

# **ORIGIN OF THE RUMANIANS**

**(Vlach Origin, Migration  
and Infiltration to Transylvania.)**

by  
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# I INTRODUCTION

## A "ROMANTIC" IMAGINATION: THE "DAKO-ROMAN" EXISTENCE.

One of the unsolved questions of the European Historiography is the problem of the Rumanian origin.

Some indubitable traces seem to prove that the origin of the Vlach (Wallachian) people was actually the southern part of the Balkans. It seems that some groups of "Romanized" Balkan shepherds survived the historical storms that followed the fall of the Roman Empire. These groups migrated gradually from the south towards the north, and arriving first to the Bulgarian than to the Munthenian area (\*1), with a natural increase in the population the density increased to such an extent that then appeared the basis of a genuine nationality.

The modern Rumanian political interest sharply opposed to the facts of the historical migration and evolution of the Vlachs. Rumanian "romantic-minded" nationalists presented a theory which connected the descendents of the Wallachians directly to the Romans; especially to the Roman conquest in Dacia. This romantic imagination became a myth, and gradually also became a political propaganda. Influenced by this newly recovered myth, western historians (even those who previously adopted the documented migration of the south-Balkan Vlachs) became confused. They were effected by the romantic idea that the modern representatives of "Urbs Eterna" were still in existence in Eastern Europe! Having actually two theory of Wallachian origin from now on (the northwardly Vlach migration and the newly discovered Dako-Roman theory), most of the historians faced this problem as one of the unsolved questions of European history.

Realistic Rumanian politicians were never really sure that the romantic myth of Dako-Roman origin have had anything to do with historical reality. They realized however, that this myth was useful to serve another dream which was the dream of "Greater Rumania". They found that young nationalists need historic national myths and if a young nation does not have such myth, one should be created. Therefore, even without real historical evidence, Rumanian imperialists used the myth of "Dako-Roman-continuity" as a great incentive for the "re-conquest" of those territories which were "lost" by their "Dak" and "Roman forefathers".

\*1: Munthenia, or Muntenia is an area which is situating between the Carpathian Alps and the Lower Danube.

Byzantine, Bulgarian, Slav, and other historical sources have mentioned various Vlach nomadic elements, which came to the historical surface from the chaotic Balkan situation following the great Goth, Hun, Avar migrations and their temporary settlements. These nomadic shepherds did not seem to have too much connection to the ancient and disintegrated Roman Empire. These mountain people did not reveal the proud, sophisticated characteristics which was so typical for the legionaries and citizens of "Urbs Eterna". Then all of a sudden in the annals of Balkan history, Wallachia appeared at the end of the XIIIth century, north of the Lower Danube. First it was a semi-independent, later as an independent Principality. It was united with Moldavia in 1859, and with the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy after the World War I an opportunity occurred for the Wallachians (already called "Rumanians" at this time) to claim Hungarian Transylvania as a former "Roman province" (\*2)

Since Transylvania was an essential part of the Hungarian national sphere, continuously since the IXth century, Rumanian Imperialists realized that a self-created myth of "Dako-Roman continuity" was needed. Pointing out again that they were originated from a historical intermarriage between the Roman colonizers and the ancient inhabitants of Dacia, they claimed it was "obvious" that they have had every legal right to "reconquer" the area, which was part of the great Roman Empire in the Age of Antiquity. (\*3).

The so-called "Dako-Roman continuity" (\*4) could not confuse many historians, who reconstructed the history of the Ancient - and Medieval Ages, with original documents and archaeological findings as bases of their works. They were, however, as it was mentioned before, some others, who were rather naive, more easily influenced, or not so well educated, who could not help but to be affected by the romantic imagination of the Dako-Roman intermarriage. They forgot that the "Dako-Roman intermarriage" or the "Dako-Roman continuity" was not supported by any archaeological findings or by any Roman-

\*2: Dacia was an eastern region of the Roman Empire, conquered by Emperor Trajan in about 107 A.D. and abandoned by Emperor Aurelian in 271 A.D. It was a Roman Province for 164 years. Its territory superficially identical with Transylvania, which became part of the Hungarian Kingdom following by the Hungarian Conquest of the Carpathian Basin in 896 A.D. Between 1540 and 1690, Transylvania was an independent, sometimes semi-independent Hungarian Principality, under the leadership of Hungarian sovereigns. After this, up to 1920, Transylvania was part of the Hungarian Kingdom, and (as such) part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire again.

\*3: According to evidences presented by this essay, the Wallachians have had nothing to do with dacian colonizers or with the colonized. Hypothesizing the non-existing Dako-Roman connection, however, the Rumanians have had about the same "right" for Transylvania, that Italians would have for Noricum (Austria), Gallia (France), or Britannia (England).

\*4: This theory, of course, bases itself on pure speculation without any evidence. One example of the typical Rumanian "historical" frazeology: "... the historical sources, it is true, do not mention, hence, it must have been a slow but steady infiltration that turned into a Roman population, speaking the vulgar Latin tongue, the Illyrians and Thracians." *N larga: A history of Rumania*, p. 24.

Byzantine-, Slav- or Bulgarian sources either. It is quite clear that a certain part of the Wallachian vocabulary showed Latin elements, however, there does not exist any historical evidence, which seems to show that the Balkan originated Vlachs have had any ancient connections with Dak tribes, or with the Roman colonizers of ancient Dacia.

At this point it also should be mentioned that the first decades of the XXth century proved to be a very suitable socio-political atmosphere for extreme, chauvinistic and even imperialistic political propaganda. It was used much more frequently instead of objective historiography. In this era of extreme and noisy nationalism many highly educated historians (who attempted to be objective and apolitical) were pushed aside. Their logical, clear, but quiet voices were surpassed by those who really did not wish to serve Clio, Muse of History, but who served Mars, the god of war. These political propagandists, acting as "historians", have had mainly political interests, which motivated them to rewrite history in their own particular way, serving their own, new political view. As I mentioned, some of them were simply naive, but many of them falsified history deliberately to fulfill the "national interest" which seemed to be so "sacred" that the "great national interest" seemed to justify even dishonest methods.

Following the World War I, France desired to paralyze the destroyed German State, and wished to frustrate the possible resurrection of the disintegrated Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. President G. Clemenceau created several, artificial, multinational states in East-Central Europe. (\*5). He was assisted by several selfish and Machiavelist politicians, and by those, whose knowledge of East-Central European history was sparse. They created a "new Europe", but the dictated "peace" which enforced the new situation of artificial frontiers and new multinational states was actually nothing else but the germs for several future wars to come.

The statesmen who redrew the map of Europe welcomed the "Dako-Roman theory" and accepted it as true history. Now the Rumanians could "legally" become "Romans", or "Daks", or "Dako-Romans". They could become anything and anybody whenever they wished, because their claim could be well adjusted to the ideas, and plans of French revenge, and of Russian-oriented Pan Slavism. The Wallachian administration received the "green light" from the Entente so the descendants of Vlach shepherds were able to march into Hungarian Transylvania.

\*5: George Clemenceau (1841-1929) was premier of France (1906-9, 1917-19) called as "the Tiger". He opposed the honest, peace-minded USA President W. Wilson in Versailles and Trianon, using the post-war conferences as opportunities for chauvinistic revenge.

Of course, anyone could say at this time, that the lamentation of the harshly treated Hungary was a seemingly "bias" voice. A voice of a nation which is loosing one of her thousand-years-old parts is similar to the sound of a person which is loosing one of his arms or limbs. This seemingly bias cry, however, coincided with the voices of objective historians, but their writings did not reach the ears of the Great Powers. It became fashionable that victorious countries were "right", losers were always "wrong".

Objective historians of the world were astonished. There were no sources, nor historical maps anywhere (except in Rumania) which ever showed Transylvania as a Wallachian province before 1920. Nobody could show any documents, chronicles, archaeological findings, which could prove any Rumanian right for Transylvania. In spite of this, however, Transylvania remained a Rumanian province not only after the First War, but also following the Second Great War. Politicians of this World recognized, accepted with considerable cynicism, that not only History creates nations, but sometimes nations are re-creating their actual history. These new historical interpretations were poor as far as historical evidence is concerned, but since "might was right", powerful armies "guaranteed" their "rightful" existence.

Since then, Rumanian historians were desperately trying to find some real evidence of the "Dako-Roman origin and continuity", which would justify the Rumanian conquest in Transylvania. They remained unsuccessful. They were able to produce generalizations which seemed to prove that ancient Vlachs adopted many cultural customs from Roman colonizers, but they still could not find evidences which would aid the myth of Dako-Roman origin in Dacia. Let us quote from some of these typical compositions.

*Rumanian is derived directly from the low Latin spoken in the Imperial era. In syntax and grammar it reproduces Latin forms of striking purity. Words dealing with agricultural pursuits, however, are generally of Slavic origin ...(\*6).*

*It is still customary in any Rumanian village to attach a small coin to the finger of the dead after an ancient Roman custom of providing the soul with its fare across the Styx ... Rumania's national dance, the Calausare, Commemorates the rapes of the Sabines to this day. (\*7).*

*The mountains saved the Latin character of Rumanian speech. (\*8).*

\*6: Leon Dominian: *The Frontiers of Language and Nationality in Europe*. p. 166.

\*7: *Ibid.* p. 161

\*8: *Ibid.* p. 162.

It is really not necessary to argue with these points above. The Vlachs as pastoral subjects of Roman landholders in Epirus, Macedonia, perhaps in Dalmatia, obviously adopted some sort of vulgarized Latin from their masters, and adopted several Roman customs as well. It was probably also true that by hiding in the mountainous regions they were able to preserve these linguistic and cultural characteristics for several centuries. All of this, however, does not seem to prove that these Vlachs originated from Roman Dacia, where the Roman legions in comparison to other provinces colonized the land the least. Thus information about adapted vocabulary and customs are not adequate evidence to recreate history in lines with the Rumanian myth of the Dako-Roman theory.

*There is much argument about the priority of the Rumanians in Transylvania. Rumanians claim that they are the descendants of the Romanized Dacians of the emperor Trajan's day, who have lived uninterruptedly in Transylvania since Roman times. Many historians point out, however, that according to all available evidence, the Romans completely evacuated their Dacian settlements, and that from the third century to the twelfth, during the course of nearly a thousand years, not a single trace of the Dacians may be found in Transylvania - even if the Rumanians were their descendants. On the other hand there are chronological data concerning the Rumanians' gradual immigration into Transylvania from the twelfth century onward. (\*9).*

One of the well known Rumanian historians, Prof. Giurescu often used to say, that "historians should not be employed by extreme nationalistic forces". Let us mention something about this Rumanian scholar, honoured by his own nation. His way of writing actually proves that Rumanian nationalism that incorporates the Dako-Roman myth as some sort of springboard for further, more extended dreams, is really ready to re-write the history of the whole European Continent.

*On the same page on which Professor Giurescu ostracizes exaggerated patriotism, he says that the history of the Rumanians is based on four positive and unassailable facts: [1] that the Rumanians are one of the oldest peoples in Europe, [2] that the Dacians were an elite people of the ancient world; [3] that the Rumanians are the oldest Christian peoples of south-eastern Europe; and [4] that they are the only people in these regions who can boast of an uninterrupted political continuity. (\*10).*

It is not the purpose of this essay to argue "how old" the Rumanians really were, or "how elite" the Dacians were under Roman colonization or before the Roman conquest. We don't really think that it would be

\*9: Dominic G. Kosary S.B. Vardy: *History of the Hungarian Nation*, p. 20.

\*10: Zsombor Szasz: *Rumanian History*, (*The Hungarian Quarterly*, 1941, pp. 198-99.)

sensible to investigate which south-eastern peoples were the "oldest Christians". If the distinguished professor, mentioned above, and his fellow Rumanian "scholars" believed and attempted to force the belief, that they were the "oldest", the "most elite", or the "oldest Christian" people, I feel, we should let them enjoy their unbased belief and happiness. The false proposition about the "national continuity" in Transylvania represents, however, a deliberate historical falsification, with serious political consequences. This attempt must be criticized and internationally corrected.

This essay does not wish to deal with the "Dako-Roman political continuity", "myth", or "theory" in details. The real purpose of this essay to re-introduce the history of the Vlach migration on the Balkans from Byzantine Epirus and Macedonia to medieval Bulgaria, from Bulgaria to Wallachia, and from Wallachia to Moldavia and Transylvania. Before doing it, however, we will outline the tragedy of the heroic and unfortunate Dak people. Following this, this essay will deal with the real history of the medieval Rumanians.

## II

### THE TRAGIC DEFEAT AND EXTERMINATION OF THE DAK PEOPLE

The racial and linguistic origin of the Dak people (the Dacians) is an example of the unsolved problems in the history of Ancient Europe. We really do not know that what sort of people they were and what part of the Eurasian Continent they came from before settling in the eastern portion of the Carpathian Basin. This area was called as Dacia by the Romans, in the 1st Century A.D., after the names of the inhabitants.

Some historians believe that the Daks actually belonged to the northern subgroups of the Thracians. (\*11). Herodotos, the "Father of historical writing" visited Dacia around 480 B.C. and he named the people there as "Getae". There is every probability that these "Getae" were identical with the Daks. Another assumption was that these people were the most western element of the Scythia people. (\*12). According to Herodotos and other ancient authors, the inhabitants of Dacia were living in the frameworks of four or five tribes and they built their tribal culture under Greek and Celtic influence. They built strong rock-fortresses, they formed highly disciplined clans with militaristic social character, but they professed agriculture and animal breeding. They were also experienced miners, and they sold their gold, silver, iron and salt to the Greeks, using Greek coins in their commercial affairs.

Their connection with Hellas was mainly peaceful, but occasionally some of their tribes were probably victimized by Greek expansionism. In the IVth Century B.C., for instance, slaves of Getae origin (assumably war-prisoners) appeared on the Athenian slave market. In about the same time they were ruled by the female-dominated "Agathyr's" people, but not much later the Daks with a larger population absorbed the conquerors.

In about 280 B.C. Celtic tribes penetrated into the Carpathian Basin probably from the north and they dominated over the Daks for a short time. (\*13). Beginning with the IIrd Century B.C., however, the Dak

\*11: Early Thracians populated the area of the East-Balkans from the mouth of the Ister (Danube) down to the Bosphorus. They absorbed Hellenic culture only in a limited extent. In c. 1300 B.C. they occupied probably much larger areas, but in the Vth Century B.C. they were pushed to the Black Sea-area by Illyrians and Macedonians. Beginning with 1st Century B.C. Thracian rulers were vassals of Rome.

\*12: The Scythians were nomadic horsemen, who inhabited E. Europe and W. Asia. They were probably Turanian (by some historians: Indo-Iranian) by origin. They traded with the Greeks and sometimes acted as Greek mercenaries.

\*13: The very same Celtic invasion ravaged Macedonia in 279 B.C., defeating the Greeks in Thermopylae, and reaching even Delphi. They ruled Thrace until 210 B.C.

tribes (called "Davi" and sometimes as "Daii" by the Romans) became a strong force in Dacia. They sent troops against the Balkanic colonies of the Romans, to prevent the encroachment of Roman imperialism into their country, (\*14). One of their greatest kings was Burebista (70-44 B.C.), who established his capital, called Sarmisegethusa, in the Southern Carpathians, and extended his power from the River Tisza (German: Theiss) to the Pontus Euxinus (Black Sea). His political and military power was recognized by the Roman Empire. (\*15).

In the age of the early (Julian-Claudian) emperors, Dacia was already under the shadow of the Roman eagle. When Moesia (\*16) and Pannonia (\*17) appeared as new Roman strongholds, it became clear that Dacia would be the next step. In 10 B.C. the Dak forces withdrew to the northern side of the Danube, forming a defensive line in the Carpathian Alps.

A new, and final renewal of the Dak power appeared in A.D. 85, when King Durosdak resigned and King Decebal took over the leadership of Dacia. (85-106). He was ambitious and warlike, and he decided to defend Dacia against Roman colonizing tendencies. He proved to be a successful military leader against the legions of Emperor Domitianus (81-96), when his Daks invaded Moesia from the north (85), and when he was able to secure his position even when various German tribal fragments (Quads and Marcomans) threatened Northern Dacia. Domitian made a quite humiliating peace with Decebal, who retained his independence. The king of the Daks also defeated the nordic German invaders, and crushed the Sarmatian lazyg horsemen, nomads, who populated the area between the Danube and the Tisza Rivers at this time.

The final tragedy of the heroic, but unfortunate Daks came about with Emperor Trajan (98-117), who was a brilliant and ambitious soldier. His name and activity coincides with the final page of Dak history. He was responsible for the invasion and complete annihilation of the Daks, and also for the colonization of Dacia.

*Nurtured on war, the Emperor was a frank imperialist who preferred order to liberty and power to peace. Hardly a year after his arrival in Rome he set out for the conquest of Dacia ... Its annexation would*

\*14: The Dak campaigns threatened Moesia, Dalmatia and Thrace in 112, 109, and 75 B.C.

\*15: King Burebista influenced even the internal affairs of Rome when he was allied with Pompey against Julius Caesar. (Between 49-46 B.C.)

\*16: Became a Roman province in the time of Octavianus (Augustus) in 29 B.C.

\*17: Around the time of the birth of Christ, the legions of Augustus advanced the frontiers of the "Imperium" to the Danube. The Romans, however, considered Pannonia as a Province already in 10 B.C., when Roman forces of Noricum (today's Austria) extended their domination east from the Alps.

*give Rome control of the road that ran down the Save to the Danube and thence to Byzantium - an invaluable land route to the East. Besides, Dacia had gold mines. In a campaign brilliantly planned and swiftly executed, Trajan led his legions, through all obstacles and resistance to the Dacian capital, Sarmisegethusa, and forced its surrender. (\*18).*

The emperor reinstated Decebal as a client king and returned to Rome in 102. Decebal, however, did not like his new and very humiliating role, and soon broke the agreement, resuming his independent rule. Trajan marched his legions back to Dacia (105) where he bridged the Danube, and stormed Sarmisegethusa again.

The Daks defended their country with enthusiasm and with blood-thirsty hatred against the Roman invaders. This fact was recognized even by those Rumanian historians, who later supported chauvinists to create or popularize the myth of Dako-Roman intermarriage.

*The Dacians resisted in the mountains "with an incomparable fury, in which all the people shared. Even the women joined in". (\*19).* Sarmisegethusa was burned to the ground at this time. The Dacian chiefs had drunk poison at a final banquet, and assumably, most of the soldiers and their families followed the heroic example of the Dacian leaders. Following this, almost unprecedented collective suicide, the legions, full of bloodthirsty revenge because of the great loss in human resources on the Roman side too, almost completely exterminated the entire population of Dacia. The unfortunate country became one, burning bloody slaughter. Some remainders were forced to leave their destructed home-country, in chains as slaves. In about 110, the victorious emperor raised in Rome a triumphal column (by Apollodoros), which aimed to proclaim the victory and a serious warning to the world: all those who resist will follow the Dacian example and, if necessary, populations of whole countries will be annihilated.

