

FROM THE ROMANIZED POPULATION  
TO VLACHS/AROMANIANS/BALKAN ROMANIANS

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Abstract

The Aromanians, representatives of Balkan Romanity (*ar/u/mâni, rumăni/rămăni*, as they call themselves, or *vlahi, belivlasi, rëmëri, çobani, cuçovlahi, țințari*, the way the Balkan peoples, in the middle of whom they live, name them) and the Megleno-Romanians (*vlași*, as they call themselves, or *vlași* and *megleniți*, the way the neighboring populations name them) are the southern branch of Oriental Romanity. This study presents historical testimonies from the Romanian Countries, confirming the belonging of the Balkan Vlachs to the Romanian people and to Romanianism; these testimonies were provided by medieval chroniclers (Miron Costin, High Steward Constantin Cantacuzino, Dimitrie Cantemir), continuing with the Illuminists (the representatives of the Transylvanian School) and the revolutionaries of 1848 (Nicolae Bălcescu, Ion Ghica, Ion Ionescu de la Brad, Dimitrie Bolintineanu), or the Romanian intellectuals of Aromanian origin, as was the martyr-professor Ștefan Mihăileanu (1884: “I am Romanian before I am Macedonian”).

**Keywords.** Vlachs, Aromanians, Megleno-Romanians, Balkan Romanians, Ottoman Macedonia, Balkan Romanity, Balkan Romanianism.

In my opinion, today’s generations should be reminded about the existence of a large Latinized population south of the Danube, in the entire Balkan Peninsula;<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See classical science landmarks—N. Iorga, *Histoire des Roumains de la Péninsule des Balcans (Albanie, Macédoine, Épire, Thessalie, etc.)* (București: 1919), also translated into Romanian in the same year; Theodor Capidan, “Romanitatea balcanică,” reception speech at the Romanian Academy, given on 26 May 1936, in *Discursuri de recepție la Academia Română* (Bucharest: 1980), 221–37; Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca, “Aperçus of the History of Balkan Romanity,” in *Politics and Culture in Southeastern Europe*, edited by Răzvan Theodorescu and Leland Conley Barrows (Bucharest: 2001), 97–111.

in today's context, the need to refer to the complex history of Eastern Romanians,<sup>2</sup> to the past of the Balkan Vlachs (Balkan Romanians) seems both obvious and urgent. Moreover, it is not just a simple matter of recovering knowledge: For us, Romanians, the recovery of historical information can signify, in many cases, another step in the recuperation of our own history; it is a compelling necessity both from the national point of view and from the perspective of the European geopolitical and ethnohistorical remodeling, especially in the Balkans, that we have been witnessing for two decades now. We need to remove the veil of the new prejudices, which tend to replace others that were discarded by history, and we must strive to know the entire history of the Romanians, with all its ramifications, a history often generous, and often tragic.

The Balkan Vlachs illustrate the complexity, the tragedy, and the greatness of Romanian national history, the historical evolution of the Aromanians,<sup>3</sup> considered, according to the Romanian geographer Ion Simionescu, “the most unfortunate branch of Romanianism.”

A summary of research works reveals a component found in almost all of them: The common origin of the descendants of Eastern Romanian ethnicity (the Aromanians or the Balkan Romanians and the Daco-Romanians),<sup>4</sup> the origin of the

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<sup>2</sup> For details see H. Mihăescu, *La Romanité dans le Sud-Est de l'Europe* (București: 1993); Aurel Berinde, *Geneza romanității răsăritene. Din istoria dacoromânilor și macedoromânilor (aromânilor)* (Timișoara: 2002); Nicolae Saramandu, *Romanitatea orientală* (București: 2004).

<sup>3</sup> According to the deeply politicized and unscientific assessments of Greek historians and philologists, the Aromanians are just the Latinized successors of the Ancient Greeks; see in this respect Achille G. Lazarou, *L'Aroumain et ses rapports avec le Grec* (Thessaloniki: 1986), 101–14. One of his colleagues, also of Aromanian origin, Socrates N. Liakou, considered those sharing his ethnicity the purest among the Greeks (in a comprehensive monograph from 1965, dedicated to their origin), “the successors of the Macedo-Dorians, linguistically Latinized”—*apud* Constantin Papanace, *Geneza și evoluția conștiinței naționale la macedo-români*, preface by Ionel Zeana (n. p. [Timișoara]: 1995), 274. These assessments date from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and constitute Greek propaganda that considered the Vlachs from the Balkans, in the period before World War I, as Greeks who spoke a Latin idiom (they share this opinion up to this day), the Aromanian press often revealing to the Romanian media the danger of such identification: “We never believed nor wanted to believe that the Greeks, when they speak about a settlement with the Romanians, refuse to take into account the several hundred thousands of Romanians from Macedonia, and they will continue to apply, like in the past, their tactic of Hellenization to them. Instead, what do we see? They are speaking about an alliance against the Slavic threat, but they do not understand or admit the ethnic individuality of the Macedo-Romanians. Romanian-Greeks, Greeks who speak Romanian, this is what we, the Romanians from Macedonia, are for them and hence the idea that we have to be indoctrinated by them”—Omega, “Suntem greci sau români?,” *Peninsula Balcanică* 2, no. 37 (1 October 1900): 1–2; see also Elvino, “Se pot numi elino-vlahi românii din Macedonia? Ce însemnează cuvântul ‘elino-vlah’ și de când datează el,” *Românul de la Pind* 4, no. 17 (159) (30 April 1906): 2.

