law takes the place of my late father.

November 28, 1759: My two children are getting married: first Andreas with Anna, the daughter of the honest citizen Johannes Köller; then Sophia with Samuel Kayser, the son of Michael Kayser. May the Lord bless them with plenty of joy.

January 13, 1762: My mother-in-law passes away.

December 15, 1765: Our Almighty Lord took my mother from this stressful world at the age of eighty-five and called her to His Kingdom.

June 15, 1767: I moved in my new home, may the Lord bless us with joy and health so that we reach the old age in His fear and be imbued with His merciful will.

February 3, 1768: my daughter Susana marries the honest apprentice Samuel Boltizar.

February 20, 1768: Mr. Vagner, the deacon,¹⁴ takes over the position of preacher; he starts his ministry the day after St. Matthias's Day.¹⁵

February 19, 1768: on Susana's birthday, after dinner, when all the children were gathered at my place, Andreas left us and let himself be drafted, and he traveled all by himself during the night, and the following day he joined the Gyulai regiment.

April 16, 1769: Countess Teleki was laid to rest in the chapel.

In 1772, religious holidays are banned.¹⁶ Paul's First Communion.¹⁷

June 11, 1773: Emperor Joseph II visited the home of Dr. Schuller, where he stayed for dinner, when he came from Sibiu; but he came to us and then traveled further to Poland; I myself handed him a memoir.¹⁸

September 19, 1779: the new organ was first used; however, it was not completely finished, but on September 20, the newly renovated church and the organ were inaugurated.¹⁹

The year 1780 was rather unproductive, without grapes, thus most people picked gooseberries and took them home in a handkerchief or a basket. The corn matured only partially. There was little garlic, thus it had to be imported from Moldavia.

March 9, 1781: the Lord made me terribly sad by taking the treasure of my life away from me.

September 18, 1781: Mr. Georgius Schuller²⁰, the local minister, passed away and [was] laid to rest under the church pulpit on September 19.

November 1, 1785: the minister Daniel Wachner²¹ came from Dedrad, and delivered his inaugural sermon on the 6th.

August 8, 1788: Prince Franz, the Emperor's brother, marched through.²²

The year 1790 was a very dry one, and during the drought the cattle had to drink water in the village, because they could not find any water in the field.

The year 1790: The Hungarians burned the Imperial edicts,²³ claiming that now it was "Magyar világ."²⁴

(Here there is a side-note which is not Elsen's since it is written in a different style and which reads: "In Cluj, all measures passed under the Emperor Johann²⁵ were burned in public (only Saxon-Reghin preserved them); the fire was fanned by the executioner, and the Hungarians were yelling: *Ni hogy a Német soikra!*²⁶ The accountant Joseph Koller recounted this to Johann Fromm; they cut the long robes of German civil servants in Cluj. Koller himself made a narrow escape").

In 1785, on St. Daniel's Day, [my son] Samuel Elsen was born.

In 1794, with guidance and support from the Lord, we managed to have our house built.

Stephanus Elsen

November 4, 1805: I, Samuel Elsen, with guidance and support from the Lord, married my wife Ester Göldnerin.

1807 was a year of famine. There was a second grazing period and a guard was placed in the wheat and corn field.²⁷

1808: it was so cold on Annunciation Day that even the wine froze in the cellar. December 23, 1809: the insurgents²⁸ came from Hunedoara County. In that year I was already a citizen, therefore I had much trouble with them.

** Addition. November 9, 1785: the late local minister, dr. Paul Bogner,²⁹ is laid to rest.*

November 1, 1810: there was payment of the lease on the vineyard and according to our calculations, it amounted to 1221 florins in bonds. Samuel Göldner Sr. and Jr. and Samuel Elsen were lessors.

The year 1813 was very unhappy for me; I was robbed and lost my rafts [...]³⁰

March 8, 1813: heavy snow fell in the evening; lightning struck three times, it thundered very loudly, and it snowed, and the snow was knee-deep.

May 13, 1814: Heavy snowfall again; the trees were in bloom and they were unhurt, the same as the vine. [...]

February 7, 1815: The new minister, Andreas Zirner³¹ from Batoș, arrived in Saxon-Reghin on horseback and on a very muddy road, accompanied by Turkish music, and there were twelve musicians; I was the first wind instrument player.