*In the 2000 figures of the 124 spiral panels we follow the conquest of Dacia step by step: the Roman cohorts issuing from their Stations in full armor; the crossing of the Danube on a pontoon bridge; the pitching of a Roman camp in the enemy's land; the confused conflict of spears, arrows, sickles, and stones; a Dacian village set to the torch, with women and children begging Trajan for mercy; Dacian women torturing Roman prisoners; soldiers displaying before the Emperor the heads of slain enemies; surgeons treating the wounded;*

\*18: Will Durant: *Caesar and Christ*. (In the series of *The Story of Civilization*. Vol. III, pp.409-410.)

\*19: N. Iorga: *The History of Roumania*. p. 27.

(Note: let us mention at this point that we are using the spelling: "Rumania" in this essay, however, we are found to use spellings as "Roumania" or "Roumanian" in quotation).

*the Dacian princes drinking one after another the cup of poison; the head of Decebalus brought as a trophy to Trajan, the long file of captive men, women, and children snatched from their homes into foreign settlements or Roman slavery - this and more the dark column tells in the most masterly narrative relief in sculptural history. (\*20).*

Trajan's column in the Roman forum is actually one of the best historical evidence of the complete destruction of Dacia indeed, which produces a considerable addition to the contemporary historical documents (of Dio Cassius, Dio Chrysostomus, Plinius, Iuvenalis, Marcus Aurelius, etc.), which were describing, stating or indicating the fact that the Romans actually succeeded in almost completely exterminating the nation of the Daks. Trajan's Dacian war was extended into a genocide. (\*21). It is interesting, however, that the "Dako-Roman theoreticians" were using even Trajan's column as some sort of strange "evidence" supporting the Dako-Roman myth, "recognizing" that the Dacians (on the column) used to wear a cap, which was "very similar" to the skin-cap of the Rumanian peasants of to-day. (\*22).

Let us also mention in connection with Trajan's Dacian war, that Apollodoros, the emperor's great architect built a bridge across the Danube at Dierna (Orsova). The Romans built several military camps and roads. In Apulum (Hung: Gyulafehervar, Rum: Alba Julia) a Pannon legion, in Potaissara (Torda) a Macedonian legion guarded the province. Near to the destroyed Sarmisegethusa, a new military town was built, called Ulpia Traiana. Only the officers were pure Romans of Italy, while the legionaires were recruited from Asia Minor, Syria, Greece, Iberia, even from Berber-Africa. The soldiers were isolated by living in their fortresses (castellum), from the almost completely depopulated country. We have to assume that no elements of any human life ever appeared around the brutal conquerors, but the military command realized the possible dangers of these hostile mountains, so military orders protected these soldiers from any connections with natives. Dacia became the Land of Death, but the careful Roman administration wished to isolate the legions from even visiting those ghost towns and deserted forests. Mining was mainly a military duty because Roman civilians did not dare to appear in this dangerous far-east province, and natives were not available either. (It was really amazing that modern

\*20: Will Durant: *Caesar and Christ*, p. 412.

\*21: The modern term "genocide" was used mainly in modern history. (It was made an international crime by a U.N. convention, adopted in 1948, and took effect only in 1950), but we have to use this word as a very characteristic one, because this case was really a proto-type of it.

\*22: The bristled felt hats (appearing on the column) were generally worn by Scythians, Thracians, and all peoples of the Carpathian Mountains both in ancient and modern times, however N. Iorga, the famous Rumanian historian mentioned that the cap of Dacian nobles was identical with the skin-cap of Rumanian peasants of today, and used this observation as an evidence! (N. Iorga: *A History of Roumania*, p. 27.)

political interest was actually able to fabricate the myth that the "Dako-Roman population" was made upon a "happy intermarriage" between Romans and Daks ...).

In 270 A.D. Dacia became the very first province which Roma abandoned. The Marcoman tribes invaded the area since about 180, and in 250, the Roman administration began the evacuation of Dacia. In the winter of 270-271, Emperor Aurelian ordered the legions to leave Dacia and to march to Moesia, which became "Dacia Aureliana" from now on. The Danube represented the borderline against the possible barbarian invasions coming from the north. Carpathian Dacia became a German territory for a while.

Let us take a final look at the Carpathian and Balkanic provinces of the Roman Empire. Let us compare Dacia with the other East-European territories, with possibility of Romanization in mind:

Province	Year of Conquest	Year of Evacuation	Years of Colonization
Illyricum & Dalmatia	168 B.C.	476 A.D.	644
Epirus & Achaea	168 B.C.	395 A.D.	563
Macedonia	146 B.C.	395 A.D.	541
Thracia	46 B.C.	395 A.D.	441
Moesia	44 B.C.	395 A.D.	439
Pannonia	10 B.C.	408 A.D.	418
Dacia	107 A.D.	271 A.D.	164(!)

In the Dalmatian coast, in Epirus, in Macedonia, in Thracia and in Moesia, even in Pannonia, many hundreds of years provided the opportunity of Romanization. In the depopulated mountains of Dacia only a relatively limited period was associated with the Roman conquest. The mountainous regions of the Balkans, however, preserved some fragments of Romanized, rural peoples, which were called later as Vlachs.

Romanization of the Balkans were stopped when Emperor Flavius died (495), and the Empire was divided between his sons: Arcadius and Honorius. Arcadius received the eastern part of the Empire including the Balkans. His rule marks the beginning of Re-Hellenization. This revival of Greek culture was, of course, very slow in the Vth Century because of the Roman traditions and of the Goth, Hun, etc. invasions, but later became quite aggressive, when the civilian bureaucrats were supported by military forces. "Dacia Aureliana", which existed for 124 years (271-395) as a Roman province, became also a Byzantine territory. Illyricum and Dalmatia remained Latin for a longer time, thus

"Romanization" could have its effect there most intensively. The most western parts of the Balkans became part of the Eastern Empire only when Rome itself finished its long history. (476 A.D.).

*The Roumanians were not descendants of Roman colonists of Dacia left behind in East Hungary and Transylvania ... After the removal and withdrawal of the Roman colonists, Dacia, for untold centuries, was the arena of the wildest international struggles known to history, and these could not have been outlived by any nomad people remaining there. To be sure, some express the opinion that the Roumanian nomad herdsmen fled into the Transylvanian mountains at each new invasion (by the Huns, Bulgarians, Avars, Magyars, Patzinaks, Cumans successively) and subsequently always returned. But the nomad can support himself in the mountains only during summer, and he must descend to pass the winter. On the other hand each of these new invading nomad hordes needed these mountains for summer grazing for their own herds. Thus the Roumanians could not have escaped, and their alleged game of hide-and-seek would have been in vain. (\*23).*

On the most-western parts of the Balkans (Dalmatia and W. Macedonia), along the Adriatic coast and the mountainous background, the Romanized pastoral societies could hide themselves much easier. These former slaves of Italian patricians, whose language still preserved some vulgar elements of their previous masters, survived both the nomad invasions and the disturbances of Byzantine tax-collectors.

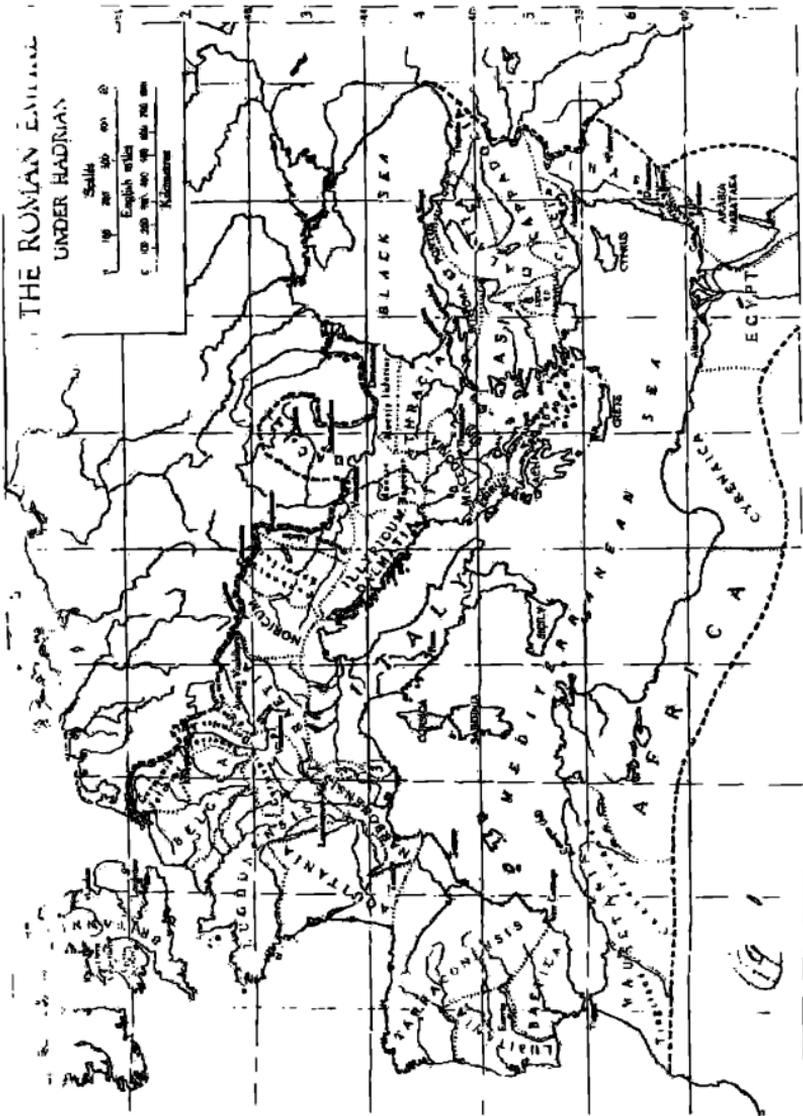
*During the summer they grazed on most of the mountains of the Balkan peninsula and took up their winter quarters on the seacoasts among a peasant population speaking a different language. Thence they gradually spread, unnoticed by the chroniclers along all the mountain runges. (\*24).*

While the heroic and unfortunate Dak people disappeared from the stage of History, those Romanized rural peoples of the Western Balkans who were more familiar with the hidden forests and roads than the uninvited nomads and Greeks, could gradually take the opportunity to migrate, step-by-step, to new, northern pastures. The descendants of these Romanized Balkan shepherds became inventive enough to claim that they were actually descendants of the so-called "Dako-Romans".

\*23: T. Peisker: *Origin of the Roumanians*. (The Cambridge Medieval History, 1911, Vol. 1, p. 357.)

\*24: *Ibid.*, p. 356.

# THE ROMAN EMPIRE UNDER HADRIAN





### III

#### **"ROMANIZED" SHEPHERD-SOCIETIES OF THE BALKANS IN THE STORMY CENTURIES OF THE MEDIEVAL MIGRATION**

It would be almost impossible to estimate how many thousands of people remained in the mountains and in the hidden valleys, forests, caves of those Provinces, which were abandoned by the Roman legions in the Balkans. No doubt that Illyricum, Thracia, Macedonia and Epirus were still populated by pastoral societies speaking some sort of degenerated Latin in the end of the IVth Century. These peoples did not wish, or were not permitted to follow their lords or the evacuating legions back to Italy, and they faced (if they were aware of them at all) two sorts of dangers which came from two opposite directions: the Byzantine-Greek expansionism from the south and the barbaric invasions from the north.

The drama which created serious turmoil on the Balkans, actually began in the far-off north-east. Balamber, king of the Hun tribal-organization defeated the Alans and Heruls north of the Black Sea, and then destroyed the Ostrogothic Empire of King Hermanrich, thus pushing the Ostrogoths to the west. The Ostrogoths entered into Transylvania from the east, and for a couple of generations they lived in the Carpathian Basin as some sort of servant-people of the growing Hun power. The Huns, before crossing the Carpathians, defeated the Visigoths at the Dniester River, which caused the Visigoths, under King Athaneric to turn to the south, towards Moesia, and penetrated in the Balkans. (\*25).

At this time (376) the Romans still attempted to stop the Great Migration so Emperor Valens (\*26) intended to disarm the uninvited guests, and ordered them to settle in Lower Moesia. He failed to fulfill his plan, because the Visigoths, under the leadership of Fritigern, defeated and killed Valens near Adrianople. (378). Following this, the Visigoths appeared even south of Thrace. Theodosius, Emperor of the East, was able to pacify the invaders by influencing the new, young king, Alaric, who was hoping for a position in Byzantium. Theodosius died in 395, and Alaric, was disappointed because he realized that Arcadius, the new Emperor of the East did not recognize him as a "Roman" authority.

\* 25: The Visigoths were later also called as "Thervings".

\* 26: Valens was the younger brother of Emp. Flavius Valentinianus I. (364-375.) The Roman Emperor appointed him as "Co-Augustus in the East".

In a passion of fury, he ravaged Thrace to the gates of Constantinople. Arcadius was quite helpless until his field marshal, Stilicho, a Vandal by blood, was able to push Alaric and his Visigoths away from Constantinople. (\*27).

In 398-99, the Visigoths were wandering first to Achaëa, then to Epirus and then they turned north-west to Illyricum. These areas, especially along the Adriatic coast, were still populated by various rural peoples, who were left behind by their Italian masters, and who still preserved some sort of deformed Latin in their languages and some Roman memories in their customs. These people, mostly shepherds, were hiding in their forests, swamps and caves, but some of them left their settlements far behind. Certain groups migrated to mountainous high-pasturages, many others took refuge to the north-east, and settled in the Balkan Mountains. (Mountain-range in today's Bulgaria.) Some of them were pushed to the northern coasts of Dalmatia by the Visigoths (Alaric arrived at Northern Dalmatia in 400, and left the Balkans for Italy in 401). (\*28).

The disturbed peoples of the Balkans now breathed more freely, but not for too long. The Hun power which ruled a large part of Europe from Gallia to the Caucasus (\*29) realized the opportunity of extension on the Balkans down to Constantinople. The Hun horsemen crossed the Lower Danube several times, and they raided Moesia, Macedonia and Thessalia (446-47). At this time the Romanized pastoral peoples of the Balkans were obliged to tolerate the patronage of the Eastern Emperor, who represented the only security for them, however, many branches of them chose the high mountains and deep forests again rather than the support of the Greek bureaucracy. The mountains were cold and dangerous, but they were isolated and free.

It is obvious that the dangerous age of the Goth and Hun invasions were not too suitable for any northward-migrations for the Romanized people of the Balkans. The adventure of the Visigoths stopped, paralyzed their movement for a while; most of them hid themselves on the higher pasturages of Illyricum, Macedonia and Epirus. Those, who already reached the Balkan Mountains, stopped and settled, because north of

\*27: Stilicho actually avoided any battle with Alaric, who was forced to leave mostly by shrewdness of diplomacy. Stilicho himself betrayed Arcadius, and was appointed later as "magister militum" of Illyricum by Honorius, Emperor of the West.

\*28: Stilicho, in service of Rome at this time, halted the Visigoths at Verona and Alaric withdrew to Epirus, but in 407-08, he left the Balkans forever. Invaded Italy and in 410, he sacked even Rome.

\*29: Following the roles of King Kharatam and King Uldin, the first representative of the Hun Golden Age was King Ruga (Rugilas). He fully occupied the Carpathian Basin, which became heart of the Hun Empire. Transylvania was populated by the Goth vassals, so it was called as "Gothia". After 409, he ravaged the Balkans and Thessalus II (408-50) was forced to pay tribute. In c. 440, Attila (his cousin) occupied the Balkans, conducting the campaigns again in 446-47, making Sigidunum (Belgrade), Sarsus, Niza and Sardia (Sofia) as Hun military strongholds.

the Lower Danube, the Hun Empire seemed to be a very dangerous place to live in. Transylvania (the former Dacia) was still called as "Gothia" in King Attila's time (445-453), since the great king of the Huns placed many of the dominated German tribes in that area. (\*30). The Carpathian Mountains were guarded by elite Hun troops. These forces were quite hostile against any movements which would appear from the south. (\*31).

After the disintegration of the Hun Empire (\*32), Marcianus, Emperor of the East (450-57), continued the Hellenization of the Balkans. The Romanized pastoral-societies did not understand Greek and worried about the growing frequency of the appearing Greek military units and Greek-speaking tax-collectors. Their natural tendency was, of course, to continue their migration to the north, however, their movements were stopped, or slowed, once more again by Hun fragments on the Balkans, Ostrogoths in Pannonia, and by Gepidas in Gothia. (\*33).

At the end of the VIth Century, the Avar Empire (proud inheritors of the "Inheritance of Attila") (\*34) extended from the Alps to the Caucasus. The people of Bajan khagan, which invaded the Balkans several times in the VIIth Century, threatened the Gates of Constantinople. They seemed to be a new appearance of the Huns.

The new patronate of the Latin-fragments was surprisingly not Byzantium, but the Bulgarians.

The Bulgarians, first mentioned by this name in 354 A.D. were members of the Turkish branch of the Turanian race. Their northern branch (the Volga-Bulgars) were populating the area between the Ural Mts. and the Central Volga River. The southern branch were organized in tribal and clan-system, and were ruled by the "Dulo" princes of Attila's Hun dynasty. Their first authenticated ruler was Kan Kurt (or Kubrat; 584-642), proud descendant of Attila, who dominated the steppes north of the Caucasus. In 619 he visited Constantinople to request aid against the Avar Khaganate. After his death Great Old Bulgaria was disrupted by simultaneous attacks of the Avars (from the west) and of the Khazars (from the east). Isperikh (or Asperuch;

30. Even Romanian historians recognized Vth Century Transylvania as "Gothia" since they were unable to find any traces of Daks, Romans, or Dako-Romans in the eastern part of the Carpathian Basin at this time.

31. We have even documentary evidence about the Szekelys as direct Hun descendants. "Anonymus", the Hungarian Chronicle of Bela III also represents one of the most authentic historical sources mentioned the Szekelys as "Populi Ardyale Regis" (C.A. Macartney: *Studies on the Early Hungarian History*, 1917). (Note: the descendants of those Szekelys, who were mentioned already by the medieval sources as "siculi" frontier guards, are suppressed minorities in Greater Rumania today).

32. After the battle of Nedao (454 A.D.).

33. Emp. Marcianus allowed the Ostrogoths to settle as "foederati" (military allies) in Pannonia.

34. The Avars were related to the Huns and ruled by kings of Hun origin.

643-701) son, or grandson of Kubrat, leader of one of the fragments, moved to former Dacia Inferior (area between the Transylvanian Alps and the Lower Danube) with his people (after 650). In about 680, the Bulgars crossed the Lower Danube, moved to former Moesia, defeated the army of the Eastern Roman Empire, and established their capital at Pliska. At this time they dominated both sides of the Lower Danube, Moldavia and Bessarabia. Ispirikh and his successors welcomed more and more Romanized refugees coming from the south, and they became the most important patrons of them.