<sup>4</sup> See Theodor Capidan, *L'origine des Macédo-Roumains. Réponse à M. le Professeur Kéramopoulos de l'Académie d'Athènes* (București: 1939); more recently, Stoica Lascu, “Aromânii nu sunt greci. Răspunsurile intelectualilor români de sorginte aromână la ‘afirmațiile’ arheologului elen A. Keramopoulos (1939),” in *Românitate și latinitate în Uniunea Europeană*, vol. 3, edited by Tudor Nedelcea (Craiova: 2009), 322–83.

Romanian nation living in a vast area of South-Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Thus, the well-known assertion of the Romanian scholar (of Aromanian origin) Tache Papahagi may be repeated: “Instead—*he wrote in 1928*—fate decreed that the entire North of the Balkan Peninsula should also be a Romanian country, with Romanian people stretching to the North-Eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea and to the lands of Thessaly, to show us how, in this Southern Danube area, Romanian life bleeds terribly and faces extinction. Of everything that pulsed and reigned in this Peninsula, today there are left only scattered islands, such as the Romanians from Timok, the Romanians from Istria, whose disappearance will not be long delayed, the Romanians from Meglena, who have started to emigrate to the Mother Land, and the Aromanians or the Macedo-Romanians.”

Representatives of Balkan Romanianism—the Aromanians (*ar/u/mâni, rumăni/rămăni*, as they call themselves, and *vlahi, belivlasi, rëmëri, çobani, cuțovlahi, țințari*, as they are called by the Balkan nations among whom they live),<sup>5</sup> and the Megleno-Romanians (*vlași*, as they call themselves, and *vlași* or *megleniți*, as they are called by the neighboring populations)<sup>6</sup> constitute the southern branch of the Eastern Romanity ethnic group, which stretched from the northern area of Trajan’s Dacia (until the arrival of the migratory peoples) to the mountainous Northern Greece and from the Black Sea to the Adriatic Sea. Its unity, resulting from the Romanization of the Thracians since the second century BC, was broken once the Slavs had settled south of the Danube during the seventh century; thus, the Romanian people developed further north of the Balkan Mountains, through its North-Balkan component (the Daco-Romanians), and in the South through its

<sup>5</sup> For information on them see the following works of Romanian literature: Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca, “Aperçus of the History,” 97–174; Stoica Lascu, “The Balkan Romanity in the Writings of Romanian Chroniclers and Representatives of the Enlightenment,” in *Балканите—Език, История. The Balkans—Languages, History, Cultures (Международна Научна Конференция, 13–15 Април 2007 г. International Conference, 13–15 April 2007. “Великотърновски Университет Св. Св. Кирил и Методий”)* (n.p. [Veliko Tarnovo]: 2008), 53–63; id., “The constitution of the dimensions of Balkan Romanianism in the perception of the society of the Danubian Principalities (first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century),” *Valahian Journal of Historical Studies*, no. 18–19 (2012–2013): 83–110; id., “De la population romanisée aux Valaques, Aroumains, Roumains balkaniques,” in *Романистика и Балканистика. Зборник на трудови во чест на проф. д-р Петар Атанасов по повод 75 години од животот. Во редакција на Мирјана Алексоска-Чкатроска и коредакција на Јоана Хаџи-Лева Христоска*, edited by Mirjana Alekoska-Chkatroska and Joana Hadži-Lega Hristosk (Скопје: 2014), 377–428; Stoica Lascu, ed., Marian Zidaru, and George Lascu, *Români balcanici (aromânii și meglenoromânii) în Arhivele Naționale Britanice (1850–1950)* (București: 2016).

Also T. J. Winnifrith, *The Vlachs. The History of a Balkan People* (London: 1987); Centre d’Études des Civilisations de l’Europe Centrale et du Sud-Est, *Les Aroumains* [Présentation: Georges Castellan Directeur du Centre], Cahier n° 8 (Paris: 1990); Thede Kahl, *Ethnizität und räumliche Verteilung der Aromunen in Südosteuropa* (Münster: 1999); Nicolas Trifon, *Les Aroumains un people qui s’en va. Suivi de L’aroumain parlé à Metsovo*, par Stamatias Beis. *Le nomadisme chez les Aroumains*, par Thede Khal (La Bussière: 2005).

<sup>6</sup> See Petar Atanasov, *Meglenoromâna astăzi* (București: 2002) (PhD thesis presented, in 1979, in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia; it was initially published in French, in 1990; the present edition is augmented); Emil Țârcomnicu, *Meglenoromânii: destin istoric și cultural* (București: 2004).

South-Balkan branch (the Aromanians and the Megleno-Romanians). The representatives of the last ones were gradually pushed into the Southern area of the Peninsula (where they may have encountered some Romanized islets south of the Jireček Line); the Istro-Romanians are the late successors of the Daco-Romanians.

The Daco-Romanians have developed continuously; they represented the basis for the formation of the Romanian literary language in the nineteenth century, while the Macedo-Romanian idiom maintained itself as a dialect of the common language trunk, the successor of Eastern Romanian.

