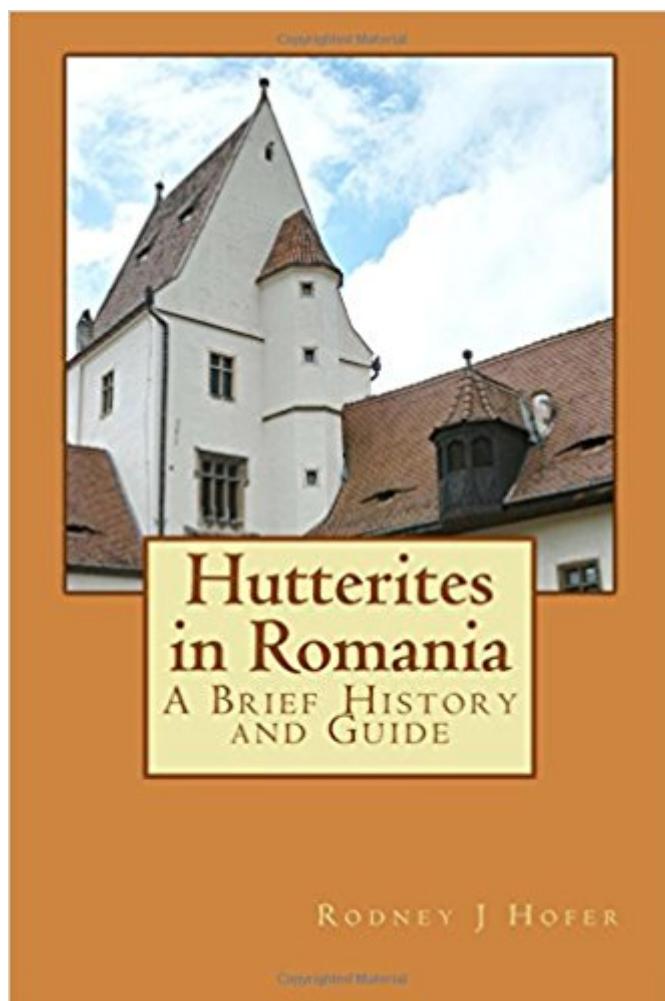


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Hutterites In Romania: A Brief History And Guide



Synopsis

Bracketed by their rescue by the Prince of Transylvania in 1622 and the invitation of Russian Field Marshal Rumiantsev in 1770 to establish their home on his Ukrainian estate, the history of the Hutterites in Romania reflects a myriad of emotions from ecstasy to despair. The castle that was their initial sanctuary became their prison under the Jesuits who attempted to destroy them. Their numbers, initially bolstered by Carithian Lutheran converts, quickly dwindled under the imprisonment of their leaders and the threat that their children would be abducted and placed in Catholic orphanages. When nearly all seemed lost, their miraculous escape over the Transylvanian Alps into Muslim-controlled Wallachia restored religious tolerance. However, peace was short lived as soon thereafter Russian and Turkish armies swept across their new refuge. This is the story of these resilient survivors who would form the nucleus of the rebirth of the Hutterian Brethren. today

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Rodney Hofer's recently published book on Hutterites in Romania is the ultimate niche-market title. It will never climb far on anyone's best-seller list, but for persons with a direct interest, most likely descendants of those Hutterites, it provides an understandable narrative and rich detail for a brief era in the late 18th century when the Hutterite movement could have been wiped out. Instead, fewer than 100 survived to move east into South Russia and, a hundred years later, along with their fellow Anabaptists, the Mennonites, on to the plains of the Dakotas and the Canadian prairie provinces where their unique communitarian-colony life style thrives today, much to the delight of sociologists and anthropologists. Hofer pieces together the story of a brief, but momentous 15-year period, roughly 1755-1770, when Hapsburg Empress Maria Theresa banished all

non-Catholic/Lutheran/Calvinist believers from her lands. Thoughtfully, she didn't exterminate them but relocated them, in trail-of-tears fashion, from their homelands in present-day Czech Republic and Austria to Transylvania, which is now Romania. Once there, their refusal to swear allegiance to the empress disqualified them from promised land and homes and subjected them to further imprisonment and extreme harassment by a devout Jesuit priest named Delphini. The framework of this story is already well-known to Hutterite insiders, but he tells the story in a way that is fresh, compelling, and much more comprehensible. For persons who have never heard it before, the story is at once depressing and uplifting. For those who haven't, it offers another example of man's intolerance and inhumanity to man, but seasoned with the inspiration of the power of faith and courage. Along with the historical narrative, the author also provides a sort of travel guide describing numerous Hutterite historic sites in the region. Given the current state of tourism infrastructure in Romania, it may be some time before readers can make much use of that information.

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