Pushed by various Turanian (Ural-Altai) tribe organizations (Huns, Avars, Bulgarians) a new type of race and language appeared on the Northern Balkans called the Slavs. This (eastern) branch of the Indo-European language family was already known by Greek and Roman writers of the 1st and 2nd Centuries as "Venedi" and in these early times they already inhabited the region beyond the River Vistula. (In today's Poland). As a direct result of the Hun and Avar conquests, the Slavs were separated into northern (Poles, Czechs, Moravians, Slovaks), eastern (Russian, Ukrainians), and southern branches (Slovenians, Croatians, Serbians), however, the officials of Constantinople called them only by the simplified name of "Sclaveni".

They quickly populated the Balkan valleys and they became servant-peoples of Hun-, Avar-, later Bulgarian lords. After the fall of the Hun Empire, and in a later time, when the Avar Empire was already weakened by the growing Frankish power, the Slavs already outnumbered by population all other races of Illyricum-Dalmatia, Western Moesia and Northern Macedonia. Krum, one of the greatest Bulgarian rulers (808-814), a Pannonian Bulgar, was probably still Hun by origin, but when Boris I. (852-89) converted his Bulgars to Greek-Orthodox Christianity, supposedly almost the whole Bulgarian population was actually Slavicized, and the blood-brotherhood of Attila was nothing else in Greek-Orthodox Bulgaria but a part of a foggy and heroic mythology.

In the IXth and Xth Centuries, Greek-Orthodox, and Slav-Bulgaria, (especially its central-mountainous regions) was the best pastoral area for those fragments, which still preserved certain elements of Latin in their language. These people (the Vlachs) were converted to Greek-Orthodoxy by Greek missionaries, but they remained illiterate. They did not know anything about the facts of Roman disintegration or about the long-time exterminated Dak people. Living in primitive circumstances among their sheep and goats, they did not even know that there is an old City, called Rome, somewhere in far-off Italy. In other

words - we have to assume that they did not have historical memories and they did not have geographical perspective either.

In the Xth Century one of the largest portions of these degenerated "Romans" were living in the Pindos mountains, in Thessalia. (Between Epirus and Macedonia). They were called by linguists as "Megleno-Romans". Another significant group, the so-called "Arumuni" (Arumuns) were already in the Balkan Mountains, populating the valleys from the Central Balkans to the Black Sea. The third, and a considerably large group, the "Istro-Romans", still populated the Adriatic Coast, (Dalmatia, and W. Macedonia), areas, which belonged to the old Roman Empire centuries ago. (\*35).

Just as the Bulgarians, the Wallachians were also Slavicized by intermarriages with Slav elements. The only difference was that the Bulgarians became Slavs almost completely, while the Wallachians still preserved almost half of their vocabulary some sort of deformed Latin. (\*36).

*The immigration of the Slavs did not fail to influence the ancient Rumanians. That is clearly proved by many Slav features in the Rumanian ethnical development and by the richness of the Rumanian language in Slav elements, which goes so far that on this basis several earlier scholars numbered the Rumanians among the Slav peoples. (\*37).*

One could ask a question: were these shepherd societies really "Slavicized Romans", or were they rather "Romanized Slavs"?

Modern Rumanians are stressing the Roman connection, but minimizing the Slavic influence, in spite of the fact that the Rumanian language actually consists more Slavic than Latin words. (\*38). Let us admit, that since the Roman Empire disintegrated already in the Vth Century, and because the first Slavic fragments appeared on the Balkans only around the VIth Century, the questioned shepherd-societies were probably Macedonians, Illyrians and other peoples of the Balkans, who were first Romanized by their Roman landlords and later Slavicized by the Slav newcomers, who were infiltrating from the north. It was quite

\*35. Megleno-Romans, Arumuns and Istro-Romans; - these expressions are clearly showing the fact that the Vlachs were actually peoples who were left by Roman colonizers in these areas. These names are also showing the fact that these fragments were the main starting points of a later unified people, which called itself: Rumania.

\*36. According to Clitor, a Rumanian linguist, even in the XXth Century, the Rumanian language consisted 45.7% Slavic, 31.5% Latin, 8.4% Turkish, 7% Greek, 6% Hungarian, and 0.6% Albanian words.

\*37. L. Fekes: *The Development of the Rumanian People*. (The Hungarian Quarterly, Winter, 1941, p. 680.).

\*38. The linguistic statistics mentioned in \*36 was taken from I. Szakonyi: *The first historical news about the Wallachians and the historical basis of the Doko-Roman Theory* (Kanadai Magyarok, 1966)

obvious, however, that these pastoral clans, villages were not "pure" Romans.

*The origins of the Rumanians point to many different components. This is not astonishing if we consider that all European nations have experienced a considerable mixture of blood so that in most cases the racial basis is no longer recognizable. This is naturally the case of the Rumanians, who lived at one of the most troubled points of the Continent and thus were exposed to many and varied foreign influences. (\*39).*

In light of historical evidence there is proof that these mixture-peoples migrated from south to north, and moved as clans, families or as individuals, but not as tribes. Of course, this piece of historical evidence did not fit to the "Dako-Roman theory", and it certainly did not fit to the imagination of a "Dako-Roman continuity in Transylvania". Consequently, it seemed to be a national task for modern Rumanian politicians, and government-supported historians to prove, that the Wallachian migration was actually not from the south to the north, but from the north to the south! For example, Ghyka was mentioning some "Romanized population" which was established by the Avars in Pannonia (A. D. 618), and he also explains the unquestionable existence of Vlachs in Northern Bulgaria (A. D. 860) as "Dacian refugees from the north" (\*40).

The traditional date of the Hungarian Conquest of the Carpathian Basin is 896. This was the year, when Arpad the Conqueror led the Magyar tribes (\*41) into the Carpathian Basin. Some of the latest researches, however, seem to suggest, that the so-called "Late Avars" which joined the Avar Khaganate in 670, were actually "The Magyars". They were related both the Avars and the Magyars, and represented some sort of transitional tribe-organization between Avars and Magyars, both racially and linguistically. (\*42). According to this newest theory, the Magyars of 896 were simply the final link in a Hun-Avar-Late Avar-Magyar chain. Each link was interrelated to the others, each of them included Mongol, and Turkish elements in a certain extent, each of them were led by Hun kings or chieftains, and all of them consciously belonged to the great Turanian (Ural-Altai) people. (\*43)

\*39: L. Elekes: *The Development of the Rumanian People*, p. 678.

\*40: M. Gyka: *A Documented Chronology of Rumanian History*, p. 71-76.

\*41: Constituting seven tribes, they were called the "Hetumoger" (The Seven Magyars).

\*42: The westward movement of the Late Avars was somewhat associated with the migration of Isprick's Bulgars to Moesia. This fact seems to indicate that perhaps both fragments were closely related, and both were directed by Hun chieftains. (The Late-Avar/Pre-Magyar Theory was introduced by Gyula Laszlo: *A Kettős Honfoglalásról*. (About the Double Conquest. Archaeologiai Értesítő, Budapest, 1970, p. 161-190).

\*43: Assuming the reality of this theory, the Székelys (who are traditionally Hun descendants) and the Late Avars by origin. The conscious interrelationship between Turanian (Hun-Avar) and Magyar tribe-organizations were suggested by several historians before G. Laszlo.

From the point of view of the Transylvanian problem it did not really make any difference if the actual Hungarian Conquest took place at the end of the IXth Century, or two hundred years earlier. The Late Avars did not find any traces of "Dako-Romans" in Transylvania, and the Magyars did not find them either. They certainly found, however, Hun, and Avar fragments and Gepid, Goth, Hun, Avar cemeteries.

Simultaneously, the Vlach fragments were still to be found in various places of the Balkans at this time. Supposedly, most of them reached the Balkan Mountains, and several clans, families were slowly migrating northwards in Macedonia and at the Dalmatian coast. The new, Orthodox Bulgaria seemed to be very attractive for them. The Bulgars of Boris (852-89), Vladimir (889-93), and Symeon (893-927) counteracted the aggressive Byzantine influence and consequently there appeared a natural base for all those, who took refuge from Greek soldiers and tax-collectors. Both Bulgarians and the Romanized fragments were already Slavicized, consequently communication was relatively easy. Finally the mountains of Bulgaria offered excellent pasturages, well-separated dwellings for these welcomed shepherd-societies.

#### IV.

### VLACHS IN THE "FIRST BULGARIAN EMPIRE" (VIII - XI CENTURIES).

In 867, the Schism between Byzantine and Roman Christianity was associated with the sharp controversy between the pro-Roman Ignatius and Patriarch Photius, who proved to be not only an enthusiastic Greek-Orthodox by faith, but an anti-Roman and pro-Greek by national feeling. (\*44). His patriarchate coincided with the rule of Basil I., founder of the Macedonian Dynasty (867-886), an Armenian, whose reign initiated what was probably the most glorious period of Byzantine history. Under his direction the Empire became a purely Greek Monarchy. In 867, Photius had been banished and Ignatius, the pro-Roman, was recalled for a while, to symbolize the peace with Rome on papal terms (\*45), but the conflict between Greeks and Latins became permanent. The emperor himself was only Armenian by extraction, but he was born in Macedonia, thus he concentrated on Balkanic affairs much more than his predecessors had done.

We could rightly assume, that the reinforced re-Hellenization, and the increased bureaucratization of the Balkans disturbed the lives of all those rural fragments, which still communicated using some sort of deformed, vulgarized Latin, and did not wish to adopt Greek language and culture. These clans, families and individuals followed the ways of those, who left Epirus, Thessalonica and Macedonia decades (perhaps even centuries) ago. This northward migration used the natural roadways of rivers (and their valleys) flowing into the Aegean Sea (Vardar, Strymon, Hebrus, etc.). They also moved along the Adriatic coast up to Dalmatia, where the direction of their movement turned to the east, and using the rivers (Drina, Morava, Sava) again, most of them reached the area south of the Lower Danube. In 877, this northward movement of these pastoral societies assumably became quicker, when the enthusiastically pro-Greek Photius was restored once more again, and he, in alliance with imperial troops, turned sharply against Roman customs and Latin-speaking groups everywhere in the Byzantine Empire. It was true that Leo VI (the "Wise; 886-912) put Ignatius back in power again, but at this time (c.900) most of the Romanized inhabitants already left the Southern Balkans.

\*44: In the Council of Constantinople (867), Photius anathematized the pope, and rejected the idea of Rome's primacy.

\*45: The popes of this time were Nicholas I. (the Saint; 858-67), and Adrian II (867-68).

We must not think that the Romanized elements of the Balkans knew anything about the Greek-Latin controversy. Living in the mountains, or on the Adriatic coast, occupied with grazing their animals, they were separated from internal and international events not only by their permanent separation but by their illiterate characteristics too. They really did not know anything about political, social, religious, etc. reasons, but actually suffered under the circumstances of the growing Greek pressure.

The most attractive place of migration was (or seemed to be) Bulgaria, where Symeon, second son of Boris I. was ruler at this time. (893-927). He was a proud, ambitious ruler, and the first of those Bulgarian kings, who assumed the title of "Tsar". (\*46). He had been educated at Constantinople (as a monk), and he was deeply imbued with Hellenistic culture, but he also realized that his people were a mixture of many racial elements, and not any of these elements were Greeks. (\*47). Ambitioning to be the only authority on the Balkans, he turned against Byzantium several times with force, and obviously, he welcomed non-Greek refugees, especially those peaceful-looking shepherds, in his country.

The Balkan Mountains proved to be not only a good pastoral area for the newcomers, but it was a relatively peaceful place, quite far-away from wars of the north and of the south. (\*48). As a result of these wars, Bulgaria lost its territories in Southern Transylvania, Munthenia and Moldavia. (\*49). In the south, the Byzantine forces prevented Symeon from becoming ruler of Byzantium, however, this event could not stop "the Tsar" to proclaim himself as "Emperor of the Romans and the Bulgars." (\*50).

At the times, when various Romanized pastoral fragments were migrating (northwards) on the Balkans, and many of them found temporary security in the Balkan Mts. of the Bulgarians, it was also

\*46: "Tsar", or "Czar" was actually a shortened form for the Latin "Caesar".

\*47: The term "Bolgar" ("Bulgar") means "mixture" in Old Turkish language. This term is understandable, if we consider that Old-Bolgary (N. of the Black Sea) already consisted elements of Hun, Turkish, Tatar, Mongol, etc. The Slavization of the Balkan-Bulgars, who were still ruled by Hun aristocracy, represented newer elements of mixture. The majority of the Bulgars became Slavs. The adaptation of the Romanized population from the south brought another racial and linguistic element into the country.

\*48: In the north, Symeon was allied with the Petchenegs against the Magyars, but finally, the Bulgarian Zalan was driven out from Maros valley, (Transylvania). The Petchenegs stopped at the Carpathians, but conquered Moldavia and all areas N. of the Lower Danube. In the south the Bulgars defeated the Greeks in 894, peace was made three years later, but Symeon attacked Byzantium in 914 again, riding into Macedonia, Thessaly, and Albania. Symeon also defeated the Serbs (926), but was unable to take Constantinople without a fleet.

\*49: The Petchenegs (Slav: Patzinaks, Hung: Hecsenyos) were Turko-Tatar nomads.

\*50: Constantinople considered itself as "the Second Rome", thus the title represented the claim to rule both Bulgars and Byzantines. Emp. Constantius (Porphyrogenitos; 913-59) protested, but Pope John X. (914-28) recognized his title.

possible that some limited groups crossed already the Lower Danube, and even infiltrated to S. Transylvania. Anonymus, notary of King Bela III (or IV), mentioned "certain Vlach", named "Gelou", who ruled a small group of "Vlachs and Slavs" in Transylvania in the Xth Century. Although Anonymus confused his own (political, social, ethnographic) age (which was the XII-XIII C.) with the age of the Hungarian Conquest (IX-X Centuries), after all, it was not completely impossible that some small Vlach settlements already infiltrated from the Balkans. (\*51). Rumanian historians, however, welcomed "Gelou" as the "missing-and-found link" between the "Dako-Romans" and modern Rumanians of Transylvania, and they introduced Gelou as "Prince" of a "Wallachian Principality" in Transylvania in the X Century. (\*52).

The Magyars, arrival to the Carpathian Basin (considered as the "Inheritance of Attila") at the end of the IXth Century, called Transylvania as "Erdöelve" ("Erdő: forest, "elve": principle, or - in this case - inland; later it became "Erdely", and Transylvanian Vlachs deformed it to "Ardeal). In the X-XI Centuries, the most powerful lord or Erdoelve was Gyula, a chieftan, whose daughter, Saroldu (Sarolta) was educated in Constantinople and married to Prince Geza, who was later to become head of the Hungarian state. (972-97). Saroldu became the mother of Vajk (Christianized as Istvan), first king of Hungary (997-1038); canonized in 1083). (\*53).

Although "Wallachian Principalities" did not exist in Hungarian Transylvania after the Hungarian conquest (or before it), one should not completely deny the possibility of the existence of small Vlach clans on both sides of the Lower Danube and even on the Transylvanian Alps. Most of them, of course were victimized by bloodthirsty Petcheneg nomads, who ruled the outside semi-circle of the Carpathians at this time, or forced to assimilate. There is no evidence of any Vlach principality in Transylvania in the X-XIth centuries, and there is not any authentic historical map of the world which would show "Wallachians", or "Vlach principalities" on the map of Transylvania before the XIIIth Century.

*The Magyars assert when they entered it, Transylvania was still uninhabited, unless the Szekelys were there, or a few Bulgars and*

\*51: We will return to this Anonymus-problem in our Chapter VI.

\*52: Rumanian historians are mentioning also "Menumoral", and "Glad" as "Wallachian prince" in X Century Transylvania. According to Anonymus, "Men-Ma-rot" was the grandson of Maró, one of Árpád, the Conqueror's chieftain, who settled in the area of the Maros Szamos rivers. (H. Iuvama "Men": Marót, because he kept too many concubines. Hung. "men": horse) Udal was probably a Bulgarian chief, living south of the Maros at this time.

\*53: The term "gyula" meant a high military position among the Magyars, based on the Turkish "pala". It became the name of a respectful Transylvanian Magyar family in which the high position of the "gyula" was inherited from father-to-son throughout generations. Gyula's residence was at Csababurgar (Rum: Alba Julia). The Petcheneg tribal-system have had also a tribe, named "gyula".

*Slavs. The Roumanians, they say, are of Balkan origin, and entered Transylvania only after the twelfth century as refugees, vagabonds, and wandering shepherds. The Roumanians claim with passion that their ancestors have, on the contrary, inhabited Transylvania, in unbroken continuity, since the days of Roman greatness ... I have no intention attempting to judge between these rival views ... Whether, in any case, there were no Roumanians in the tenth century, or one, or thousands: whether they constituted a quorum within the meaning of the act or no, they cannot have been either numerous or important, neither can they have possessed any ordered social or political society, for the organization which Hungary adopted for her new possession took small account of them; at most, perhaps, accepting the allegiance of certain mountain chieftains, who were, presumably, held responsible for the conduct of their followers. There were not, however, granted any status as a "nation" nor do we find any record even of isolated groups possessing "privileges" in the interior of the country. (\*54).*

As we realize from this quotation, C. A. Macartney, the eminent British historian, a specialist of medieval East-Central European history, attempted to be as cautious and as objective as humanly possible. With the exception of Anonymus' (mentioned) "Gelou", he could not find any traces of Vlachs up to the XIIIth Century in any of the (Byzantine, Bulgarian, Slav, or Hungarian) sources, but he assumes some slight possibility of some Vlach fragment even before it. He did not believe, however, that "Gelou", or any other Vlach existence in the country of the early Arpads (\*55) could represent any evidence of the "Dako-Roman continuity", only supposed that the pre-XIII Century Vlachs (if there were any) were the first forerunners of the Wallachian infiltration to Transylvania.

Unquestionably, Symeon's Bulgaria, which was forced to abandon the Northern side of the Lower Danube to the Petchenegs, still owned a stronghold at the point, where the River Sava flows into the Danube. Its Byzantine name was Singidunum. Assumably, Tsar Symeon sent only trustful, reliable and warlike Bulgarians to guard this fortress, some of them could be Vlach by origin. (\*56).

Symeon died in 927, and his son and successor was Peter (927-69), a ruler, who was pious, well-intentioned, but rather weak. He made peace with Constantinople, and Leo (the Wise) recognized him as Bulgarian ruler, and he also acknowledged Bulgaria as a semi-independent

\*54: C. A. Macartney: *Hungary and Her Successors*. Oxford University Press, 1937, p. 25n.