Moreover, after the inclusion of the Balkans into the Ottoman Empire (in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries), the Vlachs continued their existence, practicing especially the shepherding of flocks, their main activity (together with the transport of goods by caravan and trade) in modern times,<sup>7</sup> until World War I.<sup>8</sup>

After 1860, among the Aromanians who had settled in the country and were integrated into the social and economic life of the Romanian society as merchants, land owners, bailiffs (some of them were even elected to Parliament), there

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<sup>7</sup> Stoica Lascu, “Balkan Vlachs—Autonomies and Modernity,” in *Power and Influence in South-Eastern Europe 16<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century*, edited by Maria Baramova, Plamen Mitev, Ivan Parvev, and Vania Racheva (Berlin; Zürich: 2013), 191–207.

<sup>8</sup> See Theodor Capidan, *Românii nomazi. Studiu din viața românilor din sudul Peninsulei Balcanice* (Cluj: 1926), 15–9. See also the synthetic appreciations based on historical criticism, in G. Ivănescu, *Istoria limbii române*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by Mihaela Paraschiv (Iași: 2000), especially 279–84: “In a verbal communication made to the author in 1960 (by Romulus Vuia—our note), it was stated that complex transhumance (which Capidan considers nomadism) became the sole form of life of South-Danubian Romanians because the Byzantine Empire, which was in need of milk, cheese, meat, and wool, was for the Macedonians a huge outlet for their products. It is therefore not accepted that, until the settlement of the Slavs in the Balkans, the Romanian people, a people of transhumant shepherds, represented the great majority South of the Danube” (283). A contemporary English historian shows that with the extension of the Ottoman authorities in the Balkans, the Vlachs settled more easily according to the new rule, partly because of the advantages and their ability “to avoid charging fees” from a transhumant population: “Historians of Balkan countries naturally regard the years of Turkish rule as a wretched period, characterized by cultural stagnation and economic depression, whereas the nineteenth century is seen as an era of heroism, liberty, and eventual triumph. For the Vlachs the reverse seemed to be the case. Traders, shepherds, and craftsmen thrive in peace, and are helped by strong rule. The collapse of authority, the erection of national frontiers, and bloodthirsty wars may have brought liberty, but they also brought death. It is true that peace is not synonymous with prosperity. The unfair Turkish economic system meant that much of the richest land was seized by the Turks, and that non-Turks often paid a variety of taxes to various absentee landlords. Hence with poor villages unable to support a big population, a pattern of emigration and wandering was set up, and has continued almost to this day. But again, the Vlachs seemed to have had some advantage. They were already used to traveling. Transhumants are good at tax avoidance. The inaccessibility of their summer pastures, very often found in important strategic positions, meant they were able to secure important tax concessions. When the central Turkish authority broke down at the end of the eighteenth century, and independent brigands like Ali Pasha set themselves up, it was against the prosperous Vlachs that he and his Albanians turned. Likewise, a century later, the establishment of the Greek-Turkish frontier in Thessaly meant economic ruin for Metsovon”—Winnifrith, *The Vlachs*, 123–24; more recently—Thede Kahl, “Le nomadisme chez les Aroumains,” in Nicolas Trifon, *Les Aroumains*, 445–69.

emerged personalities who vigorously pleaded for institutional organizations that would assist their co-ethnics from the Balkan Peninsula in the process of developing their national consciousness. Representatives of Romanian public life, political leaders, and men of culture adhered to this initiative. Consequently, in 1864, the first Romanian school was opened in Macedonia, through the efforts of a self-taught Aromanian tailor, Dimitrie Athanasescu. From the Pindus Mountains, Aromanian young people were sent to Bucharest by Father Averchie for training. Later, they opened several Romanian schools in the Vlach communities throughout the Balkans. Their number dramatically increased after 1878, when, through an official act, the Ottoman authorities chartered Romanian schools and guaranteed Aromanians unhindered performance of religious service in “their own language.” About the same time, the Romanian society became growingly aware of the existence of their kin in European Turkey, in particular, of the Romanians in Macedonia or the Macedo-Romanians. Articles and books began to be published, and the necessity for even larger funds to be allotted to the above-mentioned schools was never more frequently invoked in the Romanian Parliament.

The founding of the Macedo-Romanian Cultural Society in Bucharest, on 23 September 1879, enhanced the efforts for a national and cultural movement, which projected itself against the cognizance of the common ethnic and linguistic roots of the modern descendants of Eastern Romanity, in which the Balkan branch clearly and coherently distinguished itself from the North-Danubian one.

### **Miron Costin—the first Romanian humanist who elaborated on the “Koutzovlachs”**

At the rejuvenation moment of Romanian medieval culture<sup>9</sup> by means of the contributions of the humanists who were connected to the most advanced spiritual ideas of their times, we also come across the first written account on the existence of South-Danube Romanians, a reality acknowledged as such in the writings of Miron Costin (1633–1691); he was the first Romanian scholar introducing this aspect regarding our ethnicity and its Balkan component: “A completely new relation, unprecedented in the Romanian culture up to that moment, hence worthy of being remembered, is the teaching of the Moldavian scholar that the Aromanians, who are called Koutzovlachs by the Greeks, have Roman origins.”<sup>10</sup> This “new relation” shows, in fact, for the first time in our historiography the idea of the unity of the Romanian people from all its historical provinces, including its southern branch—the Aromanians.