February 14, 1815: Johann Orendi preached at the ordination of Mr. Schwarz³² who came from Dedrad to Batoș. Exactly on the day he preached, his sweetheart was lying in bed in terrible pain, and yet he preached; and his praise of the Lord did her good; Sophie Göldnerin was violently ill.

February 25 or 26, 1815: elections were held in Dedrad. My brother-in-law Orendi³³ received most votes, and had 33 votes more than Mr. Fritsch. He was denied access to the keys [to the church and parish house]; there was an inquest; none of them went. Bishop Neugeboren³⁴ and two other ministers participated at the inquest: Mr. Graeser and the Hungarian one - [...]

There was another round on March 19; Daniel Theil, a preacher in Petelea, received most votes; however, Joseph Benjamin Helwig³⁵ became minister; the first time he did not take part in the election and the second time he was a minister in the village of Dedrad, therefore, from a small town to a village; it might be (?) that it was not such a beautiful promotion.

June 3, 1817: I traveled to Arad with 9 loads or 45 raft quarters (?), and on June 21 I went home and brought a profit of 4,500 florins which I shared equally with Senator Fromm and Samuel Goldner.

August 27, 1817: Emperor Franz³⁶ visited Bistrița and the entire country. Our mayor, Mr. Samuel Hellwig, along with Johannes Ekkard and Johannes Brekner, the orator, gave him a petition in Sibiu.

December 28, 1817: the Reformation was celebrated. The minister Samuel A. Zirner and Johannes Feyl (this is a mistake because his name should be Johann Theil), an elderly preacher, and Samuel Fritsch, a young preacher participated; it was a beautiful ceremony. I, Samuel Elsen, was the first wind instrument player and I played beautiful music. Those who are lucky will see it celebrated again in hundred years.

June 29, 1821: my father Stephan Elsen passed away.

[...] January 23, 1822: the town pub above burns down due to the negligence of the noblemen, because they used the space above; they leased the space below to Samuel Göldner senior and junior as well as Georg Krigsherr and Samuel Elsen.

March 14, 1822: the entire region was drafted.

November 18, 1824: my brother-in-law Johannes Orendi started his pastoral activity in Dedrad.

March 7, 1825: the fire in Ideciul de Sus was started by a Gypsy while he was burning coal, and 50 houses were obliterated; thanks to the Almighty God, the church and parochial house remained intact during the great fire.³⁷

February 12, 1825: celebration of Emperor Franz's birthday, and the investiture of Mr. Samuel Wilhelm Wagner as mayor.

July 29, 1830: fire broke out at the house of Samuel Schwab and it spread to Georg Schwab and Johann Burger; it burned down Daniel Schwab's barn, (?)'s roof partially, Boltizar's house, and Hameridner's stables; a terrible fire, indeed.

In 1831, an epidemic of acute gastroenteritis or cholera morbus wreaked havoc among the people.³⁸ It was active in our small town in October, when there were up to four bodies every day.

In 1831, a new girls' school was built. Michael Schobel was a young minister and he was very generous, donating 3000 Viennese florins for the construction.

February 25, 1832: I purchased the building of the old girls' school³⁹ for 1660 Viennese florins.

July 5, 1832: at seven-thirty in the evening, the lightning stroke the small tower in the back, above the Choir, at the corner in the direction of Iernuțeni⁴⁰ and it destroyed three beams and an altar door – luckily there was no fire.

1832 (August 14): I, the unfortunate Samuel Elsen, moved into the building of the former girls' school (on January 8, 1832, his house on Church Street [strada Bisericii] burned down, on January 11 he exchanged it for Proconsul Samuel Wilhelm Wagner's house behind the walls plus 4,500 Viennese florins, now in the ownership of Mrs. Haltrich).

The year 1833: because of the small water depth, no raft left for Arad.

May 22, 1833: Samuel Wilhelm Wagner was invested as mayor for the second time.

May 29, 1833: Michael Schobel was elected orator.

[The year] 1834: a very dry year; the wine turned out wonderful and plentiful; the old vine was affected by hail.