\*55: "The Arpads", kings of the Arpad dynasty, descendants and successors of Arpad the Conqueror.

\*56: Singidunum was called as "Nandorfchervar" by the Hungarians, (Nandru" South-Bulgars, - "chervar": white (freckle). The city is called as "Belgrad" today, and it is the capital of Jugoslavia.

Greek-Orthodox patriarchate. Bulgaria, during this period was preoccupied by the constant threat from the Magyars and the Petchenegs (or Patzinaks) (\*57), who occasionally reached even the mountainous hiding places of the Vlachs. The Croatians and Serbians simultaneously established their small but independent nation-states, (\*58), and gradually became quite hostile to Bulgaria. In the second half of the Xth Century, Sviatoslav and his Kievan (Russian) Slavs invaded Bulgaria. In 967, King Peter was able to force Sviatoslav to withdraw, but his successor, Boris II (969-72) was able to defend Bulgaria only by the help of Byzantium. As a consequence the king of the Bulgars was obliged to abdicate, thus the Bulgarian patriarchate was abolished, and Bulgaria itself became a Byzantine vassal-state for a while.

These were black years for the Romanized shepherd-societies of the Balkan Mountains. They were disturbed by the attacks of Magyars, Petchenegs, Kievan Slavs, and also by Byzantine bureaucracy which reached them once more again. Several of them abandoned their ancient occupations, such as sheep-breeding, and instead they became transport-carriers. As a matter of fact, probably so many of them adopted this new occupation, that the Bulgars and Serbians used them as "kjelators" (carriers, or transporters in medieval Slavic language. (\*59).

The year of 976 was a significant year in Bulgaria both from the Bulgarian- and a Wallachian point of view. In this year, Samuel, son of a Bulgarian governor of one of the western districts, which had been unaffected by the Russian invasion, set himself up as the new ruler of Bulgaria. (\*60). In this very year, the Byzantine chronicler, named Ioannas Skylites, noted that one of Samuel's brothers, named David, was murdered by some of the "kjelator-Vlachs", somewhere in the region of the Lakes Prepa and Kastoria. (\*61). According to our best knowledge this was the very first occasion, when the word "Vlach" appeared in historical writing. The Byzantine chronicler obviously picked this expression up from the Slav-Bulgarian vocabulary, since the Bulgarians (and also the Serbians) called almost all peoples of the Balkan Mountains as "kjelator-Vlachs", or simply as "Vlachs" at this time. (Its linguistic variations are: "Vlahi", "Volochi"; its Greek versions are: "Vlachos", and "Vlachus").

\*57: The tribes of Zsolc, Vaisz, and Taksony (successors of Arpad the Conqueror) raided Bulgaria in 934, 943, 958 and 962. The Petchenegs crossed the Lower Danube and raided Bulgaria in 944.

\*58: Tomislav became King of Croatia already in 924, accepting a crown from Pope John X (914-28), and turning his people towards Roman Christianity. The Serbians remained Byzantine-Orthodox, but under King Chaslav (900) they separated themselves both from Bulgaria and Byzantium.

\*59: "Calator" is a brother-word of "kjelator" in the modern Rumanian language. It still means: pastoral, or carrier-Vlachs.

\*60: Samuel extended his dominion to Sofia, re-established the Bulgarian patriarchate and after 986, extended his power to the Black Sea.

\*61: These lakes are at the area, where the River Vistrica springs.

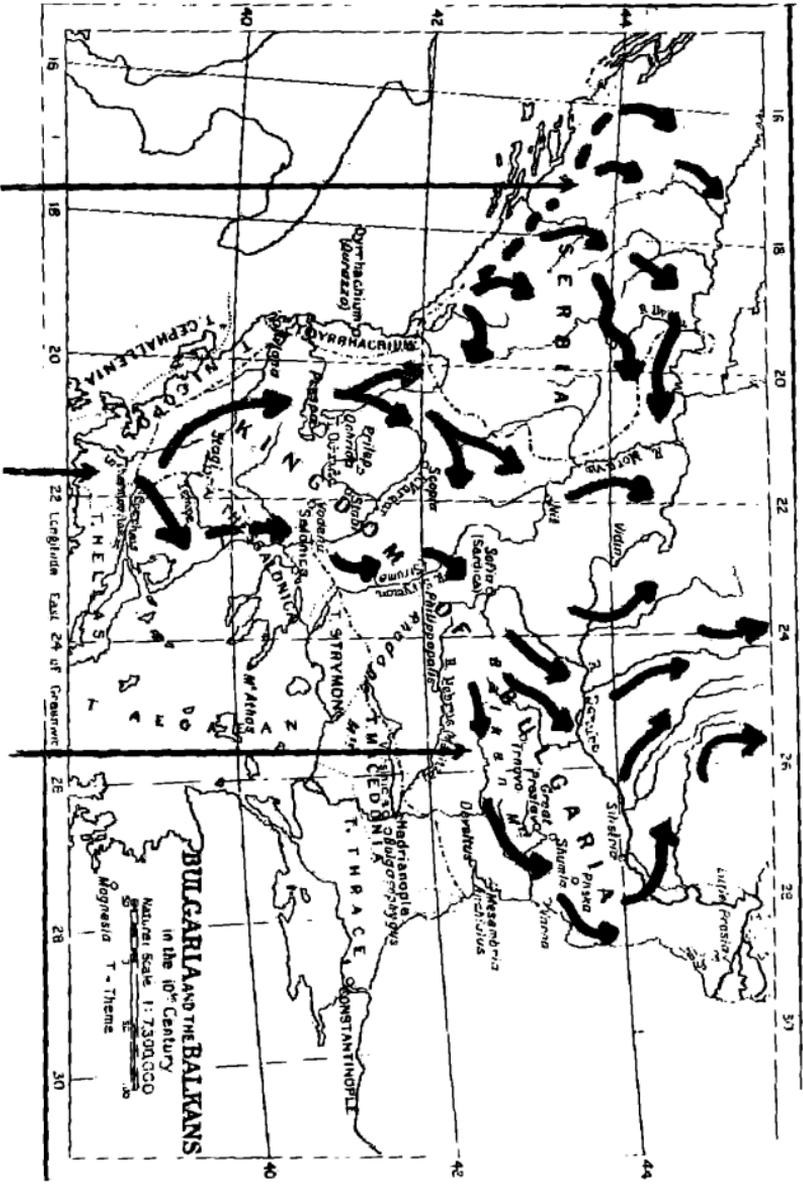
The first Bulgarian Empire (founded by Ispersikh in the VIIth Century) disintegrated at the end of the Xth Century. Already in 996, Emperor Basil II (who was called by Byzantines as "Bulgaroktonos", ; "Slayer of the Bulgarians"; 976-1025) proceeded to reduce one Bulgarian stronghold after another. Samuel was helpless, since officers defected from his army, and remembering the tragedy of his brother, David, he saw the probability betrayal of his Vlach subjects too. His son, Gabriel Radomir (or "Romanus") was murdered by his own cousin, (1016), John Vladislav, (1016-18), who (as successor of the Bulgarian throne) continued the war against the Byzantines. He was also killed in the battle near Dyrrhacium. Following this, Bulgaria was incorporated into the Byzantine Empire. The Bulgarian Patriarchate was once more abolished, only the Archbishop of Ochrid retained practical autonomy. Many members of the Bulgarian aristocracy settled in Constantinople and assimilated into the leading Byzantine families.

Some of the Vlach subjects were obviously trying to save themselves by betraying their Bulgarian lords to the Byzantines. Others, however, probably those on the northern slopes of the Balkan Mountains, attempted to leave dangerous Bulgaria, by migrating northwards. Many Vlach fragments crossed the Danube and appeared in Petcheneg-occupied Munthenia, offering their services to the Petchenegs. They chose life in the unknown, dangerous Petcheneg land, fearing the possible Byzantine persecution. In the first half of the XIth Century, the gravity of the Vlachs was still in Northern Bulgaria, but more and more Vlachs moved one-step-northwards again.

ISTRO-RUMENS

MEGLENO-RUMENS

ARUMENS



**BULGARIA AND THE BALKANS**

In the 10<sup>th</sup> Century

Natural Scale 1: 7,300,000

Legend:
 

- Province
- Theme

## V.

### VLACHS IN CUMANIA AND IN THE SECOND BULGARIAN EMPIRE.

Following the collapse of the First Bulgarian Empire (1018), Bulgaria was, for 168 years, part of the Empire of Byzantium. Taxation was very heavy in the newly occupied Bulgarian territory. Basil II, the "Slayer of the Bulgarians" cruelly suppressed all new subjects, who survived. The Bulgarian Vlachs attempted to disappear among their rocky mountains, or they tried to confuse the Byzantine tax-collectors and other bureaucrats by their permanent migration. From 1020 still remained one of the "sigillions" (orders) of the emperor, which prescribed the duties and responsibilities of the Archbishop of Ochrida. (\*62). Detailing the bishopries and listing all the duties, the sigillions notes, that the Archbishop should organize the wandering Vlachs somehow, and should attempt to collect the ecclesiastical tax. The Vlachs were forced to pay and to settle down, but many of the Vlach families hid themselves successfully again, or crossed the Lower Danube joining their fellow nationalities on the fields of the Petchenegs, because they chose danger and uncertainty rather than settlement, organization and tax-payment.

The Vlachs favoured peace and separation and they avoided fight at this time. They used every opportunity to escape from military service, but in some cases they were forced to serve their masters on the battlefields, whichever side they incidentally belonged. For example, when the Petchenegs invaded the Balkans in 1027 (in the time of Constantine VIII, the younger brother of Basil II; 1025-28), we may assume, that some Vlachs were recruited both in the Petcheneg- and the Byzantine side. (\*63). When Byzantium organized campaigns against the Sicilian Saracens, Vlachs were also in the mercenary army. (\*64).

In 1028, a female ruler followed Constantine on the imperial throne. Her name was Zoe, and she was the third daughter of the late emperor. Though she was 48 years old, married three times, associating her husbands (and favourites) in the imperial office. (1028-50). In the period of her rule Byzantium was involved mainly for the defense of its far-eastern frontiers against the Seljuk Turks, it could not concentrate on the organization and supervision of its Bulgarian territories with the

\*62: Ochrida is in Macedonia (it belongs to Jugoslavia today). It was an important political and social center of Bulgaria in the X-XI. Centuries.

\*63: The Petchenegs (Patzinaks) were finally driven back over the Danube by the general, Constantine Diogenes.

\*64: The Byzantine fleet attempted to clear the Mediterranean from the Saracens (Moslem Arabs). Part of this campaign was a campaign to Sicily. (1038).

same strength. The Bulgarian-Wallachian combined forces used this opportunity, to revolt under Peter Deljan, who was a descendant of Tsar Samuel, the son of Gabriel Radomir. Deljan was defeated in 1041, but in 1072 another Bulgarian, named George Voitech led an uprising against the Byzantine overlords in which he was also suppressed.

Bulgaria had to suffer under the repeated attacks of the Petchenegs in the same period. Their final raid came in 1048-54, but this invasion proved to be rather some sort of migration, under the pressure of the Cumans. (\*65).

The Cumans were also nomadic horsemen of Turkish origin. (They were also called "Kipchaks", and as "Polovtsi" by the Russians and as "Kuns" by the Magyars.) They used the very same east-west road, which was used by the Huns, Avars, Magyars, Petchenegs, (tribe-organizations to which they were related) before them: the road of the Great Migrations north of the Caspian and Black Seas. They conquered South Russia, later the region between the Crimea and the Eastern Carpathians in the XIth Century, and they appeared also north of the Southern-Danube valley, destructing the Petcheneg Empire and threatening the Kingdom of Hungary. In 1604, they crossed the Danube, invading the Bulgarian-Wallachian settlements, and flooded the Balkans as far as Thessalonica. They were finally driven back by local forces, but they occupied Munthenia, the Sereth, Pruth, Dniester valleys, Crimea, the southern Dniepr, the Donets valleys east to the Ural Mountains, and the northern coast of the Caspian Sea. They took over all the servant-peoples of the Petchenegs, who survived the turmoil, including the Wallachian settlements of Munthenia.

Unquestionably, several smaller Wallachian fragments were wandering on the Balkans in the same times. One of the well informed Byzantine officials was a man, by the name of Kedrenos, who mentioned them as shepherds migrating all over the Balkans. Another chronicler, was Kekaumenos, who was a chronicler of Romanos Diogenes (1067-71), emperor of Byzantium.

Kekaumenos, who was a man of Armenian origin, but a faithful servant of the Byzantine Imperial Court, wished to commemorate his uncle, who played some sort of positive role on the Byzantine side, when the Thessalian revolt broke out. This revolt was associated with the Cuman invasion. When the Cumans attacked Thessaly, and when some portion of the local population used this opportunity to revolt against Constantinople. According to the description of the chronicler, the

\*65: Many of these settled down in northeastern Bulgaria and assimilated into the Bulgars. The era of Petcheneg domination was over. The Bulgars were forced to face the menace of the Cumans.

Wallachians of Thessaly undertook the role of the traitors immediately, attempting to instigate the Thessalian Greeks and other nationalities against Byzantium, and, possibly, for the support of the Cuman invaders. Kekaumenos details the life-style of the Vlachs, reminding the readers, that the language of these pastoral peoples show some traces of Latin. He also mentions, that the illiterate society of these semi-nomads could be quite suspicious, wherever they appear, since they are notoriously double-dealers. They are serving everybody and they are usually betraying anybody, whoever is their master. (\*66). In one of his other works (\*67), Kekaumenos returns to this Thessalian rebellion again, mentions Nikulitsas, his uncle, and calls him as "Prince of Hellas" at this time. He also makes some remarks about those "traitorous Vlachs" again. It seems that the Wallachian problem engaged the Byzantine public opinion quite a lot in these critical years, and probably the Imperial Court did not really mind the northwardly migration of these unreliable shepherds. (\*68).

The Cumans, realizing the strength of Byzantium and attempted to invade Hungary in 1068 thus pursuing those Petcheneg refugee fragments, which were requesting asylum in the Hungarian Kingdom. (\*69). The invaders penetrated into Hungary almost to the Tisza river, but finally they were defeated by King Salamon's cousins, Princes Geza and Laszlo at Cserhalom. (\*70).

The Petchenegs were already destructed and partially annihilated by the Cumans at this time, but some surviving fragments still presented a considerable force, and they pushed by the Cumans slightly westward in the Lower Danube-valley. They probably mixed themselves with migratory Vlachs in 1071, when they conquered Sirmium (Hung: Szeremseg), which happened to be a Hungarian dominion at this time. The Hungarian army crossed the River Szava (Sava), cleared Sirmium

\*66: Interestingly enough, Kekaumenos mentions even Dacia Aureliana in his work in association with Romanized peoples on the Balkans. He proved to be very confused in this particular subtopic, since he puts even King Decebal into the IIIrd Century.

\*67: Kekaumenos' works were found by V. Vasiljevskij, a Russian Byzantologist in the Synodical Library of Moscow. (1881). The overall title of the Codex, written in Greek, was "Strategikon", (Knowledge in Strategy).

\*68: The northward migration of the Vlachs permanently continued in these decades in two major areas: (a) from Epirus, Thessaly and Macedonia to the Balkan Mountains of Bulgaria and (b) from Bulgaria to the land of the Cumans.

\*69: These Petcheneg refugees were settled down by Solomon, king of Hungary (1063-74) on the Lake Fertő and River Vág area. (1065)

\*70: Princes Geza and Laszlo (sons of King Bela I) became both rulers of Hungary in a later period. Prince Geza (as King Geza I: 1074-77), and his younger brother ruled Hungary as Laszlo I. (the Saint: 1077-95). According to the Hungarian Chronicles, especially Prince Laszlo proved to be a hero in battles against the invading Cumans.

from the Petchenegs, who, as it was clarified at this time, were actually acting as frontier guards employed by Byzantium. This incident spoiled the relationship between Emperor Michael VII (1071-78) and Hungary, and the situation became even more serious, when the ambitious King Solomon turned against Nicetas, the captain of Nandorfehevar, (which was a Byzantine stronghold at this time), to punish him, as a person who ambited the Pecheneg adventure. Nicetas surrendered Nandorfehevar, and the Hungarians penetrated south into Byzantine territory down to Nis. There, Prince Geza, one of the leaders of the Magyar army made peace with the Byzantine representatives, returning all the war prisoners. This gesture improved the Greek Magyar relationship right away, (\*71), and it was important for both Byzantium and Hungary, which countries equally faced the problem of Cuman invasions at this time.

At this point, let us raise the question: just how much were those Cumans really "Cumans", or in what extent were rather a mixture of Cumans and Vlachs?

Unquestionably, a very large portion of the Balkan-Vlachs were already in Cuman service, since they amalgamated themselves with Cumans. This amalgamation was useful for the Cumans, (because the Vlachs could be used not only as pastoral servants, but as guides on the hidden roads, and forests), and was good for the Vlachs, (who were looking for military support against the Byzantines). The Vlachs, originally humble shepherds, and refugees from the south, were proud to be associated with the powerful Cumans, whose country extended from the Lower Danube Valley to the Caspian and up to Russia.

*"They were enriched by a new ruling class. That is why, in mediæval Rumanian documents, most of the nobles have Turki names; ... they prove that a considerable part of the Rumanian leaders in the Middle Ages was of Turki origin, and for a long time remained faithful to Turki customs."* (\*72).

Another episode of Hungarian history in which Cumans were involved came in 1083, when Solomon, the former king, who was deposed by Geza I, in 1074, visited Cumania and surprisingly married one of the daughters of Kutesk, ruler of the South Danubian Cumans. (\*73).

\*71: As a symbol of Byzantine gratitude, King Geza I. received a crown from Michael VII (Dukas) in about 1074-75. This crown became part of the Hungarian "Holy Crown". Geza also married Synadene, a Byzantine princess. For Byzantium this step was important, because the Empire was endangered by the attacks of the Cumans (from the north), and of the Seljuk Turks (from Asia Minor) in the same time.

\*72: L. Etelek: *"The Development of the Rumanian People."* p. 681.

(Note: The habits of most of the Rumanians are still Turkish. The ethnic customs are similar to the customs of Turkey Proper. The reason was not so much connected with the long Moslem domination of Wallachia, but with the fact of Cuman-Vlach intermarriage in the XI. Century.)

\*73: Solomon became a brigamis since he was already husband of Judith, d. of Emperor Henry III. of Germany (110,14-56)

Solomon encouraged Kutesk to invade Hungary, but Laszlo I., the royal hero of Cuman wars defeated the invaders again. Then Solomon and Kutesk turned the Cuman forces against Byzantium (1087), but this attack was unsuccessful again. (\*74).