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<sup>9</sup> Stoica Lascu, *Romanitatea balcanică în conștiința societății românești până la Primul Război Mondial* (Constanța: 2013), 10–35, 64–78; respectively: I.1. *Primele percepți românești ale existenței romanității balcanice (secolele XVII-XVIII)*; I.2. *Romanitatea balcanică în viziunea Școlii Ardelene*.

<sup>10</sup> Enache Puiu, *Viața și opera lui Miron Costin* (București: 1975), 265.

They were mentioned for the first time in a paper of 1677, written in Polish—*Cronica țărilor Moldovei și Munteniei (Cronica polonă)* [The Chronicles of the Countries of Moldavia and Wallachia (the so-called Polish Chronicle)]. Being a historical summary meant to inform foreigners (the Polish people), the Moldavian humanist scholar finds the augmentation of the value of information appropriate, “highlighting the particular aspects unknown to the Polish.”<sup>11</sup> That is why, when talking about the origins and spreading of the Roman descendants, he also provides the following information: “In Macedonia there is also a Roman colony, with the same language as ours, but a lot closer to Italian than our speech. The Greeks call them Koutzovlachs, meaning lame Vlachs, because the lame and the sick of the Roman army would remain there. There is also a wide land that is called Romania, and this land is a Roman colony.”<sup>12</sup>

This is documentary information of real value, beyond the explanation of the ethnonym “Koutzovlach,” which maintains also its historical primacy and its interpretative significance over the understanding, in those times, of the unity of language and of kin of the Romanian people. A few years later, after 1684, there was elaborated “the first critical and scholarly presentation of cultural humanist literature regarding the Roman origin of Romanians, with the corrective and decisive influence of the native conscience of the Romanity and the unity of the people”<sup>13</sup>—*De neamul Moldovenilor* [On the Kin of the Moldavians]. In presenting the extent and the civilizing character of the Roman Empire, Miron Costin appeals to the southern descendants of Eastern Romanity, perfectly aware of their Roman origins, although less clear on the historical evolution of this Romanity: “And in Rumelia, in the Greek lands, a kin, which we call Koutzovlachs, is the colony of Rome.”<sup>14</sup>

In Wallachia, by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, scholars were aware of the spreading of Eastern Romanity.

### **The humanist scholar and High Steward/Seneschal Constantin Cantacuzino (1640–1716) about the “Koutzovlachs” and their language**

The noble scholar, whose “cultural superiority is recognized by foreigners who are able to compare him to other cultural environments,”<sup>15</sup> is considered to be rather a humanist historian than a chronicler. Unlike the latter, his informational

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 264.

<sup>12</sup> In Romanian: “În Macedonia este de asemenea o colonie romană, cu aceeași limbă cu noi dar cu mult mai apropiată de limba italiană decât vorbirea noastră. Grecii îi numesc cuțovlahi, adică vlahi șchiopi, pentru că șchiopii și bolnavii din oastea romană rămâneau acolo. Este acolo un ținut mare care se numește Romania și acel ținut este o colonie romană.”

<sup>13</sup> Adolf Armbruster, *Romanitatea românilor. Istoria unei idei*, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised and expanded ed. (București: 1993), 211.

<sup>14</sup> In Romanian: “Și la Rumele, în țările grecești, un neam ce le zicem coțovlah, colonia Râmului ieste.”

<sup>15</sup> Virgil Cândea, *Stolnicul între contemporani* (București: 1971), 110.

horizon, his profound humanistic training provide his exact knowledge of those times' literature, based on which he scientifically proves the idea of the Romanity of his people and the unity of Romanians everywhere. Even more, written sources are supplemented by oral reports on the "old Romanians" and also by discussions and news from other sources. In the context of the present documentary approach, we are referring to the information gathered from the often-called "Greeks" (who could actually often be Aromanians), mentioned in various sources of those times, which the young scholar must have come across in Padua during his two years of studies (1667–1669)—according to Nicolae Iorga,<sup>16</sup> when he stated that the founder of the college, where the future High Steward/Seneschal studied, was an "elinovlah" ["hellenovlach"] from the region of Veria, the erudite Ioan Kottunios (1572–1667). It also seems that the connections of Constantin Cantacuzino among the Aromanians living in Bucharest had broadened his knowledge regarding the southern descendants of Eastern Romanity.

Indeed, Constantin Cantacuzino clearly attests direct contact to the "Koutzovlachs," whom he considered to be the descendants of Rome, speaking the same language as the North-Danubian Romanians, "only more corrupted and mixed with this simple Greek and Turkish":

*Hence these Koutzovlachs are, just like their neighbors tell us and even how the ones I have discussed with say, people not different, nor in appearance, nor in "obcine" [habits], nor in the stamina and shape of their bodies, than these Romanians (our emphasis), and their Romanian language, just like the others, is only more corrupted and mixed with simple Greek and Turkish, because very few, as it has been said, have remained living in the mountains. The ones stretching from Ioannina in Epirus to the Albanians near Elbasan only live in villages, although some villages are big. I say their craft is strong, making you wonder as they continue to exist even today, guarding their language and some of their customs. Even so, their language became more corrupted and their numbers dwindled, as they too have fallen under the Turkish yoke, just like the Greeks there, where their rulers and their nobility and everything was lost. And it might be that they were not so many to begin with. As many as they are now, being mere simple folk and peasants, their places lacking food as they live in rocky mountain areas, they scatter and many go to the big Turkish cities to get food; and in those places, their language mixes and becomes corrupt, as I have said, and they become even fewer. I also tell you that if whoever asks them: What are you? He says: Vlahos [Vlachos], meaning Romanian; and the place where they live, they call [Great] Vlahia.*

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<sup>16</sup> N. Iorga, *Istoria românilor*, vol. 8, *Revoluționarii*, edited by Georgeta Filitti (București: 2006), 81.