October 17, 1835: I brought the wine home by sleigh, and it was so cold that it froze.

July 22, 1836: the terrible disease broke out (acute gastroenteritis) and on this day, there were six bodies lying on the catafalque; on July 23, there were 13 dead in coffins, out of which I made six, and I did not manage to make enough, because it was very difficult for us as well.

[The year] 1837 had an unproductive autumn, and we could make use of the grapes.

January 23, 1838: there was an earthquake that made the glasses and plates fall off the wall.

The year 1843: the month of February was so hot that dust was blowing in the street; on June 16, torrential rain suddenly fell behind the Goats' Forest; the Rose Brook grew so big it took a few houses and pigsties along with the pigs with it; this year, autumn was unproductive; the grapes stayed on the props.

The year 1849, "...at Râpa de sus⁴¹ /Ober Rübendorf/ I visited the outposts and I discovered two Jewish spies who came from Groß Sajo /Groß Schogen/ [Șieu, Bistrița-Năsăud] perhaps to give information about us to the Hungarians, [then] I had them cuffed and sent them further under escort. The Jews were the most harmful people because they did not believe in anything; they also acted as spies for both the Hungarians and the Imperial troops."⁴²

July 20, 1853: heavy hail fell – it was as big as an egg, with four angles, and it destroyed what the Lord provided: fruits, the vine, everything. [It broke] the tile and shingle roofs, shattered windows, and in many places the hail was six inches big, etc.

September 9, 1853: Mr. Johannes Kinn⁴³ was ordained by the Dean of Bistrița; no minister participated on behalf of our Chapter.⁴⁴

May 6, 1856: the golden sphere was placed on the tower; the master carpenter Georg Müller and the locksmith Simon Haltrich covered it in gold and placed it (the skimmers' guild covered the costs, which amounted to over 1,600 Viennese florins).⁴⁵

June 7, 1856: the weather was terrible and the hail destroyed everything. The Lord's beautiful blessing was destroyed in a quarter of an hour, etc, etc.

Note: the events from the year 1848, etc., in which Samuel Elsen's son also played a role were not recorded in the family chronicle.⁴⁶

The description of certain years as weak is in straight relationship with Samuel Elsen's professional qualification. The year 1780 was weak because "the grapes did not ripen," which had a negative impact on the manufacturing of barrels; However, the same year was perceived as "normal" in other localities, such as Brașov and Codlea.⁴⁷ Josef Dück⁴⁸ also confirms that the year 1790 was droughty in his "Zeidner Denkwürdigkeiten (1432-1847)": it recounts a dry spring, which led to an increase in the price of flax⁴⁹ and corn⁵⁰ in the Bârsa region.

The spring of 1813 seems to have presented certain anomalies concerning precipitations. Elsen was surprised by the snow that fell in northern Transylvania on March 8, while in the southern part of the province there was a drought that lasted until June, after a rough and snowless winter.⁵¹

The winter and spring of 1833 were both dry, which led to a decrease in the level of the rivers; thus, the river Mureș became unusable for the navigation of rafts,⁵² while in southern Transylvania they recorded the coldest weather in living memory.⁵³ The following year was just as dry; furthermore, for the Bârsa region, there is a recount of a powerful storm in January followed by two weeks of heat in February.⁵⁴

Conversely, the end of 1835 brought an early winter in Transylvania. In Saxon-Reghin the wine was transported home by sleigh,⁵⁵ while in Codlea there was a shortage of firewood and acorn, which led to an increase in the price of swine.⁵⁶

The chronicle of Reghin does not search for the causes of the cholera outbreaks. On the other hand, the chronicle of Codlea identifies its cause in the cold spring weather followed by a three-month long drought; the cholera epidemic made one thousand victims in the Bârsa region until September 1831.⁵⁷

At eight thirty on January 23, 1838 a powerful earthquake was recorded,⁵⁸ which was felt across the entire Principality. Another earthquake, which was not recorded by Elsen, but was once again felt across Transylvania, happened in 1802.⁵⁹

It is difficult to assess the impact of the calamities on the demographics as well as the population's reaction to it based on the chronicle.