A much more dangerous and memorable Cuman invasion threatened Constantinople in 1094, when Constantine Diogenes, a pretender to the throne of Alexius Comnenus, the ruling emperor (1081-1118), crossed the Danube with a large army of Cumans. He besieged Adrianople, but finally was defeated in the battle of Taurocomon. Anna Komnena, daughter of the emperor, and enthusiastic chronicler of the age, mentions the Wallachians again in connection with the Cumans. When the emperor led a campaign against the invaders (1095), he reached even the Balkan Mountains of Bulgaria, where he considered a decisive battle. Pursuing the already defeated Cumans, and being prepared for some other confrontation with other Cuman forces, the Byzantine army arrived to Anchiales (a certain point on the northern slopes of the Balkan Mountains, not too far from the Danube, dominated by the Cumans at this particular time). Then, Pudolos, a Vlach adviser of the emperor, suggested that the Byzantine forces should approach the Danube, where the Cumans could be expected to appear. At the same time, other Vlachs, (we do not know that they were co-operating with Pudolos or not), led the main force of Cumans and advanced in various hidden paths to surround the Greeks, and to attack them from behind. The Vlachs (both in Byzantine and in Cuman service) were more familiar with the Mountains than their masters. Anna Komnena could not really justify, who were planned victims of this treachery, and whether the Vlachs in Cuman service and in Byzantine service were co-operating at all. Beside the possibility of co-operation it was also possible that the Cumanian Vlachs attempted to betray their (cruel) Cuman masters, while Byzantine Vlachs tried to betray the hated Greeks, so the Vlachs, coincidentally, betrayed each other. Whatever was the real case of this incident (described by the imperial chronicler), it seemed to prove Kekaumenos' opinion about the Vlachs, whose history contains several of very similar treasons, whoever was their ally. (\*75).

While Vlach fragments amalgamated with the Cumans north of the Danube, a considerable number of other Vlachs remained among the Bulgars, who were dominated by Byzantium since 1018, and who

\*74: The Cumans ravaged the entire eastern Balkan region as far as Constantinople, until Emperor Alexius bought them off, took them into imperial service and used them to annihilate the Petchenegs. (Battle of Leburon: 1091.)

\*75: Byzantium learned from this bitter lesson; Constantinople did not need to use Vlach "advisers" or Vlach "alliance" anymore. (Emperor Alexius rather employed Cuman mercenaries attacking King Laszlo's Hungary, - without success. Later, Emperor John Comnenus, 1118-43, also used Cuman forces defeating the last surviving fragment of the Petchenegs in 1122).

attempted an unsuccessful rebellion against Constantinople in 1040, and also in 1072. Using the confusion on the Balkans caused by the Cuman invasions, the Bogomil heresy (\*76), the marches of the First and Second Crusades (1096 and 1147), and also using the opportunity that Byzantium was weakened by the Seljuk Turks, a third attempt finally brought freedom for the Bulgars. In 1185, two Bulgarian lords, John and Peter Asen (\*77) collected a large force of embittered Bulgarians and Vlachs, and being supported by the Cumans, attacked the local imperial forces of Emperor Isaac Angelus. (1185-95). The imperial army defeated them in the first battle, but the two Asens fled to the Cumans and returned again with a huge Cuman army. The combined Cuman-Bulgarian forces devastated the Central Balkans and even Thrace, annihilating the Greek population. The Greek commanders were unable to suppress the movement at this time, which resulted in the formation of a new Bulgarian State north of the Balkan Mountains, (1188), called the Second Bulgarian Empire. It became a very powerful kingdom, and Trnovo became the new political and cultural centre for the two Asen Brothers, who were joint rulers of this new Bulgaria.

The participation of the local Vlachs could have been very strong in this new kingdom. The founders, John and Peter Asen, were Vlachs themselves.

*"The Bulgarians ... regained their independence and again created a powerful kingdom under the Asenids ... That dynasty was of 'Vlach' origin."* (\*78).

The Asens were supported, of course, not only by their local Bulgarians and Vlachs, but by their northern neighbours, the Cumans and Turko-Wallachians. This alliance, however, did not seem to be strong enough facing the still powerful Byzantians. Then, in 1189, the Asens attempted to effect an alliance with Frederick Barbarossa, ruler of the Holy Roman Empire (1152-1190), when he took the Cross, and led the Third Crusade to the Holy Land (1189-1192). John Asen offered him a combined Bulgarian-Wallachian-Cuman army, if he would turn all his crusading forces not against the Seljuk Turks but against Byzantium. The German Emperor avoided friction and did not welcome the proposition. (\*79). The Bulgarians, however, resumed their raids into Thrace and even Macedonia, and they completely defeated the imperial army of Isaac Angelus near Berrhoe (1190) and at Arcadiopolis (1194).

\*76: This religious movement flourished especially among Bulgars, advocating political independency and resentment of Byzantine culture.

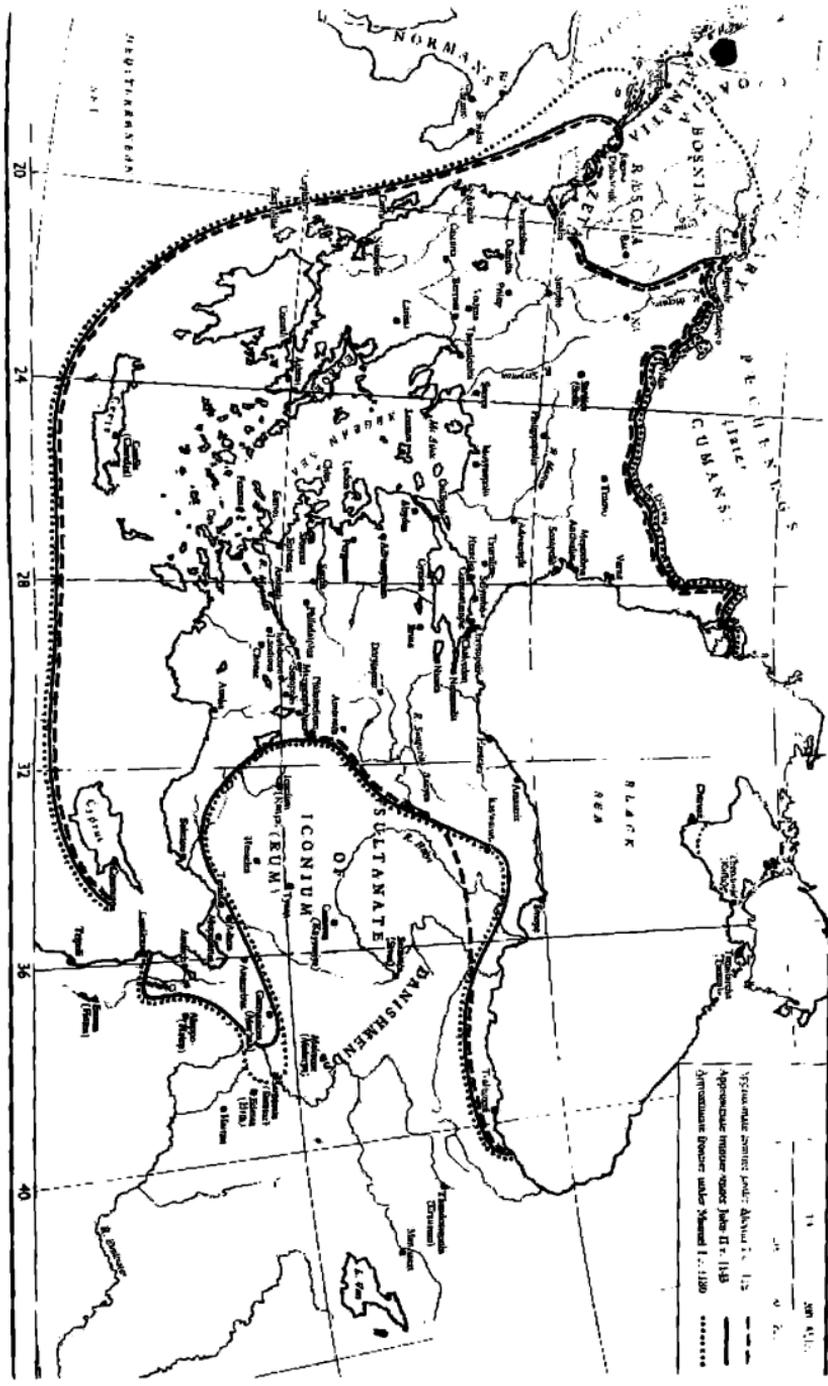
\*77: The Asen-brothers appeared from the vicinity of Trnovo. (North-Central Bulgaria).

\*78: Oscar Halecki: *Borderlands of Western Civilization*. p. 66.

\*79: For the satisfaction of Barbarossa, Isaac Angelus did not oppose the crossing of the crusaders into Anatolia.

In 1196, John Asen was murdered by boyar conspirators, and Peter Asen became the sole ruler, but one year later he himself became victim of his rivals. Their youngest brother, Kaloyan (Joanitsa) took over leadership (1197-1207) and the Asenid Dynasty ruled Bulgaria until 1258. The greatest ruler of the Asenids was John Asen II (1218-1241). (According to some sources: Ivan Asen). During his rule, Bulgaria became the strongest and largest state of the Balkans. After his rule, however, Bulgaria was victimized by the invasion of the Mongols (Tatars; 1241), and by the insurrection of Ivajlo, the "Tsar of shepherds", (1277-80), which was directed both against the Tatar invaders, and Bulgarian feudal lords. When the Turkish invasion began at the beginning of the XIV. Century, Bulgaria already disintegrated into three small portions (Trnovo, Vidin and Dobrudja). Thus they became easy victims of Osman imperialism of Bayazid I. (1389-1402).

Until this time, part of the Vlachs of Bulgaria assimilated to the Bulgars, the larger part, however, followed the roads of their relatives into Cumania and even to the Hungarian Kingdom.



The Division of the Continent.

37

## VI.

### EARLY WALLACHIAN INFILTRATION TO THE HUNGARIAN KINGDOM. (XII-XIII CENTURIES.)

Some groups of Vlachs from Munthenia and Oltenia (\*80) crossed the Transylvanian Alps in the second half of the XIIth Century, and appeared on the northern slopes of these high mountains. It is not easy to assume the first years of their appearance, and it would also be hard to justify as to what exactly was the real racial and linguistic characteristic of those pastoral families, who sneaked into the Transylvanian Basin from the land of the Cumans, using the high and narrow mountain-passes, the valleys of the Olt, Csill, Jolomica and Bodza rivers, and especially the Focsani Gate, which led to Fogarás county. Were they "Romanized" Cumans or were they "Turkicized" Vlachs? Since a large part of their vocabulary indicated that they were actually Slavic, or Bulgarian, or Serbian origin, since they were using a considerable number of vulgarized Latin words, and since they entered from Cuman-Wallachia, their name remained Vlach even in Transylvania. This was how they called their own nationality, and following this expression, the Magyars also called them as "Olah". These newcomers seemed to be humble. They chose the high-mountainous no-mans-land for their dwellings, for their sheep and goats, and they seemed to be quite grateful for the permission of settlement.

They did not call the new land as "Dacia", or "Transylvania", since they never heard of these geographical terms. Since they did not have too much connection with Magyar officials, whose official language was the Latin at this time, they adapted the expressions of the local rural Hungarian population. Transylvania was not called as Erdoeive in the turn of the XII-XIII Century, but as Erdely. The newcomers deformed this termed to "Ardeal", and this word remained their expression for Transylvania up to the XXth Century. They seemed to acknowledge with humility that they were admitted, and they could occupy certain limited areas, consequently the Hungarian word for "admission" - "befogadás" became "fagadui", and the other Hungarian word, which means "offering a shelter" - "szallasadas" was adapted as "salasdui" in their primitive communication.

For the Vlachs it seemed to be natural that they could not claim any

\*80: Oltenia and Munthenia are the main areas of the territory between the Transylvanian Alps and the Lower Danube. On the historical maps this area was marked as Wallachia, beginning with the XII-XIII Centuries.

leading cultural position in Hungary. First of all, they were completely illiterate, and without any desire or tendency for education. Secondly, they did not wish to be part of the peasant-society of Medieval Hungary since they isolated themselves to areas which were previously unpopulated. Thirdly, these newcomers have a tradition to being only humble servants, wherever they appeared in the course of their wanderings of many centuries. In Byzantium the Greeks, in Bulgaria the Bulgars, in Cumania the Cumans were the ruling class and

*"... the Serbian princes, for example, bought and sold the Rumanians living in their country like slaves."* (\*81).

The other - rather linguistic - observation was that

*"... the ancient neo-Latin element, the core of the Rumanians, was at the time latent, mostly hiding in the lower classes, but by its numerical majority it was gradually getting the upper hand and assimilating its leaders of ethnically foreign origin. This process was not a difficult one, because of the primitive social order, in which leaders did not come from a secluded group but mingled with the people in undifferentiated forms of small communities."* (\*82).

It was quite possible that in this early time of Wallachian migration, their chiefs, their leaders, heads of clans and families were not Vlachs at all, but Slavs or Turki-Cumans.

*"Thus, the Council of Ragusa once mentions 'Slav Vlachs', Pope Clement VI speaks of 'Rumanian Vlachs' "*

-but this expression was born already in the middle of the XIVth Century. (\*83).

When in the year of 1150, Geza II (1141-1162) permitted a Saxon settlement (Germans from the Moselle region) in the southern Transylvania regions, in the same period some Petcheneg and Cuman fragments were also permitted to settle in Eastern Hungary. Were these Turkish elements associated with Wallachians? There is no documentary evidence which concerns it, but after all, it is not completely impossible. The following years, could be characterized partly as the years of Byzantine wars, and partly as the years of Byzantine influence. The opportunity of infiltration was very limited. The southern frontier-line was heavily guarded, and in times when Byzantium influenced the Hungarian internal affairs, Vlachs and Cumans probably did not feel to join a country, where bureaucrats from Constantinople introduced customs and gave advice.

After the death of Bela III (1172-1196) who proved to be one of the greatest rulers of Medieval Hungary, and who was educated in

\*81 L. Flekes: *The Development of the Rumanian People*. p. 680

\*82: *Ibid* p. 681-682.

\*83: *Ibid*. p. 682.

Constantinople himself, troubled times came to Hungary. Bela's weak, unable successors between 1196 and 1235 did not have time or did not take time to look at what was really happening in Transylvania, or as a matter of fact in other parts of Hungary as well. This was the period, when more and more Vlachs poured into Southern Transylvania, especially into the unpopulated areas of the Fogaras county. More and more shepherds of Balkanic origin appeared on the mountain pasturages.

On these mountains life was very simple, even though starvation was part of the problem, these newcomers enjoyed the fact that the inhabitants of Transylvania did not disturb them, and from now on the Transylvanian Alps separated them and defended them from the south. Many of these shepherds probably escaped from their Cuman lords, taking the flock with them. Some of them perhaps were previously victimized by the severe domination of the Serbians, where (since 1168) the new Nemanyid Dynasty more vigorously. The semi-nomad shepherds did not like order and organization, so they used the first opportunity to leave. In Bulgaria, Joanitsa Kaloyan, the youngest of the Asen brothers (1197-1207) began a series of wars against his neighbours and there were many Vlachs in Bulgaria who left this country (where their forefathers spent some generations), and joined their relatives in Cumania, or in Fogaras, where they were not forced to perform military duties. (In Hungary the Szekelys were the traditional frontier-guards.) In the year 1204, Byzantium collapsed, Alexius V. (Dukas) escaped and the Empire was divided between Latin and Greek states. This turmoil also gave opportunities for thousands of Vlachs to leave the Southern Balkans, and to migrate northwards, possibly up to Transylvania, where they could continue their humble, simple life, but also where their future seemed to be secured.

Until the age of Bela III, chroniclers of Hungary did not mention Vlachs in Transylvania at all, simply because there were no Vlachs there in their times.

The "Gesta Ungarorum", which was written in the time of Laszlo the Saint (1091), reports about Transylvania several times, but this (unknown) author never heard about Vlachs. Bishop Miklos (official chronicler of Andrew I. in the XI Century), and an unknown author from the Court of Istvan II (from about 1130) did not hear about Vlachs either. Some modern historians assumed that Rumanians settled in Transylvania already in the XI Century, basing their theories, of course, on the "Dako-Roman continuity", but without any, produced evidences. The question could be raised: why would any chronicler of the

XIth and of the early XIIth Century deny the existence of these settlements? These contemporary chroniclers described the political, social and ethnographic circumstances of Hungary, including Transylvania, which was an integral part of the Kingdom. These medieval historians performed these duties in the royal Court with a demonstrated responsibility and knowledge in detail. These chroniclers gave accounts about many non-Magyar elements, such as Jewish and Ismaelite tradesmen, Kievan Slavs, (who came to the country with King Kalman's wife in c. 1100), German, French, Italian crusaders (1096, 1147, and 1189), Petchenegs and Cumans. There were documents about Saxons, who were invited in by Geza II in 1150 from the Moselle region and were settled down in Southern Transylvania, and on the northern frontiers. Why would these chroniclers completely ignore the presence of Vlachs, if they were already in the country?

No doubt, these chroniclers were responsible to their feudal lords and to the king himself. The royal court had every right to know what was going on in the country. In these vigorous circumstances of the XI-XII Centuries, those chroniclers (usually monks), who were employed to note every notable thing in the country, and who ignored any facts, could be seriously punished and even executed. On this theory, we have every reason to believe that the Vlachs did not infiltrate into the Transylvanian Basin before 1200, and if few families hid themselves in the Fogaras Mountains, they were clever enough to disappear from the watchful eyes of the guarding Szekely military force or of the local government.

The first chronicler, who mentions Vlachs in Transylvania, was "Master P.", or "Anonymus", this Parisian-educated priestly-historian of Bela III. His work was written in Latin, and it describes the assumed origin of the Magyars and their settlement in the Carpathian Basin. His "Gesta Hungarorum" mentions various events of the Conquest (of 896), but he confuses these events with the political, social, economic and ethnographic circumstances of his own age (the XII-XIII Centuries). He puts Chief Arpad into the focus of a late-medieval, chivalric Court, and the semi-nomad fellow chieftans are appearing in the Chronicle as baronial oligarches. This enthusiastic but quite superficial chronicler also mentioned "a certain Vlach", named "Gelou", who, according to Anonymus, fought against the conquerors. (We touched this "Gelou-problem already in Ch. IV.) With Gelou, there appeared another Transylvanian chieftain, whose name was "Glad" and whose settlement (south of the River Maros) was supported by "his Cumans". Although we may assume some early Vlach infiltration to Transylvania, at this point we must express some scepticism again, since the Cumans were somewhere north of the Caspian in the Xth Century.

and they appeared in Transylvania only in the second half of the XIth Century. Looking at this obvious mistake about the Cumans, we may conclude that perhaps this mysterious "Gelou", the Vlach chieftain also appeared in Transylvania only in Anonymus' own age. (\*84).