*In my opinion, the Romanians here understand them better if they hear them speak than the other way, but even so, if they would live together for a short time, they could easily understand each other. Also, it is believable that those Koutzovlachs are Romanians just like these, and they descend from them; and back during those times, Gallienus or some other emperor has called some of them from here and placed them over there, where they remained until today. The Greeks call them Koutzovlachs, mocking and laughing at them, meaning lame, blind, cursed, thieves, this is how they call them. And they gathered the ones who were of their kin in that place, just like they laugh at these Romanians from here, and they even speak direly of them and call them nullities, telling stories that they are the descendants of thieves. Because of this, as these Greeks even now laugh at Romanians and speak so vile, they have a lot of influence. And also for seeing all the other people laughing at them and mocking them, they remained in lassitude in their rubble, just like roosters, seeming to them that they still have some vigor . . . .<sup>17</sup>*

Hence, for Seneschal Cantacuzino the common origin of the Balkan Vlachs and the “Rumanians” is an acknowledged idea, placing them in the Epirus region

<sup>17</sup> Stolnicul Constantin Cantacuzino, “Istoria Țării Rumânești de când au descălecat pravoslavnicii creștini (Letopisețul cantacuzinesc),” in *Cronicari munteni*, vol. 1, edited by Mihail Gregorian, preface by Dan Horia Mazilu (București: 1984), 42–4. In Romanian: “Sunt dară acești coțovlahi, cum ne spun vecinii lor și încă și cu dintr-înșii am vorbit, oameni nu mai osebiți, nici în chip, nici în obcine, nici în țăria și făptura trupului, decât rumânii (our emphasis), ceștea, și limba lor rumânească ca acestora, numai mai stricată și mai amestecată cu de ceastă proastă grecească și cu turcească, pentru că foarte puțini, cum s-au zis, au rămas la niște munți trăgându-se de lăcuiesc. Carii să tind în lung de lângă Ianina Ipirului până spre arbănași lângă Elbasan, în sate numai lăcuind, săvâi că și mari unele sate. Zic că sunt și oameni cu putere în hrana lor, de carii și mare minune, iaste, cum și până astăzi se află păzindu-și și limba, și niște obicei ale lor. Aceștea dară și limba ș-au mai stricat, și ei s-au împuținat, drept că și ei desăvârșit supt jugul turcescu cu acei greci dupre acolo s-au supus, unde și stăpânire, și blagorodnia, și tot ș-au pierdut. Și poate-fi că nice dintâi așa mulțime nu va fi fost de dânșii. Că iată acum și câți sunt, mojici și țărani sunt, și locurile lor cu greu de hrană fiind, pentru multa piatră și munți ce sunt de lăcuiescu, să împrăștie și să duc mai mulți pen cele orașe mari turcești de să hrănescu; și pe acolo mai mulți amestecându-se, și limba, cum am zis, foarte ș-au stricat, și ei puțini au rămas. Zic și aceasta că de-i întreabă pre ei neștine: Ce ești? El zice: *vlahos*, adecâte rumân; și locurile lor unde lăcuiesc le zic *Vlahia* [cea mare].

Pare-mi-să, zic, că ei grăind, mai mult îi înțeleg ceștea rumâni decât ceștea grăind ceia să înțeleagă; însă și unii, și alții cu puținea vrême într-un loc aflându-se și vorbind adese, pe lesne pot înțelege. De crezut dară iaste că și acei coțovlahi, dintr-acești rumâni sunt și se trag; și într-acéle vremi ce Galian au alt împărat, au rădicat o seamă dintr-înșii de aici și i-au dus de i-au așezat pe acolo, au rămas și până acum.

Coțovlahi le zic grecii, răsând-i și batjocură făcându-și de dânșii, adecâte, șchiopi, orbi, blestemați, hoți, și ca acéștea le zic că sunt. Și cîți au fost de acel feliu pe undevași, i-au adunat de i-au dus pe acolo; precum și de ceștea rumâni dupre aici rîd și încă destule cuvinte grozave le zic și de nimic îi fac, și că din hoți să trag povestesc și băsnuiesc între ei. Ci de aceasta, căci grecii cești dupre acum rîd de rumâni și grăiesec așa de rău, au socoteală mare; pentru că văzând și ei pe toată alaltă lume răsând de dânșii și batjocorindu-i, au stătut și au obosit și ei pen gunoaietele lor, ca cocoșii, pârându-le că au mai rămas cevași vlagă și de ei. . . .”

and Southern Albania, the homeland during the Roman emperors, where the scholar believes they live in few numbers—thanks to the imprecations of some Hellenes, as it becomes obvious from the anti-Greek texture of his narration (“But because those Greeks are suffering, believing others to cause their situation and not themselves, they blaspheme and talk awful about them, not looking at themselves”<sup>18</sup>).