The chronicle also provides valuable information on the organization and financial activity in the field of construction, such as the renovation of the Evangelical church, the expansion of the locality through the construction of the girls' school, as well as other activities conducted for the use of the community. The expansion of the town beyond its walls can be an indication of the existence of urban liberties.

The Church holds a central place in the Chronicle of the Elsen family. The authors of the chronicle have close ties to the Church both through their participation in the administrative activity of the institution, and their family ties, some of their relatives acting as ministers.

From the perspective of both the content and the manner of recounting, the entries seem to have been written to perpetuate the memory of the family. This fact is especially revealed by the passing-down of traditions within the family.

The Chronicle is a significant source for the history of Reghin, since it not only enumerates random events, but also proves the direct involvement of the authors and those close to them in the everyday life of the town.



Notes

1. Samuel Wilhelm Hellwig was born on December 21, 1832 in Saxon-Reghin. He wrote many studies and articles on the history of the town of Reghin and the local German school. (Fr. Schuller and Hermann Andreas Hienz, *Schriftsteller Lexikon der Siebenbürger Deutschen*, Köln-Weimar-Wien, 2000, Bd. 7, p. 69).
2. Helmut Czoppelt (1905-1994) was a forest engineer and passionate researcher of the history of Reghin. He wrote numerous works on the history of Reghin, many of which remained in manuscript and were deposited in the Transylvanian archives in Gundelsheim. (Christian Czoppelt, *Zum Gedenken an Helmut Czoppelt*, in: *Siebenbürgische Zeitung*, 44. Jg., 14, 1994, München, pp. 16).
3. Traugott Schwab, *Zunftgeschichte der Stadt Sächsisch-Reen*, in: *Archiv des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, vol. 50, Bistrița, 1944, p. 515.

4. *Großes Universal Lexikon aller Wissenschaften und Künste welche bishero durch menschlichen Verstand und Witz erfunden worden*, Vol. 30, Q-Reh, Leipzig-Halle, 1741.
5. In November 1848, Reghin was torched by the Szekler troops. (D.-I. Rus, *Distrugearea Reghinului în noiembrie 1848* [The Destruction of Reghin in 1848], in: *Sargeția*, vol. 34/2006, Deva, pp. 123-136).
6. In 1786, the Josephine cadaster was introduced in Transylvania. This measure led not only to discontent among the peasants, but also to the open opposition of the nobility. For the Cluj district, the third higher commission was under the supervision of the imperial commissar Count Teleki Ádam, under the leadership of Military Engineer Captain Fleischer, assisted by 33 soldiers and a civil engineer entrusted with measuring and taxing in the Cluj, Turda, as well as Lower and Middle Solnoc Counties. It is unknown to what extent measurements were conducted in this region. By the end of 1789, these works had been finished after repeated warnings from the imperial authorities. On January 28, 1789 the ailing Emperor issued an Edict of revocation which annulled all reforms up to the Patent of Toleration, the regulation of parishes and the abolition of serfdom, and the regulation of urban relations had to wait for another half a century, until 1848. The works halted, and the documents were sent to the higher commissions. Unfortunately, this did not happen in every case because the nobility found pleasure in destroying these documents. Saxon communities were a notable exception, and through a Gubernial decree the salvaged documents were returned to their owners, the communes. It is unknown whether Reghin received the documents back, because in 1848, the archive of the Magistracy burned down. Neither Haltrich, nor the monograph from 1870 quotes them. (Eugen von Trauschenfels, *Übersicht der josephinischen Grundausmessung in Siebenbürgen in den Jahren 1786-1790*, in *Archiv des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, NF, Bd.2/1846, pp. 130).
7. The lumber trade and rafting were among the main activities of the inhabitants of old Reghin. The town's favorable position in the proximity of the Gurghiu and Călimani Mountains with their vast wooded stretches was a real challenge for the inhabitants. (D. I. Rus, *Din activitatea societății de plutărit din Reghinul-Săsesc (1853-1908)* [Aspects from the Activity of the Raft-manufacturing Society in Reghin], in: *Revista Bistriței* vol XV, 2000, Bistrița, pp. 91-95).
8. Joseph Haltrich, *Zur Geschichte von Sächsisch-Regen seit letzten hundert Jahren*, in *Archiv des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, Band 3, Heft 2, 1858, Kronstadt, pp. 282-285; *Beiträge zur Kenntniß Sächsisch-Regens. Festgabe der Mitgliedern des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, Hermannstadt, 1870, pp. 78-79.
9. The *kuruc* is the name given to the multi-ethnic participants in the anti-Habsburg (anti-Austrian) rebellion led by Ferenc Rákóczi II. His opponents were the *lobonc*. The rebellion in Transylvania ended with the Treaty of Satu-Mare in 1711. (G. Fischer, *Zur Geschichte der Stadt und des Capitels Bistritz im ersten Jahrzehnt des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*, in: *Bistritzer Gymnasialprogramm*, 1878/79, p. 12; Johann Höchsmann, *Studien zur Geschichte Siebenbürgens aus der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Archiv*, NF, 11/1873, p. 61).
10. The Forkesch Tower or the Tower of the Goldsmiths was one of the main towers in the town's fortifications system. It is a massive tower built between the years 1494-1534, it has three stories and a pyramidal roof. (Hansotto Drotloff, Günther Schuster (ed), *Mediasch. Ein historischer Streifzug durch die siebenbürgisch-sächsische Stadt an der Kokel*, Debrecen, 2009, pp. 90).
11. The reference is to the siege of Mediaș of 1704, during the *kuruc* rebellion (1703-1711); Thoroczai (at Elsen, *Tarazkay*) and Gaspar Pal were the *kuruc* commanders in Transylvania (Drotloff, Schuster (ed), *Mediasch*.pp. 311).
12. In the spring of 1705, Simon Forgács renewed the siege of Mediaș with a rebel assault which was repelled with heavy losses; after the death of the fortress commander, his replacement, Captain Salz, capitulated (Drotloff, Schuster (ed), *Mediasch*.pp. 311).