It is possible that the war between the combined Cuman-Bulgarian forces against Byzantium (1185-89) was one of the major events, which forced most of the Vlachs to move northwards and enter the Transylvanian Fogaras by the use of the Focșani Gate and other paths. Imre (Emerich; 1196-1204), and Laszlo (Ladislas III; 1204-05) were shadow kings, and their successor, Andrew II (1205-35) represented the most disastrous reign in the Arpad period. He led a crusade to the Holy Land (1217) which required much money. He accomplished this by alienating huge tracks of the royal domain, thus supporting the emergence of powerful oligarches. (\*85).

It was the second year of this rule that a document, (the first in Hungarian history of this kind) mentioned the appearance of few Vlach shepherds. (1206). This document was followed by another one in 1222, when the privileges of the Transylvanian Saxons were set down. They received self-government, directly under the king of Hungary, and Andrew II. in a document that permits the Saxons when they were transporting salt on the areas of the Szekelys and Vlachs ("per terram Balacorum") not to pay any toll. At this point, it is also important to mention that the "Terra Balacorum" was often mentioned also as "Terra deserta et inhabitata" (deserted and uninhabited territory), which in fact seems to prove that only the uninhabited, unclaimed or neglected areas were yielded or ceded to the Vlachs, and these areas remained uninhabited in a large extent, because the Vlach population was still too small in the beginning in the XIIIth Century to populate the mountainous regions, the pasturages and valleys of Fogaras.

In the same year another document mentions that the king gives the forest of the Vlachs and of the Petchenegs to the Saxons. ("Silyam Balacorum et Bissenorum"), thus they had to leave certain areas in favour of the Saxons. We have to assume, however, that in the third and

\*84: "Master I", or "Anonymus" was (by some sources) Peter, notary of King Bela III. (1171-96), provost of Esztergom, ("Anonymus Belae regis gloriosissimi notarius.") He completed his Chronicle in c. 1200. As a result of a new research, however, Professor Karpat stated (1961) that Anonymus was identical with Bishop Pava, a Dominican, who was notary of King Bela IV (1235-70), and died c. 1272. This assumption makes even more assumable Anonymus' knowledge about Vlach and Cuman settlers. (Note: Those "Daco-Roman" theorists, who welcomed Anonymus' "Gelou" as the found "missing link" between the Daks and modern Rumanians made not only "Gelou", but also "Glad", and the Hungarian Memorials as "Wallachian Princes" of X Century Transylvania. Of course, these historians forget to mention that the same Anonymus also called the Magyars as "the people of the great King Arpa.")

\*85: As a resistance against oligarches the lesser nobility forced the king to declare the Golden Bull (1222) as a charter of feudal privilege. (7 years after the Magna Charta).

fourth decades of the XIIIth Century, some of their fragments were already leaving Fogaras, and they even reached with their families and with their flocks some other areas of Transylvania, as far as the Bihar county, by carefully remaining on the high pasturages.

They were not dissimilar to the other Slavs which were infiltrating to Hungary from the Balkans in these years. They did not show any characteristics of Roman origin. As we mentioned previously, they did not adopt the name of "Transylvania" from the Hungarians, whose official language was the Latin. (\*86), but used the term "Ardeal", which was a deformed way to use the Magyar word "Erdely". A Latin-oriented people would probably welcome Latin terms very happily. The Vlachs did not seem to adopt any other Latin terms from the Hungarians, and, hating and escaping the educational attempts and efforts of the local governments, they remained illiterate. They came from a Byzantine-oriented Slav world, so they detested anything which was "Roman", "Latin", or "Western". They still belonged to the Old-Slavon Archbishopry of the Bulgarian Trnovo, and their priests (the "papa"-s) joined their Transylvanian settlements in growing number, did their very best to irritate them against the Latin-oriented, Roman-Christian Magyars and Saxons.

Considering the mentioned three small branches of Vlachs on the Balkans (\*87), we may call those fragments which poured from Cumania to Transylvania as the fourth branch.

*The fourth branch turned north-east and crossed the Lower Danube in the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries. In the thirteenth century we find them mentioned in the Banat (\*88), and in Southern Transylvania as subjects of the King of Hungary. (\*89).*

Following this philosophy of grouping, it would be safe to say, that in the XIIIth Century, there were not three or four, but actually five branches of Vlachs: (1) the "Megleno-Rumuns" on and around the Pindos Mountains, (2) the "Aurumuns" on and around the Balkan Mountains in Bulgaria, (3) the "Istro-Rumuns" on the Dalmatian Coast and to the east of the Adriatic on the mountains, (4) the "Turko-Wallachians in Cumania, in the area between the Transylvanian Alps

\*86: Since Hungary adapted Roman Christianity already in the XI Century, ecclesiastical Latin became the official language of Government, Church and literature for many more centuries.

\*87: Megleno-Rumuns, Aurumuns, and Istro-Rumuns.

\*88: The term "Banat" was originally used for several military frontier provinces of Hungary and Cumania. The governors had the titles of the "Ban". The Transylvanian "Banat" was actually the "Banat of Temesvar" a fertile plain between the Danube, the Tisza, and the Maris rivers. Its largest city was Temesvar (part of Temes), which name was deformed in today's Rumanian Transylvania as "Timisoara". (Rumanian officials just could not find any suitable "Dak", "Roman" or Wallachian name for this old Hungarian city, so they simply re-wrote its original name using Wallachian dialect and spelling.)

\*89: Zombor Szász: "Rumanian History" (*The Hungarian Quarterly*, 1941, p. 199).

and the Lower Danube, and (5) the infiltrated Vlach fragments in and around Fogaras and the Banat of Transylvania.

These branches represented the step-by-step migration of the Romanized pastoral fragments. The "Megleno-Rumuns" and the "Istro-Rumuns" became only quite small branches, and almost completely assimilated into the Macedonian and Dalmatian-Slav population. The Bulgarian "Aurumun" branch was still large in the XIIIth Century, and it lost most of its Latin identity, under the influence of the Turco-Slav Bulgarians. The population of Cumania was not Turco-Cuman and was not Wallachian anymore, but a mixture of the two. It became a society led by the Turko-Cumans, gradually absorbing the growing number of the Bulgaro-Slavo-Vlachs. Although the Transylvanian branch of the Vlachs in the XIIIth Century was much smaller than the Cumanian, or Bulgarian branches, later it gradually became larger than the Bulgarian branch and approached the size of the Cumanian branch, because (1) circumstances for the Vlachs were much more favourable in Transylvania than in Cumania or Bulgaria, thus the Transylvanian Vlach population was growing faster both by natural increase, and further infiltration, and (2) because the Magyars did not intermarry with the newcomers, which the Cumans and Bulgarians did, so thus the Vlach identity especially in Bulgaria disappeared.

In this chapter I already mentioned two important points about the Transylvanian Vlachs: (1) they favoured the high-mountainous no-mans-lands, and (2) they made attempts to isolate themselves from the Latinized society of the Magyars, because they felt that they could preserve their old Slavonic culture by this isolation.

*"At all events, we find them occupying in compact masses the head waters of the Muros (Mures), the Aluta, and the Nagy Kukullo (Tarnava Mare) in the extreme east of Transylvania; and there we find their descendants to-day. They retain, indeed, a strong local and 'tribal' patriotism. (\*90).*

*"If you look at the country today where Magyars and Roumanians live together, you will still find the mountain portions, and especially the tops, settled by Roumanians, and the lowlands settled by Magyars, who also enter to mouths of the valleys; because the one has always been fond of the mountains and the other has always been fond of the plain. (\*91).*

Looking at the Wallachians, these people, which jealously guarded its Slavonic culture from Western-Christians, and which tried to isolate itself as much as possible on the high mountain-regions, one could not

\*90: C. A. Mearns: "Hungary and Her Successors", p. 255

\*91: Count Paul Teleki: *The Evolution of Hungary, and Its Place in European History*, p. 34

help but to suspect, that they favoured mountain-life not only because Alpine-pasturage was their traditional occupation, but because the mountains represented the best way for separation from the dominating Hungarians.

Going back to the edict of Andrew II, which was discussed previously in this chapter in association with the privileges of the Saxons, let us mention an aspect, which belongs to this particular subtopic: the infiltration of members of another Wallachian branch - from the East:

*"The edict of King Andrew II of Hungary in 1222 for the establishment of the Teutonic Knights in Burzenland speaks of the land of the Brodnicii, east of the territory granted to the Teutonic Order. And a Papal Bull of the same year, repeating this passage of the royal edict, replaces 'ad terminos Brodnicorum' by 'ad terminos Blavorum' as if these two terms were interchangeable."* (\*92).

Yes, in the time of Andrew II, the actual Wallachian infiltration poured into Hungary not only from Cumania, but crossing the Eastern Carpathians, - from the east as well. The "Brodnicii" were a Vlach-Slav mixture, between the Sereth and Dniester rivers, and having been molested by their Cuman overlords, they joined their fellow-Vlachs (coming from the south) in Transylvania. Obviously, since "Brodnicii" and "Blaci" were actually the same people, these two terms became "interchangeable" in the land of the Hungarians.

In 1235, an interesting Hungarian political step gave opportunity for even more Wallachians to pour into Transylvania from Cumania:

*"King Bela organized in 1235 a large Hungarian settlement ... for the protection of the Focsani Gate. The autonom settlement was called the 'Bansag of Szoreny'. Even today, more than 200 town and village names remind us in this area of their Hungarian origin."* (\*93).

This "Bansag of Szoreny" was south of the Transylvanian Alps, which cut off a considerable area from the land of the weakening Cumans. (The possible reason was probably not connected with the coming Mongol invasion, since the king received information about it only one year later). The reason was to protect Transylvania from the growing power of Ivan Asen II of Bulgaria, who broke with Rome in 1232, and allied himself with John Dukas Vatatzes, the powerful Greek emperor of Nicaea. (1222-1254). This "Bansag of Szoreny" actually embraced an area with large Wallachian population. From this new "Bansag" the Vlachs could quite easily pour into Southern Transylvania again but they did not have to cross an "international border" anymore, since both sides of the Carpathian Alps actually belonged to the same royal authority.

\*92: M. Lihyka: *A Documented Chronology of Rumanian History*. p. 40.

\*93: Zastrowitzky: *Transylvania, Citadel of the West*. p. 39.

It is interesting that the modern Rumanian historiography writes about the Mongol (Tatar) invasion of 1241 with the same dramatic solemnity as that of Polish or Hungarian historians, in spite of the fact that Wallachians of Cumania or Transylvania certainly did not act as "defenders of European Christian culture", as it was the case in Poland and in Hungary.

Bela IV (1235-70) was informed about the Mongol danger from Dominican monks, who were investigating traces of Asiatic Magyars at the northern areas of the River Volga. (1236-37). (\*94). In 1223, the Mongols defeated a strong force of Russians and Vumans at the Kalka River, but after their victory they returned to Asia. In 1239, new and huge Mongol armies appeared under Batu and Sabutai and they defeated another Cuman force led by King Kutun (Kotony) at this time. Reminders of this army were asking permission from the King of Hungary to enter the country. Since they promised military co-operation against the Mongol invaders, Bela allowed some 40,000 families to settle between the Danube and Tisza rivers. (\*95). The Mongols overran Hungary, Poland and even Bohemia with great speed. Previously, they easily conquered Cumania, south of the Transylvanian Alps, and those Wallachians, who survived, became slaves of the new conquerors, who willingly guided them throughout the well-known paths into Transylvania. The Hungarian army was defeated at Muhi (beside River Tisza), and the Mongols devastated the country. Suddenly they gave up their conquests when news arrived of the death of the great Khan (Ogodai at this time.).

When the Mongols left Munthenia and Oltenia the Wallachians came forth from their hiding places. From now on they represented an overwhelming majority between the Transylvanian Alps and the Lower Danube, since many of their former Cuman masters died in the Mongol wars, or were permitted to settle in Hungary. Many Wallachians, however, used this opportunity that the king, returning to Hungary, planned to rebuild the country and had a great need for more population. The Bansag of Szoreny and Transylvania Proper received more Vlach immigrants, and Bela IV accepted the foundation of a semi-independent "voivode", as part of this Bansag. (1247.)

This royal grant (which was associated with the simultaneous settlement of the Knights of St. John;)(\*96), was followed by another

\*94: The Mongol chief, Temujon (1162-1227) proclaimed himself as "Chinjit Khan ("Very Mighty King") making the foundation of the Great Mongol empire. Father Julian brought information about them from "Great Hungary" at the Volga.

\*95: Interestingly enough, the Rumanian historian Ghyka puts a "Rumanian-Cuman duchy in Transylvania in the XIIIth Century". (*A Documented Chronology of Roumanian History.*)

\*96: This Order grew out of a hospital (which was established in the XIth Century to care pilgrims in the Holy Land. Later it was reconstituted as a Military Order.

similar document of royal grant, dated on June 23, 1250. In this letter, the king was obviously trying to attract various minorities, including Vlachs to come and settle in Hungary's depopulated areas. This royal letter indicates that faithfulness of some national minorities were already proven in 1210, when Szekelys, Saxon, Petchenegs and Vlachs were participating in an army, which was sent by Andrew II to Boril, King of Bulgaria (1207-18) against the Franks. (\*97). Bela IV permitted new Wallachian settlements in the counties of Bihar (Rum: Bihor), Maramaros (Maramures), Hunyad (Hunedora), and new Wallachian waves poured into Fogaras (Fagaras). One of the active organizers was Voivode (Vajda) Lorincz, who personally invited Vlach shepherds and Cuman-Petcheneg families from Cumania. It was very possible that the number of Vlachs increased significantly in Transylvania both by natural increase and immigration between 1250 and 1260. Some Balkanic Vlachs moved first to the Duchy of Boszna-Mucso, (an area south of the Sava river, which belonged to Hungary since 1210), and to the most northern part of Bulgaria, (which became some sort of vassal territory of Bela IV, since Ratislaw, shadow-king of disintegrated Bulgaria became a permanent guest in the Hungarian royal court, in the year 1255). Later these Vlachs joined their fellow-nationalities in the southern counties of Transylvania, (\*98). They did not mingle with the Hungarians but instead they isolated themselves on the mountainous regions under the leadership of their own (Cuman?) chiefs, and under their Greek-Orthodox priests. They did not participate in internal affairs, partly because they were still illiterate, and ignorant about the official Latin administration, and also because they did not seem to be interested in Hungarian events. Consequently, one could understand why Master Akos (a chronicler working around 1270) did not mention them in his chronicle, and why Simon Kezai, chronicler of Laszlo IV (1272-90), working around 1285, could not find anything remarkable about them.

*It is necessary to record that a peculiar national hatred appears to have reigned between the Roumanians and the other nationalities of Transylvania. Old documents and literature about in scathing and venomous references to the Vlach vagabonds, thieves, and whores. They were regarded as an alien element and, if in theory membership of the Hungarian "nation" was open to them as to every Hungarian subject, in practice the vast majority of them remained outcasts, an element deliberately excluded from the body politic. Nor did the Roumanians, on the whole, want assimilation. Notably un-sedentary*

\*97: This act of the King of Hungary did not help Boril. He was dethroned at this time from Henry I. (1205-16). Latin emp. of Constantinople.

\*98: The number of the Vlachs was probably still very limited comparing them to the original inhabitants (the Magyars and Szekelys) of Transylvania. The census of Nagyvarad (today's Rimnicu Vilcea) in Oradea of 1250 did not show any Vlach names on the citizenship's lists.

*in their habits, and practically unencumbered by the ownership of things, they seem only to have lived with one foot in Hungary. (\*99)*

It would be hard to say to what extent the Vlachs participated in the rebellion of the Cumans in 1280 and if they did, they only followed orders of their Cuman chiefs, since they occupied always a secondary role in their relationships. When Laszlo IV (son of a Cuman woman) spent most of his reckless life among his Cuman friends, assumably some Vlachs fawned around his throne too. When the troops of Nogaj (Khan of the Dnyeper Tatars) appeared as the king's guest (1285), we do not hear about Vlachs, but when the Cumans finally murdered their royal "friend" (1290), chroniclers mentioned the quick Vlach reappearance. For the first time in their history, some of them began to dream about the foundation of an independent Wallachian state.

Some historical accounts suggested that Radu Negru (or Rudolf the Black), a Transylvanian Vlach escaped the religious persecutions of the Catholic Kings, (\*100), and returned to Wallachia. We do not think that this was the reason. Stephen V (1270-72) was a weak ruler, who did not have time to deal with Transylvanian affairs during the course of his short rule. His successor, Laszlo (Ladislav) IV, was excommunicated from the Catholic Church himself and the Holy See declared a Christian Crusade against him, because his Cuman friendship and anti-Christian attitude. Radu Negru, this courageous adventurer simply used the opportunity offered by history, when Hungary was in chaos. Laszlo was dead, and his successor, Andrew III (1290-1301), the last one from the Arpad Dynasty, spent most of his early "rule" as prisoner of the Austrians and his own oligarches.

*According to legend, Radu Negru, a voevod in Transylvania founded Wallachia in 1290. He settled near Fagarash and, according to Rumanian historians, began to play a role analogous to that of Piedmont in creating Italian unity. Many nobles followed Radu Negru, and the result was a weakening of the Rumanian base in Transylvania. (\*101).*

Radu Negru did not dare to touch Transylvania, because the Vlachs represented only a small minority there, and Radu did not know anything about the possibility of "Dak relationship". He declared himself as a true Wallachian, and considered Wallachia as the main homeland of the Vlachs. Returning to Wallachia, established himself at Campulung, and became one of the leading chieftains. He gave the

\*99: C.A. Macartney: *Hungary and Her Successors*, p. 260-61.

\*100: W. Miller: *The Balkan States*, (*The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. III, p. 540.)

\*101: R. Ristowhauer: *A History of the Balkan Peoples*, p. 49.

essentially flat country of Wallachia the local name of "land of mountains", in memory of those mountains whence he came. At this time, the large majority of the Wallachian population were his fellow Vlachs, because the Cumans were murdered by the Tatars, or they settled already in Hungary. The Mongols (The Khanate of the Golden Horde of Kublai Khan) withdrew eastwards, since the Great Khan concentrated on Chinese affairs and he did not wish to disturb European countries for a while. When the weakened Hungarian Kingdom released the Bansag of Szoreny, then the weak Balcenic nationalities concentrated their attention on the growing power of the Ottoman Empire, nobody stopped the Wallachian effort to the foundation of their own country. Radu Negru was able to secure leadership, and by his successors (the Basarab family) a new principality, Wallachia appeared on the historical map of Balkans.