### **The Moldavian Prince and scholar, the erudite Dimitrie Cantemir**

Contemporary to this high-ranking dignitary from Wallachia is Dimitrie Cantemir (1673–1723), the Moldavian Prince [*domnitor/voievod/hospodar*] and also the most prominent representative of Romanian medieval humanism, who has also dealt extensively, in some passages of his writings, with the history and existence of the descendants of Eastern Romanity. Being a renowned scholar in the European scientific world, beginning to resort to Romanian scholars in trying to find arguments and proofs for the Romanity of our people, the historical ideas of Dimitrie Cantemir highlight the unity of his kin, its origins and—unlike his predecessor, perhaps with the exception of Constantin Cantacuzino—the Roman continuity in Dacia, claiming that the Romanian people descends only from the Romans, thus anticipating one of the main ideas of the “Transylvanian School.”<sup>19</sup>

His references to the Balkan Vlachs are found in the works he wrote in Russia. Hence, in the first Romanian scientific writing, which is *Descriptio Moldaviae* (written in 1715–1716 at the urge of the Berlin Academy), in the third chapter, he refers to the idiom of the Balkan Vlachs in the following terms: “*A much more corrupted language have the Koutzovlachs, who live at the border of Macedonia* (our emphasis). They surprisingly mix their language with Albanian and Greek. But, in any case, they keep the Moldavian endings in nouns and verbs. A so corrupted language they only understand between themselves, as no Greek, Albanian, or Moldavian is capable of understanding them. If all these three were in the same place and they would hear the Koutzovlach speak, then for sure they could understand what he means, provided each would translate to the others the fragments in his language.”<sup>20</sup>

Dimitrie Cantemir also knew about the same pejorative name attributed to Aromanians, and from his explicit manner of referring to certain characteristics of their language and its relations to Greek and Albanian, it is possible that he may have met and conversed with some of them. *The Description of Moldavia* being a work that aims only towards presenting one of the areas inhabited by Romanians, Cantemir has found it appropriate not to widely digress regarding the other branches of the Romanian kin.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>19</sup> Armbruster, *Romanitatea*, 230.

<sup>20</sup> Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei*, afterword by Magdalena Popa (București: 1986), 167–68.

Therefore, it can easily be observed that the branches of the unitary body of the Romanian kin also include the Balkan Vlachs: “Thus, today the Moldavians, Wallachians, Transalpine Vlachs, Mysians, Bessarabians, and the Epirotes all extensively call themselves not ‘Vlachs’ but ‘Romanians,’ and they call their own language ‘Romanian language.’ And if a Moldavian, a Wallachian, a Mysian and so on would ask a foreigner or a newcomer if he knows their language, they would ask this way: ‘Știi românește?’ [‘Do you know Romanian?’], <meaning> ‘Scis Romanice?’”<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, among the Romanian provinces, Dimitrie Cantemir also enumerates the regions of the Balkan Peninsula, where he knew about the existence of South-Danubian Romanians:

*By the testimony of experience we acknowledge that the entire Roman-Vlach kin is living today in 6 lands: In Moldavia, Wallachia, Bessarabia, Transylvania, Mysia, and the Epirus of Greece. . . . Mysia follows the flow of the Danube from the Iron Gate up to the Black Sea, <and> its cities, towns, and the villages are full of Romanians (our emphasis), mixed with Turks <and> with Serbs. It stretches wider to the South for more (or less) than 20 miles, except for the borders of Dobrudja. Today, inner Mysia is wholly occupied, as far as the Haemus Mountains, by the Turks called “citak.” In Epirus, around Ioannina, near the Pindus Mountains (Chalcocondylas, in the 6<sup>th</sup> Book), they live scattered in villages and towns, mixed with Greeks. The Emperor John Cantacuzino empowers Constantine Angelos (his brother’s son) with the ruling over these Vlachs, also bestowing him with other royal honors.*<sup>22</sup>

Further—as has been already mentioned in the last writing, in the last chapter (*Despre provinciile neamului românesc, în care /ei/ locuiesc astăzi* [On the

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 415 (“Ita hodie Moldavi, Montani, Transalpini Valachi, Mysii, Bassarabienses et {{Epiresenses}} omne<s> generali nomine se non Vlachs, sed Romanos vocant, linguam vernaculam linguam Romanam dicunt; et si Moldavus, Muntanus (*Sic!*), Mysus etc. [si] alienigenam aut extraneum inter<r>ogaret, an sciret linguam eorum, sic inter<r>oga<re>t: *Știi românește*, Scis Romanice?”). In Romanian: “Astfel, astăzi moldovenii, muntenii, valahii transalpinii, mysienii, basarabeni și epiroții se numesc pe sine cu toții un nume cuprinzător nu ‘vlahi,’ ci ‘români,’ iar limbii lor neașe îi spun ‘limbă română’; iar dacă un moldovean, un muntean, un mysian ș.a.m.d. l-ar întreba pe un străin sau venetic dacă știe limba lor, l-ar întreba așa: ‘Știi românește?’, <adică> Scis Romanice?”