13. This fire broke out because of a servant from the area; the wind spread the fire over the town up to Mühlgasse, which burned down almost entirely up to the mill. It seems that even the dam caught fire (Haltrich, *Zur Geschichte von Sächsisch-Regen*, pp. 285).
14. The reference concerns deacon Wagner. From 1762, Vagner (Wagner) Michael from Teaca, acted as rector in Reghin (Czoppelt, *Chronik*, Band 4, I, pp. 91).
15. February 24 or 25 according to the Evangelical calendar.
16. The secularization measures are among the great reforms that Emperor Joseph II carried out in the spirit of enlightened absolutism; many convents were closed and religious holidays were abolished. The latter legislative measure was enacted in 1781. Many of the Emperor's reforms targeted the external forms of Baroque Catholicism and had a symbolic character (Karl Vocelka, *Österreichische Geschichte 1699-1815* (ed. Herwig Wolfram), Wien, 1995, pp. 374-376).
17. A Catholic, Evangelical, and Anglican holiday celebrated on January 25.
18. During his first visit to Transylvania, Joseph II visited Sibiu, Făgăraș, Brașov, the Szeklerland, Saxon-Reghin, Bistrița, Bârgău, and Rodna. "On June 18, he reached Saxon-Reghin whom he did not give much attention. The only aspects that interested him were the large valley of the river Mureș and the raft trade. On June 19, he was already in Bistrița." (Georg Adolf Schuller, *Samuel von Brukenthal*, 1. Band, München, 1967, pp. 300).
19. The building of the organ cost the church 750 Hungarian florins (W. Weltzer and E. Philippi, *Sächsisch-Regen: Die Stadt am Berge*, Bochum, 1991, pp. 411).
20. Schuller (Schullerus) Georgius was born on June 7, 1714 in Saxon-Reghin. On May 17, 1771 he became Dean of the Chapter in Reghin, from May 13, 1774, after the passing of J. Adleff, he acted as minister in Petelea and once again as dean; on June 3, 1776 he resigned as dean. He passed away on September 18, 1781 in Saxon-Reghin (Czoppelt, *Chronik*, Band 4, I, pp. 97).
21. Daniel Wagner was born in Saxon-Reghin. On May 8, 1789 he was elected Dean of the Chapter, and in November, pro-dean, on April 26, 1791 he retired from the office of Dean, from May 3, 1793 until May 5, 1795 he again acted as Dean of the Chapter, on May 20, 1799 he was reelected Dean of the Chapter Reghin. (H. Czoppelt, in *Chronik der Stadt Sächsisch-Regen in Siebenbürgen /Rumänien*, Siebenbürgische Bibliothek/Archiv, Nachlaß Czoppelt, A VIII, 169, Sächsisch-Regen, Band 4, I, pp. 99).
22. Prince Franz, the brother of Leopold II. In 1792, he became the last Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, abdicating in 1804.
23. In December 1790, the representatives of the Diet burned the texts of the reforms, and demanded the reintroduction of the old constitutional forms.
24. "The Hungarian world."
25. Emperor Joseph II.
26. "Look how the fire consumes the writings of the Germans" (translated from Hungarian).
27. This piece of information cannot be found in the manuscript copied by Prof. Hellwig. It is quoted only in H. Czoppelt, *Chronik der Stadt Sächsisch-Regen in Siebenbürgen /Rumänien*, Siebenbürgische Bibliothek/Archiv, Nachlaß Czoppelt, A VIII, 169, Sächsisch-Regen, Band 4, I, pp. 112; See also Weltzer and Philippi, pp. 414).
28. In Hungary, the members of the militia that was called to defend the country were dubbed *insurgents*.
29. Paulus Bogner was born at Ideciu de Jos. In 1739, he was a student in Tübingen (Paulus Bogner, Regna Transsylvanus). On May 17, 1771 he was elected Dean of the Chapter, From October 6, 1785 he acted as pro-dean in Reghin. (*Auszug aus dem Album der k.württembergischen Eberhard-Karls Universität Tübingen (1617-1861)*, in: *Archiv des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, NF, Bd.7/1867, pp. 460).
30. At this point, the text suddenly stops.