Meanwhile, in Transylvania (as M. Ghyka, the Rumanian historian reports in his Chronology) (\*102), on March 11, 1291, the Assembly of Gyulafehervar (Rum: Alba Julia) recognized the Vlachs of Transylvania as a nationality with equal rights to other member nationalities under the Hungarian Holy Crown. ("Cum universis nobilibus, Saxonibus, Syculis et Olachis"). Two years later

*Andrew III decreed in 1293 that "all Wallachians, whether to be found on noblemen's estates or on others' estates, should be settled on his own estate known as "Szekes", the territory of which is estimated between 45,000 and 65,000 acres. (\*103).*

The king did not have any other choice but to take this step, since the Vlachs did not seem to give up their semi-nomad behaviours, and did not stop wandering from county to county, from village to village. The royal estate (mentioned) was relatively small, thus once more this indicates again that at that time the Vlachs comprised only a small percentage of Transylvania's population.

\*102: M. Ghyka: *A Documented Chronology of Roumanian History*, p. 54

\*103: D.G. Kosary: *History of the Hungarian Nation*, p.34.



**TRANSYLVANIA**  
PART OF HUNGARY SINCE THE END OF THE 9TH CENTURY



About 1100



About 1350

**BOHEMIA, POLAND**

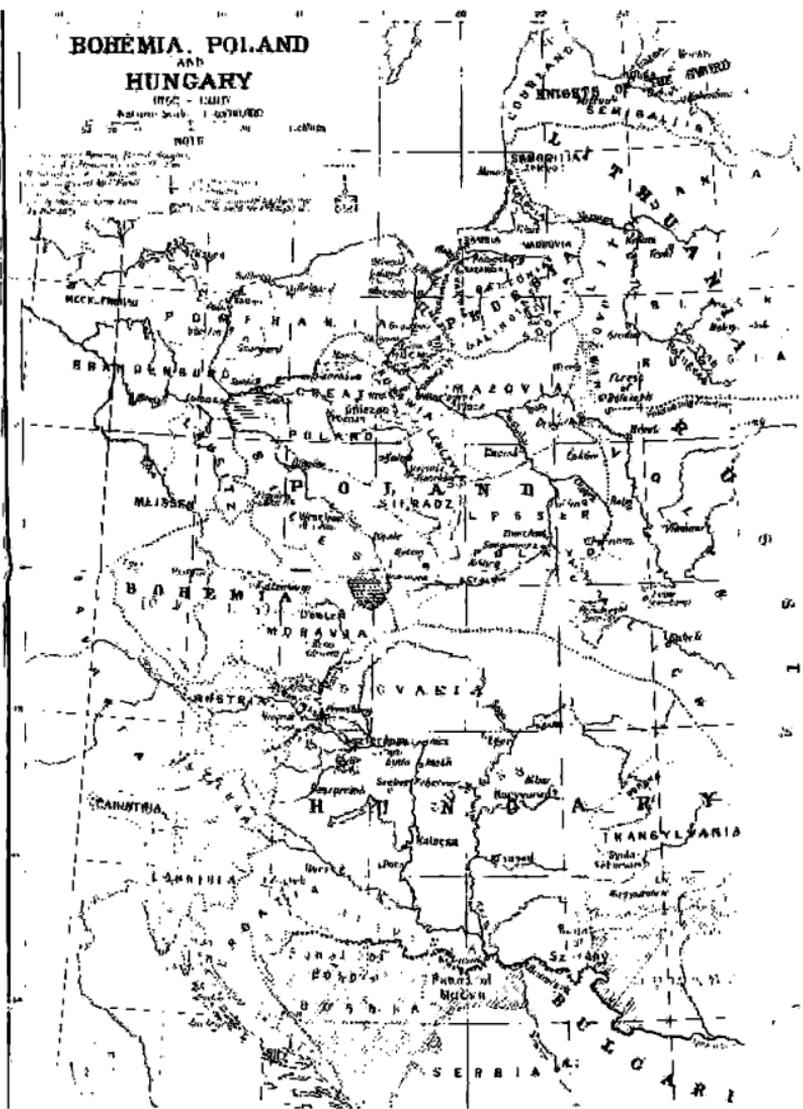
**AND HUNGARY**

1875 - 1914

Scale 1:500,000

NOTE

1. The boundaries shown are those of 1914.  
2. The names of the countries are those of 1914.  
3. The names of the cities are those of 1914.  
4. The names of the rivers are those of 1914.  
5. The names of the mountains are those of 1914.



## VII.

### CONTINUOUS INFILTRATION AND MULTIPLICATION IN THE LATE MEDIEVAL AGES.

After the extinction of the Arpad Dynasty Czech, German and Italian parties attempted to put their own candidates on the Hungarian throne. Finally, the Italian-French Anjou family was elected, and for about eight decades, the Anjous (\*104) continued the traditions of the Arpads to establish Hungary as one of the most powerful states of Europe.

Under Charles Robert of Anjou the "Latinization" (which was typical in official, ecclesiastical, literary, etc. affairs in Christian Hungary for three hundred years anyway) continued and strengthened. Charles introduced Italian chivalry in his capital (Visegrad), and Latin, Italian, French became the languages of the law, church and learning. One would think that the Transylvanian Vlachs would welcome these changes; after all, people who were "Roman by origin" should be happy, when their new, adopted country became more and more "Roman" in its culture. The new king realized the multinational character of Hungary, especially Transylvania, and he attempted to please the minorities including the Wallachians.

*"Magyar, Saxon, Slovak, Roumanian, Serb, all met in friendliest terms and learned to respect, and understand one another."* (\*105).

Charles Robert encouraged settlements on the North-East Carpathians too, and he guaranteed their freedom. He subdued Laszlo (Ladislav), the powerful lord of Transylvania, not only to preserve royal overlordship, but protecting those nationalities, whose relative freedom was endangered by the "little king". (\*106).

In spite of all efforts of Charles Robert (and of his successors) the Wallachians still did not show any willingness to become an integral part of the kingdom. They considered "Latinization" as a cultural invasion against their (basically Slav) primitive culture, and as undermining tendencies by Roman Christianity against their Greek-Slavonic religion. They remained isolated and hostile. Since the king needed a large army to secure Hungary's international position and to protect royal power from the "little kings", he introduced the first "direct tax", and encouraged trade. These activities were quite welcomed in Transylvania by the Magyars and Saxons, but the Wallachians (whose life on the

\*104: Charles Robert I. (1308-42), Louis "the Great", (1342-82), and Mary of Anjou (1382-85).

\*105: A. B. Yolland: *A History of Hungary*, p. 50.

\*106: Muthos of Csak, and Ladislav of Transylvania were the most powerful of those "little kings".

Balkans were associated with endless flight from military service, from urbanization and from taxation) did not sympathize with the new order at all. Isolating themselves on the mountains more sternly than ever before, the Vlachs became an even more mobile and more separated sub-society.

The years between 1324 and 1330 marked the real beginning of Wallachian history, south of Transylvania. Radu Negru's successor

*...Ivanko Basaraba, the ally of the Bulgarians in the campaign of 1330, extended his authority over "little Wallachia", completely routed the Hungarians, and strengthened his position by marrying his daughter to the new Tsar of Bulgaria. (\*107).*

When Stephen Dechanski (who became king of Serbia as Stephen Urosh III in 1321) attacked the weak Bulgarians, a considerable number of Bulgarian Vlachs left their former patrons by joining Wallachia, which made Wallachia somewhat more populous and slightly stronger. Basarab I. attempted to side with the Bulgars against Serbia, but Urosh defeated the Bulgarians near Kustendil, occupying the Vardar Valley, and practically putting an end to the Bulgarian power. Since his Balkan policy did not work out, Basarab turned his attention to Transylvania. In 1324, he surprisingly invaded the Bansag of Szoreny (S. of the Transylvanian Alps) and attached it to Wallachia. This "Bansag" was partially inhabited by Hungarians since Bela IV. (1247).

*A number of Hungarian settlements, like Hosszumezo, now Campolung, were signs of Hungary's ethnic expansion. Contemporaries called this territory Ungro-Wallachia, the westward portion of which was directly under the jurisdiction of Hungary. (\*108).*

Charles Robert reconquered this "Bansag" again, but this Wallachian-Hungarian confrontation became another stimulus in the Vlach-Magyar hostility, which gradually became traditional both on the Wallachian-Szoreny frontierline and in Transylvania itself.

*Nevertheless, Basarab had to recognize Hungary's sovereignty over Wallachia. In exchange, however, Hungary agreed to an enlargement of his domain. The Wallachians then secured authorization for the establishment of an Orthodox metropolitan in Wallachia. Such recognition by the Greek Patriarch affirmed the creation of the Principality of Wallachia to which it granted an ecclesiastical seat. (\*109).*

In 1330, Charles Robert was forced to realize that he could not compete with Vlachs who knew the hidden routes of Wallachia so well. Visiting

\*107: W. Miller: *The Balkan States. (The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. III. p.540.)*

\*108: D.G. Kosary: *History of the Hungarian Nation. p. 40.*

\*109: R. Ristelhueber: *A History of the Balkan Peoples. p. 50.*

the "Bansag of Szoreny", he fell into a trap prepared by Basarab and the only way of escape was by changing armour with his man, Dezso Hedervari. The self-sacrificing hero was murdered by bloodthirsty Wallachians, but the king, dressed as Hedervari, returned to Hungary safely. From now on, the Anjou abandoned the "Bansag of Szoreny", and recognized the independence of Wallachia, which was called by Basarab as "Tara Romanesca". (This denomination was probably connected with the fact that a few decades ago, Pope Clement V. - 1305-14 - recognized the Latin elements in the Wallachian language and called the Vlachs as "Olahi Romani"). (\*110).

Charles Robert's son and successor, Louis (called by Hungarians as "Louis the Great"; 1342-82) concentrated his attention on Transylvania even more than his father did. The first interesting act of the new king, who ascended the throne at the age of seventeen, was a visit to the tomb of Ladislas (Laszlo) I (canonized by the Church in 1192) at Nagyvarad, which was regarded traditionally as the city of this important king of the Arpad-house. (Nagyvarad is called as "Oradea" today. The Rumanians did not have their own name for this city, thus they deformed the Hungarian expression.) By this ceremonial visit, the young king wished to symbolize his intention of imitating his great predecessor, by devoting his life for Hungary, and especially for Transylvania.

In the age of the Anjou kings not only Wallachia, but also Serbia received a growing number of Vlach population. This Balkan country of Greek-Orthodox Southern-Slavs attracted Vlachs from two directions. All those Vlachs who were still on the Dalmatian coast, or in Epirus, or in Thessalonica, rapidly migrated to Serbia, when this Slav country gradually extended his possessions, taking full advantage of the growing weakness of the Byzantine Empire. The other wave of Vlachs came from Bulgaria, when Kaliman II, the last of the Asen Dynasty was deposed and expelled. In Serbia

*...the Vlachs constituted an important element and a rich source of income for the sovereign and the other landlords. By then the larger mountain pastures were made the most of and indeed devastated and disforested by the reckless grazing-off of the new growth, by the searing of the grass to freshen pasturage, and by the peeling of young beech-trees as a substitute for honey to sweeten milk foods. (\*111).*

Stephen Dechanski (Urosh III; 1321-31), and Stephen Dushan (Urosh IV; 1331-1355) were the kings of Serbia, when the Vlachs provided their state with excellent horses of small stature but hardy, and good cavalry

\*110: InF. from M. Ghyka: *A Documented Chronology of Roumanian History*, p. 60

\*111: T. Peisker: *Expansion of the Slavs*, (*The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. II, p.440.

for the army. The Vlachs also managed the commerce with these pack-horses, and traded in wool, skins, and the famous Vlach cheese, which even served as a substitute for money.

*By this trading the Vlachs acquired knowledge of the world, and became far superior in experience and shrewdness to the boorish Slav peasant. They grazed the mountain pastures (planina) to the height of 5000 ft., from the end of April to the middle of September, and then slowly made their way, often taking two months, to winter on the coasts on account of the mild snowless climate and the salt which spendidly nourishes the sheep. They lived chiefly on milk and cheese. (\*112).*

The problem of Serbia with the Vlachs came when they became a heavy burden for the peasantry, especially through their destruction of the cornfields. The Serbian peasants and the Vlach herdsmen were in a growing opposition, there was no more intermarriage between them, and the Serbian State had to regulate the wandering shepherds and to protect its own Slav peasants with draconic laws. King Stephen Dushan's law-book (1349) states that

*"Where a Vlach or an Albanian camps in a village district, there another who comes after him shall not camp: if he camps there by force, he shall pay the fight-fine (100 hyperpyres, that is fifty gold ducats) besides the value of what he has grazed off."* (\*113).

This situation embittered the Vlachs and many of them migrated to Wallachia, (where the Basarab Dynasty welcomed them), or to Transylvania, (where King Louis tolerated them and where their life-standard was still higher than in any Vlach populated area of the Balkans).

The northward migration of the Vlachs reached (the previously Cuman) Moldavia too, and

*... about the same time as the foundation of the Wallachian principality, a second principality, dependent however on the Hungarian crown, was created in Moldavia by another colony of Roumanians from the north of Transylvania under a chief named Dragoche. This vassal state threw off its allegiance to Hungary about 1349, and became independent. (\*114).*

This independence was declared by Bogdan, a Vlach, who succeeded Dragoche (Dragosh). Transylvania, from now on, had to exist as a Hungarian province with growing Vlach population, and as an area partially encircled by Vlach principalities. Additionally, the Patriarch of Constantinople delegated a large number of Orthodox priests to the

\*112: T. Peisker: *Expansion of the Slavs. (The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. II, p. 441.)*

\*113: *Ibid.*

\*114: W. Miller: *The Balkan States. (The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. III, p.540.)*

Transylvanian Vlachs, appointing Hiakinthos to be Archbishop of "Ungro-Vlachia". Beginning with this period, most of these priests became not only the religious but the "national" leaders of the Transylvanian Vlachs. When the king, who realized that these priests were acting as national agents of Wallachia and Moldavia trying to undermine Hungarian authority, expelled Hiakinthos, Vlach hostility grew considerably in Transylvania again.

Differences between national (linguistic, cultural) traditions could, of course, become reasons for national hostilities, and we could see several examples of these problems in European history. This factor was very noticeable in the Magyar-Vlach case by two significant elements. One of them was the difference between the Roman- and Byzantine Christianity, which was intrigued simultaneously by Catholic - (later also by Protestant), and by Greek-Orthodox priests, respectively. In this controversy, not simply opposing religions, but the West (Catholic, - later Renaissance - later Protestant) and the East (Byzantine-semi-Oriental) as sharply opposing socio-political views faced each other with hostility. The other additional element was the anger of the poor and illiterate observing the rich and educated, and occasionally, the irritation of the serf living under the feudal lord. Feudalism as a new social order included many good elements, but obviously created many new problems. These problems were especially complicated in multi-cultural areas. Transylvania was a province with a relatively high life-standard, where feudal lords (mostly Hungarians and Saxons) were usually wealthy and educated, and the Saxon "burgers" and Magyar and Szekely peasants were hard-working. On the other hand, the Transylvanian Vlachs were still illiterate, they still continued their semi-nomadic life, they still attempted to escape from citizenship duties like military service and tax-paying. Most of them remained very poor, because a nomad life on unproductive mountains really did not offer too much opportunity. Since trade was occupied mostly by Saxons and Jews, they could not create a privileged position for themselves as they did (temporarily for a few decades) in Serbia, but hostility between the Hungarian peasants and Vlach shepherds was very similar to the Serbian situation, and from the same reasons. The society of farmers and artisans was irritated by the appearance, disappearance and reappearance of these semi-nomads, who did not consider any parts of Transylvania as their permanent home. The Vlachs hated those who admitted them, with the hatred of the nomad against the settled, with the hatred of the illiterate against the educated, with the hatred of the poor against the well-to-do, and (in the case of feudal relationship) with the hatred of the serf against the lord.

Economic situations in Wallachia and Moldavia was not better for the

Vlachs. In these principalities the Vlachs were suffering under the domination of their own (Vlach) landlords, and they were even poorer than their relatives in Transylvania.

*Conditions in both Wallachia and Moldavia remained extremely primitive for a long period after their foundation. There were no real towns. Both countries were completely isolated. Education was almost unknown. Even the Church was backward and unorganized, served mainly by Slav priests. (\*115).*

*... With us, said Brătianu, one of the prime ministers of Rumania, in the course of a public lecture, the Middle Ages began when they ended in other countries ... We were outside the civilization of Europe. (\*116).*

As a historical paradox, when the Ottoman power advanced on the Balkans, swallowing the small, powerless countries one-by-one, the Vlachs depended on the protection of the hated Hungarian State in Wallachia, Moldavia, and, of course, in Transylvania.

Osman I. (1290-1326), the traditional founder of the Ottoman dynasty, already extended his territory at the expense of the Byzantine Empire. Under Orkhan I. (1326-59), the Muslims conquered Nicaea (1331), and Nicomedia (1338). In 1345, the Ottomans crossed into Europe and settled in Gallipoli in 1354. Murad I. (1359-89) took Adrianople and made the city his capital. (1366). In the same year the Turks were confronted by the Hungarians of Louis the Great, and the king defeated them near Vidin. (At the Lower Danube, on the Wallachian-Bulgarian frontier). Thus, in the time when the Bulgarians were already paying tribute to the Sultan, Wallachia was being defended by the Hungarian Kingdom. Lajk, the local vevod, showed some gratitude to the Hungarian king, but members of the Basarab family were already speculating about the possible opportunity against Hungary in the situation of possible further Ottoman advance. Moldavia was still far enough from the advancing Turks, it became stronger by the annexation of Bessarabia (1367), and the neighbourhood of the strong Hungarian army gave them more feeling of security.

In the years of 1369-72, Murad conquered Bulgaria, and up to the Balkan Mountains the Balkans became part of the growing Ottoman Empire. At this time, those Vlachs who still hid themselves in these mountains, joined their relatives in Wallachia, Moldavia and also in Transylvania.

\*115. R. W. Seton-Watson: *History of the Roumanians* (p.29)

\*116: inf. from Zvonimir Szász: *Rumanian History*, (p. 205). (Note: J. Brătianu, (1864-1927) was prime minister of Rumania three times. (1909-11, 1914-18, and 1922-27.)