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 421, 423. In Romanian: “După mărturia experienței aflăm că întreg neamul romano-valah se găsește astăzi împrăștiat în șase ținuturi: în Moldova, Muntenia, Basarabia, Transilvania, Mysia și Epirul din Grecia. . . . Mysia urmează malul Dunării de la Poarta de Fier și până la Pontul Euxin, <iar> în ea *orașele, târgurile, satele sunt pline de români* (our emphasis), amestecați cu turci /și/ cu sârbi; iar de-a latul, către miazăzi ea nu se întinde, în afară doar de hotarele Dobrogei, pe mai mult (sau mai puțin) de 20 de mile; căci Mysia dinlăuntru este ocupată astăzi în întregime, până în munții Haemus, de către turcii numiți ‘citak.’

În Epir, în jurul Ianinei, lângă muntele Pind (Chalcocondylas, în Cartea a 6-a) locuiesc împrăștiați în sate și în târguri amestecați cu grecii. Ioan Cantacuzino împăratul îi întărește lui Constantin Anghelos (nepotului său de frate), cărmuirea acestor vlahi, dându-i și alte onoruri regești.”

Provinces of the Romanian Kin, in Which /It/ Lives Today]) of *Istoria moldo-vlahică*, the fragment from the above-mentioned work is almost literally repeated:

*They speak the same language as the other Romanians, but because of the long period of time <it is> so corrupted with Greek and Albanian, that the Moldavians can barely understand their words and speech, especially because they do not only mix words, but whole Greek and Albanian phrases, just like Latin is wholly corrupted by the Polish, in writing as well as in speech. They are called, rather by the Greeks, Κουτζόβλαχοι (Koutzo-Vlachs), meaning “lame Vlachs,” either because today they falter in their language, or because they have been called so after a certain Claudus (sic!), one of their old rulers (it becomes obvious that this is new information on the etymology of the ethnonym Koutzovlach—our note).<sup>23</sup>*

<sup>23</sup> Ștefan Giosu, *Dimitrie Cantemir. Studiu lingvistic* (București: 1973), 70. The provided explanation cannot be accepted. Coming, it seems, from Nicetas Choniates, the author links (*Chronicle*: 414) the name of Koutzovlach with a nickname given to a leader of the Aromanians, Chris. He was short, and therefore he was called *κυτο βλαχοι*, meaning ‘short Vlach’; the mentioned researcher also expresses his opinion that “The circumstances in which the Aromanians received this name from the Greeks are not yet made clear”—*ibid.*

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of Macedo-Romanian Culture that took place at the Sacred Heart University of Bridgeport (U.S.A.) (1–4 September 1989), the famous Romanian researcher Petre Ș. Năsturel (1923–2012) has proposed a new meaning of the ethnonym Koutzovlach—appearing for the first time in an internal Romanian document from the times of Matei Basarab, in 1644; namely, it is about a Greek semantical corruption of the word “koș” (pronounced “koci”), meaning “ram”: „Il signifie par conséquent ‘les Valaques aux béliers,’ ou ‘aux moutons,’ en d’autres termes, ‘les Valaques éleveurs d’ovins’”—Petre Ș. Năsturel, “Koutsovalaque-recherche étymologique,” in *Études Roumaines et Aroumaines*, sous la rédaction de Paul H. Stahl (Paris; Bucharest: 1990), 92. Commenting on this new hypothesis, the Italian academician (of Aromanian origin) Gheorghe Carageani takes more caution, underlining that “As it is about a population entirely consisting of shepherds, this ethnonym [koș] could be satisfactory. But as the Greeks did not understand the meaning of the Turkish word – *the cautious author warns*—and as they used to joke at their fellows, koș has been placed near the Greek adjective *koutsos* meaning not only lame but in many expressions, it has the pejorative meaning of mutilated, poor, beggar, difficult.”—Gheorghe Carageani, “Una minoranza dimenticata: gli Aromeni (Macedoromeni),” *Annali dell’Istituto Universitario Orientale. Sezione Romanza* 35, 1 (1993): 53.

Also see amidst other (older) ethymologies N. [Nicola] Popillian, *Româniî din Peninsula Balcanică* (București: 1885), 21–2: According to the author (of Aromanian origin), the same word would be “a corruption from the Turkish word *kiuciuc*” and, in consequence, “translated by small Romania,” to distinguish the Balkan Romanians from the ones living north of the Danube (“Dacia”). The perception of the Aromanian people was close, according to a testimony from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: “În anul 1868 cându plecai de Crușova (Macedonia) loclu iu escu faptu mi aducu aminte că unū aușu românu mi spunea că sborlu cuțo-vlahi se trage de la *Cuciuc-Vlah* sboru turcescu care va se dzică *Mică Romaniă* ca se se cunoască de sborulu *Cara-Vlah* care va se dzică mare, teasă Romaniă, numă cu care acliema pe românilu de aoace. Cum mi spunea acelu bătrânu—*I. Sterescu continues his testimony*, ‘Un abonatu al d-voastră,’ *in a letter*—, turcitli după ce supuseră Macedonia o numără Cuciuc-Vlah, eră grecili o traduseră in Cuțo-Vlah ca să lă hibă rușine și gnosu a romanilor de aestă numă și se dzică că sunt greci. Muzaverlichile (intridgele) și agonirile din partea grecilor asupra limbiliei române și asupra a totu ce este românescu, amo vë suntu cunoscute. Ma macedoneanili le revdară tute și lă părea ca mai bine se se numiască cuțo-vlah de câtu unu singuru românu se □ ică că este grecu [it is better for them to be called Koutzovlachs than a single Romanian