31. Czirner Andreas from Petelea. In February 1815, he was elected minister and Dean in Reghin (Czoppelt, *Chronik*, Band 4, I, pp. 121).
32. Martinus Benjamin Schwartz was born in Bistrița on September 3, 1751. On June 14, 1830, he left for Batoș to serve as minister (Czoppelt, *Chronik*, Band 4, I, pp. 121).
33. Johannes Orendi was born in Saxon-Reghin on November 24, 1783. On March 19, 1829 he was elected minister in Reghin. In 1829, on Palm Sunday, he arrived to Saxon-Reghin to take over his position as minister (Czoppelt, *Chronik*, Band 4, I, pp.122).
34. Daniel Georg Neugeboren was the bishop of the Evangelical Church of Augustan Confession in Transylvania between 1806 and 1822 (Konrad Gündisch, *Neugeboren, Daniel*, in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, Band 19, Berlin, 1999, pp. 123).
35. Josephus Benjamin Hellwig was born in Saxon-Reghin in 1768. From the end of 1805, he served as minister and Dean at Teaca. From March 19, 1815 he served as minister at Dedrad. He died of cerebral congestion at Dedrad on October 20, 1824 (Czoppelt, *Chronik*, Band 4, I, pp. 121).
36. Emperor Franz I (1804-1835), who visited Transylvania in 1817.
37. This information appears in the monograph of the locality, entitled *Heimatbuch Ober-Eidisch in Nordsiebenbürgen*, de Jost Linkner, Wels, 1999, pp. 52.
38. The Asian cholera was an acute infection of the colon, which caused diarrhea and strong cramps. The bacterium “Vibrio Cholerae” was transmitted orally and multiplied in the colon. The blood thickened, the skin turned blue and became wrinkled, the circulation stopped and death occurred. The incubation period lasted between a few hours and four days (Ellen Jahn, *Die Cholera in Medizin und Pharmazie im Zeitalter des Hygienikers Max von Pettenkofer*, Stuttgart, 1994, pp. 104-105).
39. This building was on the present-day Autumn Street [strada Toamnei] (the former *Entengasse*), in the valley of Rose Brook (W. Wigant and E. Philippi, p. 118).
40. Iernuțeni (*Etschdorf* in German and *Radnótfája* in Hungarian), was situated on the left bank of the river Mureș. At present, it is a neighborhood of Reghin.
41. The actual name of the locality is Vătava.
42. This piece of information cannot be found in the manuscript copied by Prof. Hellwig. H. Czoppelt, pp. 158; Fritz Keintzel Schön, *Siebenbürgische Aufzeichnungen über die Juden vor hundert Jahren*, in *Deutsche Forschung in Südosten*, 1. Jg., Hermannstadt, 1942, pp. 656.
43. Johann Kinn “Sutor” was born in Saxon-Reghin on June 23, 1806. On July 6, 1853 he was elected minister in Reghin, and on September 9, he started his ministry. Between 1860 and 1869 he acted as Dean of the Chapter (Heinrich Nikolaus, *Die deutsche Plebane und die Stadtpfarrer der Stadt Sächsisch-Regen*, în *Archiv des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, Bd. 50, Bistritz 1940, pp. 529).
44. He was elected minister despite the opposition of the representatives from Ideciu de Jos, Batoș, and Dedrad (*Protokoll der Sitzungen der evangelischen Kirche A.B. von Sächsisch-Regen*, pp. 26-27, Direcția Județeană Sibiu a Arhivelor Naționale, *Fond Protopopiatul evanghelic Reghin*, 952.6, 1852-1870).
45. All members of the community and the guilds volunteered to help in the construction of the tower and the church. The coppers’ guild and skinners’ guild distinguished themselves by contributing with 200 florins and 600 florins, respectively. The master Simon Haltrich covered the sphere on the tower in gold on May 7, 1857. The butchers’ guild contributed 180 florins to the building of the arrester. The four spheres on the small towers were paid for by the master butcher Johann Alzner, a member of the Community (*Beiträge zur Kenntniss Sächsisch-Regens*, pp. 254).
46. The note belongs to W. Hellwig.
47. *Anales Czeidimienses*, in *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Brassó (1392-1851)*, vol. 5, Brașov, 1909, pp. 395.