In 1370, Louis, the king of Hungary, became king of Poland too. He paid little attention to his Polish obligation, but used his extended military power as the protector of Christian civilization against the approaching Muslims. In 1371, the Turks defeated a combination of Serbian lords in the battle of the Maritza river, and this victory secured their domination in Thrace, Macedonia and in Bulgaria. In 1380, the year, when the great shadow of the Ottoman Empire actually reached Wallachia. Mircea (the Great), one of the Basarabs was expected to join Hungary in the Christian defence-line against the Muslims, but in these critical times, he began a policy to act as the balance of power between Hungary and the Turks. His Wallachian army, seemingly, stood beside the Hungarian forces, but when the Turks captured Sofia (1385) and Nish (1386), the Wallachian leader considered the opportunity to become king of an extending Wallachia, under Ottoman suzerainty. After some hesitation, Mircea participated in the collective defence of Greek-Orthodox states, but with definitely less effort than the Serbians. (Already in 1371, Lazar I. of the Hrebeljanovich family became the Prince of Serbia, who in association with Tvartko I, Lord of Bosnia, became a very able defender of his Slav state.) On June 15, 1389, however, Murad defeated a coalition of Serbs, Bulgars, Bosnians and Wallachians in the battle of Kossovo (Hung: Rigomezó). The Serbians fought with great heroism, but they were not supported well enough by their allies. (\*117).

After this decisive battle, the Turks arrived at the Hungarian border, pursuing thousands of Vlach and Serbian refugees, who found asylum in Transylvania again. Sigismund of Luxembourg (husband of Mary of Anjou), was king of Hungary at this time. (1387-1437).(\*118). Following the unfortunate battle of Kossovo, he began to organize a crusade against the Muslims, who conquered Bosnia (after Tvartko's death of 1391), and Bulgaria (after the fall of its capital, Tirnovo in 1393), and blockaded Constantinople (since 1391).

On Sept. 25, 1396, the Christian forces, led by Sigismund of Hungary, and supported by Balkan rulers and by French, German and English knights, were disastrously defeated at Nicopolis (Nikopol; it is a town of N. Bulgaria today, on the Lower Danube, opposite Rumania). When the Hungarians were forced to withdraw, Mircea realized that perhaps the time arrived for a better Turkish-Wallachian co-operation. (He probably suspected that if his people survived as "Roman-Vlachs", "Byzantine-Vlachs", "Bulgaro-Vlachs", "Cuman-Vlachs" and "Serbu-

\*117: Sultan Murad was killed by a Serb who posed as a traitor, but Murad's son Bayazid I. (1389-1402) won a victory. Lazar was captured and killed. Serbia became a vassal state of the Turks.

\*118: Beginning with 1410, Sigismund also became German Emperor, and in 1436 the King of Bohemia.

Vlachs", the time was ripe to expect further influence, even power, more territories by becoming "Turko-Vlachs" at this critical time).

*The consequences of Nicopolis obliged him to pay tribute to the Turks who in turn granted him a degree of autonomy. His people were grateful to Mircea for all his exploits and aggrandizement of of the country by annexing the Dobrudja (Dobruja, Dobrugea), a region south of the Danube which furnished Wallachia with outlet to the Black Sea. (\*119),*

While Mircea was negotiating with Sultan Bayazid and his successors, hoping for Dobrudja (area of his previous ally, the Bulgars), and for other territories, some other Wallachians took refuge in Transylvania. The Ottoman leaders must have had good reasons to assume that Wallachians on both sides of the Transylvanian Alps (in Wallachia and Transylvania itself) could represent some sort of bridge into the heart of Europe. Meanwhile, King Sigismund founded a society of knights, the "Order of the Dragon" (1408), to fight Turkish invasion. Several members of this new military order were noblemen of both Hungarian and Vlach origin. One of them was Vlad "the Impaler", who obviously disagreed with Mircea at this time. (\*120). Mircea agreed with Mohammed I. (1413-1421) to become a faithful vassal of the Sultan (1415), but Vlad was still ready to fight on the opposite side.

Vlad the Impaler's military and political appearance on the Wallachian scene was associated with the confusion, following Mircea's death (1418). When Moldavian and Wallachian noblemen struggled over the question of succession, in spite of Mircea's previous agreement with the Sultan, many of the candidates sought support from Sigismund. Vlad was one of them, and, of course, he attempted to prove to the king that he (Vlad) was on his side. When Mohammed sent a strong army to pacify the restless population of Wallachia, Vlad disguised himself as a Turk and engaged in such successful espionage that he was able to secure himself from Turkish defeat. Following this, Vlad (called by his superstitious peasants as "Draculi") justified his nicknames (Impaler and Dracula), by impaling the Turkish prisoners with unprecedented cruelty.

*The hostility between the two groups of Rumanians did not prevent some princes from occasionally playing significant roles. Such was the case of a Wallachian prince, Vlad the Impaler, who nickname sadly indicated his barbarism. He warred in brigandage, intimidated the nobles into obeying his authority, and considered himself sufficiently strong enough to refuse tribute to the Turkish sultan. (\*121).*

\*119: R. Ristelhueber: *A History of the Balkan Peoples*, p. 51.

\*120: The name of the Order was "Miles Draconis". Vlad actually joined the Order only 1431. (Inf. S. Cuthbert: *The Real Dracula*, *The Hungarian Quarterly*, 1941, p. 327-28.)

\*121: R. Ristelhueber: *A History of the Balkan Peoples*, p. 52.

Vlad the Impaler was the greatest authority on Wallachian areas between 1456 and 1462. But before we would describe happenings in Wallachia after his rule, let us return to Transylvania.

In 1437, a peasant revolt broke out among Transylvanian serfs against the nobility. Some of the Rumanian historians introduced this event as the revolution of the Vlachs against Hungarian domination. Actually, it was a revolt of serfs (both Hungarians and Vlachs) under the leadership of Antal Budai-Nagy, a Hungarian. It was true, however, that the "borderly union" (Magyar, Szekely and Saxon noblemen) did not include Vlachs, and this union (formed in Kapolna) suppressed the rebellion of the serfs. The Union of Kapolna

*was really a sort of defensive alliance against all social, political and foreign enemies; peasants, Turks, and royal encroachments. This "union" developed into a sort of Federal Diet for settling the common affairs of Transylvania (each of the partners continuing to enjoy self-government in its internal affairs). (\*122).*

This year of 1437 also marked the first victory of Janos (John) Hunyadi over the Turks. Also in the very same year Albert of Habsburg, son of Sigismund (1437-39) followed his father on the throne.

According to some sources, Hunyadi was a frontier lord of "uncertain origin". It is very probable that he was actually a common-law son of Emperor Sigismund himself. (The large royal grants he received in a very young age seem to strengthen this version). The most widely spread version is that he was son of a Vlach "kenez" name Vajk, who had considerable authority in south-eastern Transylvania. Hunyadi became the most outstanding Hungarian hero of his age. He served several kings, but most of these rulers were nothing else but shadows behind him. (\*123). He became Ban of Szoreny in 1439, voevod of Transylvania in 1441, and became chief captain of the southern frontiers in about the same time thus making him the holder of about four million acres. His main duty was the military protection of Transylvania, later of Hungary, and actually, he became the protector of the whole Christian Europe, when his victorious campaigns stopped the Ottoman advance for eighty years. Although he was defeated at Varna at the Black Sea on Nov. 10, 1444, (King Vladislav I. died in this battle), he became Governor of Hungary and protector of the child king, Laszlo (Ladislav).

His greatest victory against the Turks was in 1456, defending Nandorfchervar. (It is called Belgrad today, and it is the capital city of Jugoslavia). John Capistrano, a Franciscan hero (later canonized by

\*122: C. A. Macartney. *Hungary and Her Successors*. p. 257-58.

\*123: Albert (1437-39), Vladislav I. (King of Poland and Hungary; 1439-44), and Ladislav V. (1444-57).

Rome) led one wing of Hunyadi's army. This heroic defense was not only for Hungary, but it was the glorious defence of the Christian culture of Europe. (Following the declaration of Pope Calixtus III, church-bells by noons are still honouring the memory of Hunyadi's heroic victory all over the world.)

As we mentioned, Hunyadi's origin is still very questionable. Rumanian historiography was attempting to introduce him as a "Rumanian". Considering his possible Vlach origin, Hunyadi was a person, who assimilated completely to the Hungarian culture, customs and language. He was a Catholic, and he was a living and dying Hungarian. (He died on August 11, 1456, in "black death"). (\*124).

Mentioning the assimilation of Hunyadi, it should be pointed out that the Hungarian governments did not force the assimilation of the Vlachs, only expected their peaceful settlement and moderate integration. All those who voluntarily integrated, even those who assimilated, did it as a humanly natural effort for better social, economic, educational opportunities. Obviously, the integrated Vlachs could become one of the respected groups under the Holy Crown of the Hungarians. Integration itself did not mean the abandonment of their native language, their original religions and customs, but the integrated Vlach was expected to be a good neighbour and a faithful citizen. Unfortunately, most of the Vlachs never attempted this sort of social behaviour in Transylvania.

Steeling, creeping across the Carpathians, settling on the high, mostly unpopulated areas, endlessly moving from place to place, most of them did not adopt Transylvania as their land in the late Medieval Ages. They remained not only isolated, but hostile. They used the better pastoral opportunities of Transylvania in contrast to the dangerous and primitive Balkans, but they remained some sort of "Balkanic" community in the heart of Transylvania too. Their separation was encouraged by their Byzantine-minded priests, who were looking at Western Christianity with jealousy and hostility. These priests gradually became political leaders too, and under this leadership, Transylvanian Vlachs communicated more and more with their relatives in Wallachia and Moldavia. Although modern Rumanian historians are discussing John Hunyadi, this Hungarian hero of the Christian world as a "Rumanian". Transylvanian Vlachs of the XVth Century were hoping for the support of Vlad the Impaler (who trapped Hunyadi after 1444, perhaps because Vlad attempted to please the Sultan at this time), or for the support of Stephen, Prince of Moldavia (1457-1504), who did his very best to encourage Vlach nationalism in Transylvania. (He received the epithet of "the Great" from some Rumanian historians.

\*124. His younger son, Matthias, (Corvinus, "the Just"; 1458-1490) became a great Renaissance king of Hungary.

Under the shadow (and occasionally under the protection) of the Ottoman Empire, puppet-leaders of Wallachia and Moldavia realized the growing population of Vlachs in Hungarian Transylvania, and probably they already visualized a great dream that was becoming clearer after every passing decade; the dream of a greater Wallachia (Rumania) in the future.

The planned framework of this essay is not intended to describe detailed Wallachian history, or to detail Vlach history in Hungarian Transylvania, but only to discuss the origin, migration and Transylvanian infiltration of the Vlach people, from the disintegration of the Roman Empire to the end of the Medieval Ages. Thus, let us end this outline-chronology with (the mentioned) Stephen of Moldavia, who was fighting against Mathias the Just, the great king of Renaissance Hungary, son of Hunyadi. Mathias was not only a great supporter of renaissance culture, but he was the recognized defender of Christian Europe at this time. Stephen "the Great", the Vlach prince of Moldavia did really his very best to undermine the political activity of Mathias. Although in his younger age he was also trying to defend Moldavia against Ottoman penetration, after the fall of his principality (1456), he became a vassal of Mohammed II (1451-1481) and later of Bayazid II (1481-1512). In his vassal position, he also adapted the great plan of the Wallachian leaders, which was to create a great Wallachia some day, - a Wallachia, which embraces all Vlach populated countries of Eastern Europe.



## VIII. CONCLUSION

The history of Transylvania (since the end of the Medieval Ages) and the history of the Vlach peoples in all Vlach-populated areas (since the same time) was (and will be) discussed in various, detailed approaches. Instead of going into further details, let us conclude this brief study only with a few additional comments.

Wallachia and Moldavia came under Turkish influence and domination in the XVth Century, which served as bases of Ottoman military campaigns Central Europe.

*After the downfall of the medieval Hungarian Empire (\*125), these two Rumanian provinces did not see any hope for resistance, and turning their back to the West, they became an active part of the Balkan. (\*126).*

Before the Turkish Conquest, in the beginning of the XVIth Century, the population of Hungarian Transylvania consisted of 425,000 people. From these figures only 100,000 were Vlachs. (\*127). At the end of the same century due to the great loss of lives in the Turko-Hungarian wars, the Transylvanian population dropped down to 400,000, but the number of the Vlachs remained at 100,000 (\*128), which seems to prove that defence was mainly a Hungarian responsibility and the Vlachs were almost untouched by the war.

*... whether by natural increase, by immigration, by the fact that their mountain fastnesses they suffered relatively little from the Turkish and Tatar inroads, or, what is most probable, through a combination of all these causes, they increased very rapidly. (\*129).*

The increase of the Vlachs was significant in the age of the semi-independent Transylvanian Principality (XVI-XVII Centuries). The princes of Transylvania secured a relatively comfortable and prosperous life for the Vlachs. Obviously in this period thousands of them poured into Transylvania from Moldavia and from Wallachia again, crossing the Eastern and Southern Carpathians. In Transylvania they found protection from their Turkish overlords, better pasturages, and much more freedom to live their traditional way of life. (\*130). In the

\*125: In August 24-30, 1526, the Turks defeated the Hungarian forces at Mohacs. In 1540 Hungary disintegrated to three parts: Royal (Habsburg) territory, Turkish-occupied Hungary, and the semi-independent Transylvania. Hungary was liberated and unified only after 1686

\*126: Gy. Zathureczky: *Transylvania. Citadel of the West*, p. 40.

\*127: Zs. Szász: *Hungarians - Rumanians. (Hungarian Quarterly)*, 1941, p. 590.)

\*128: P. Teleki: *Evolution of Hungary, and its Place in European History*, p. 83.

\*129: Macartney: *Hungary and Her Successors*, p. 259.

\*130: The first (non-Slavic) Vlach document was the Bible, which was translated from the Hungarian version to the Vlach language by Michael Tordasi, a Hungarian Calvinist bishop (1581-82), following the order of the Hungarian Prince of Transylvania.

middle of the XVIIth Century, the Vlachs represented already  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the Transylvanian people. (\*131). Fifty years later, when the population of Transylvania reached  $\frac{1}{2}$  million, the Vlachs consisted about half of this number. (\*132).

Finally, the Vlach population increased so much

*that the Saxon and Szekely settlements, and even some of the Magyar groups in the west (of Transylvania), had become islands in the Roumanian sea - a singularly unfortunate matter for the Szekelys in particular, who, being by now, at least, true Magyars, found themselves isolated from their kinsfolk. (\*133).*

The rest of the Vlach-story is well known in the history of Modern Europe. The Congress of Paris (1856) gave to Wallachia and Moldavia virtual independence under nominal Turkish overlordship, and in 1861, these principalities were united as "Rumania". At the Congress of Berlin (1878), this new country obtained full independence, and in 1881, it was obtained as a kingdom. As a consequence of the Second Balkan War Rumania occupied South-Dobrudja from Bulgaria. (1913). In 1914, Rumania proclaimed neutrality, but in 1916, she surprisingly joined the Entente in World War I. The Treaties of St. Germain (1919) and of Trianon (1920) awarded Transylvania, Eastern Banat, Crisana-Maramures, and Bukovina to Rumania. Thus, the imperialistic dream of "Greater Rumania" became a reality.

In 1940, Rumania joined Hitler's Germany, hoping for the defence of Transylvania from Hungarian revisionism, and for the possible further conquest (from the Ukraine). In the same year, however, when Nazi-Rumania already withdrew from the League of Nations (July 11, 1940), Premiers Teleki of Hungary and Giurtu of Rumania were called to Vienna to acknowledge the decision which returned the northern part of Transylvania to Hungary. By this decision the Axis Powers wished to satisfy Hungary, (which was already an unwilling satellite of the Axis), and still keep the support of the Rumanian fascists. Under German influence, in June 22, 1941, Rumania attacked the Soviet Union, hoping again that perhaps the Germans would let them bite a piece from Ukraine, and also hoping that Hitler would return North-Transylvania to them as a reward for their faithfulness. Five days later, the Hungarian Government also declared war against the Soviet Union, partly under the pressure of Germany, partly because any resistance at this point would have surely resulted in the immediate return of N. Transylvania to the "more faithful" Rumanians. In August, 1944, however, when the

\*131. Gy. Zathureczky: *Transylvania, Citadel of the West*, p. 401.

\*132. *Zs. Szász: Hungarians - Rumanians. (The Hungarian Quarterly, 1941, p. 590).*

\*133. C. A. Macartney: *Hungary and Her Successors*, p. 259-60.

Russian forces attacked Rumania from the north, King Michael quickly dismissed the pro-German Antonescu government and ordered his troops to align to themselves with the United Nations against the Nazis. Hungary could not follow this example at the same time, since Hitler's troops occupied the country on March 19, 1944, degrading this unwilling satellite into a helpless colony.

The quick transformation of Fascist-Rumania into Pro-Soviet-Rumania was rewarded by Moscow. By the Peace Treaty which was signed at Paris in February, 1947, Northern Transylvania (where the Hungarian population represented 52.3% of the whole population) was restored to Rumania. (\*134).

How many Hungarians are still living in Transylvania? There are certain reasons which make it very difficult to estimate their numbers. The Rumanian governments transferred thousands of them to Wallachia, and to Moldavia. Hungarian families were forced to "Rumanize" their family-names by intimidations in jobs and in schools. These factors and the "official", but unreliable census could prevent any objective investigation by individual historians. Only a well prepared group of professionals, authorized and protected by the United Nations Organization, or by another international body, could measure the true situation of this humiliated and tortured country.

The future of discriminated minorities in Transylvania is hopefully not only in the hand of the Rumanian Government, but also in the hand of the United Nations and of the leaders of the World. In the days, when this study was written, Hungarians of Transylvania are exposed to terror and genocide on their own land, which was the land of their forefathers for much more than a thousand years. They are exposed to a people, which was originated in the Balkans, which migrated and infiltrated to Transylvania, and which was permitted to settle down by generous Hungarian rulers. Hungarians of Transylvania are exposed to an alien and rancorous administration, which was clever enough to cover and justify Wallachian imperialism introducing the "theory" of Dako-Roman continuity. In light of this theory the Wallachian conquest of Transylvania became actually a "re-conquest" of the "descendants" of those Daks, who were almost completely exterminated by the Romans in 117 A.D., and of those Romans, who evacuated Transylvania in 271 A.D.

\*1.34: The Census of Transylvania found 2,678 people in this province, in 1910, of which 1,472,021 were Vlachs (51%) (C.A. Macartney: *Hungary and Her Successors*, p.246-65). According to the Census of 1941, from the 2,577,291 population of North Transylvania 1,347,012 were Hungarians (52.3%), 1,066,33 were Rumanians (41.3%), and 6.4% were other nationalities. (C.A. Macartney: *October Fifteenth* p. 42.)

To study, to understand the true history of the Wallachians is very important, because in our complex world, objective historiography and education should be the only base of international justice. Objective historical writing must replace political propaganda in connection with Transylvania and in association with true Vlach history. Only purified historical writing could restore the reputation of professional historians all over the world, and only an objective historical approach could become a base for a restoration which will grant justice for Transylvania.



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