48. Josef Dück (1814-1862) was born in Braşov, he studied theology in Berlin, and first acted as a professor in Braşov, and then served as a minister in Codlea; in the latter capacity, he wrote a chronicle of the town of Codlea, which he published in Braşov in 1877 (*Josef Dück* in: *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Brassó (1392-1851)*, vol. 1, Braşov, 1903, pp. LXXVIII-LXXIX).
49. Josef Dück, *Zeidner Denkwürdigkeiten (1432-1847)*, in: *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Brassó (1392-1851)*, vol. 1, Braşov, 1903, pp. 394-395.
50. *Anales Czeidinienses*, pp. 403.
51. Josef Dück, *Zeidner Denkwürdigkeiten (1432-1847)*, pp. 328.
52. Elsen, *Hauschronik*, pp. 3.
53. Josef Dück, *Zeidner Denkwürdigkeiten (1432-1847)*, pp. 336.
54. Ibidem, pp. 336.
55. Elsen, *Hauschronik*, pp. 3.
56. Josef Dück, *Zeidner Denkwürdigkeiten (1432-1847)*, pp. 338.
57. Ibid, pp. 335.
58. Josef Dück, *Zeidner Denkwürdigkeiten (1432-1847)*, pp. 339; *Auszug aus Tartlauer Chronik (1645-1886)*, in *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Brassó (1549-1827)*, vol. 3, Braşov, 1915, pp. 90.
59. The earthquake happened on October 26, and caused damage in Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania, and Hungary (*Anales Czeidinienses*, pp. 409).

Abstract

Aspects of Everyday Life and Natural Phenomena as Recorded in the Chronicle of the Elsen Family from Reghin (1704-1853)

The aim of the present article is to reveal the manner in which the authors of this chronicle viewed the world and the environment, on the one hand, and to analyze the perception of natural phenomena in a family chronicle, on the other. The main source was the chronicle of the Elsen family, entitled "Familienbuch und Hauschronik des Herrn Samuel Elsen, Tischlermeister (und Turner) in Sächsisch-Regen," which extends over the period 1704-1853, and it is authored by several of its members. The Chronicle is a significant source for the history of Reghin, since it not only enumerates random events, but also proves the direct involvement of the authors and those close to them in the everyday life of the town.

Keywords

chronicle, Reghin, modern era, natural phenomena, medical history, economic history, church history