*Their weddings are very strict, as they do not allow their daughters to marry a man of a different kin, and they do not take foreign spouses for their sons, and they carefully safeguard their old Romanian customs, as well as the other traditions of their kin. About thirty thousand men pay an annual tax to the Sultan, which they call "harach," except those who live like outlaws in the mountains and often wreak havoc upon Turkish travelers.<sup>24</sup>*

The last two phrases extend the informational aspect which Dimitrie Cantemir places in the European scientific circuit, by attesting some traditions and mentalities—widely revealed by modern travelers—without which the Balkan

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*to be called Greek*] (our emphasis)"—*apud* letter dated "Mizil 8 Iunie 1880", published in *Frăția intru dreptate* 1, no. 9 (14 June 1880): 70. For the Aromanians settled in *Țara-mamă* [the Mother-Country], as they call Romania, that name was not necessarily perceived as an insult. Nevertheless, the writer and Romanian politician Nicolae Batzaria (of Aromanian origin) explained the situation by using psychosocial arguments: "So... 'you, Koutzovlach!' Reading the word, with which the unnamed knight courageous counted against the author—in a letter that he had sent to him—that deeply offended me, I thought two things. Firstly, the ethnic origin of the one who used it. It is not allowed to be a true Romanian. Romanians from here almost do not even know the term *Koutzovlach*, and so far it has *never been heard from the mouth of a Romanian* (our emphasis). At best, one who intentionally used it to offend, may be a native. . . .

I am rather inclined to believe that the anonymous offender could be an alien who settled in the Balkans. But establishing the identity of the individual is an unimportant detail—says rightly the personality who is famous among the Balkan Romanians. Essential to be aware of and remember is that we Aromanians have here, in Romania, a lot of enemies, lots of people who leer at us and who become agitated whenever we perform an activity *based on the underlying love for everything that is Romanian* (our emphasis). We have enemies, because—we can say this—we are good Romanians and bad diplomats. I mean we should just pretend and hide our thoughts. We have enemies, because we show an energy that many perceive as disturbing and an honesty that upsets even more.

We have enemies, for that patriotic feeling of ours is not an empty promise and we hear the voice of instinct and blood, we clearly see the true path leading towards the raise and strengthening of Romanianism. For these qualities of ours and because we keep silent and close our eyes, we attract many hard feelings and enmities. Such feelings have animated my anonymous correspondent, when he threw this, believing it is outrageous: *you, Koutzovlach!*

And we are proud to be 'Koutzovlachs'"—Nicolae Batzaria, "Cuțovlahule!," *Apărarea*, 1, no. 17 (11 January 1931): 2.

<sup>24</sup> Cantemir, *Descrierea*, 427. In Romanian: "Ei au aceeași limbă cu ceilalți români, dar, datorită timpului îndelungat, <ea este> atât de stricată cu cea grecească și cu cea albaneză, încât moldovenii abia de le pot înțelege vorbele și graiul, mai ales că amestecă nu numai cuvinte, ci și întregi fraze grecești și albaneze, nu altfel decât suferă limba latină din partea polonilor, atât în scris, cât și în vorbire.

Aceștia sunt numiți îndeobște de către greci Κουτζόβλαχοι (cuțo-vlahi), adică 'valahi schiopi,' fie pentru că astăzi schioapătă în limba lor, fie pentru că au fost numiți astfel de la un anume Claudus (sic!), pre vremuri conducător al lor.

Dar ei își țin foarte strâns cununiile, fără să-și dea fiicele după soți de alt neam și fără să ia pentru fiii lor soții străine și păzesc cu grijă obiceiurile cele de obște la români încă din vechi, precum și celelalte datini ale neamului. Cam 30 de mii de bărbați îi plătesc sultanului în fiecare an o dare, pe care o numesc 'haraci,' în afară de cei care țin munții în haiducie și nu areorei fac mare prăpăd asupra călătorilor turci."

Romanians could no longer maintain their ethnic individuality amidst populations of other nations and other faiths.

An enlightened spirit and a true patriot, Cantemir considered that the translation into the language of his fellow countrymen of the *Historia Moldo-Vlachica*, a much amplified translation of what will become *Hronicul vechimei a romano-moldo-vlahilor* [The Ancient Chronicle of the Roman-Moldavian-Wallachians] (1719–1722) is to the benefit of the “Moldavian kin” [“niamului moldovenesc”].<sup>25</sup> This masterpiece of “amazing”<sup>26</sup> erudition for any scholar of those times summarizes the “Cantemirian thesis” regarding the exclusively Roman origin of our people, the process of its ethnogenesis solely in Dacia, and the unity of the Carpathian-Danubian space, also reinstating his assertion on the Koutzovlachs in the above-mentioned works.

### **The posterity of Romanian chroniclers and humanists: The representatives of the Transylvanian School**

One of the basic ideas of Dimitrie Cantemir—the Roman purity of the Romanian people—will be reinstated as a main idea in the program of the Transylvanian School at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the writings of the most prominent representatives of this valuable, circumscribed to the Enlightenment, intellectual movement of the Transylvanian Romanians there can be found precious information regarding the South-Danubian Romanity.

Summarily, this is about:

– Samuil Micu (1745–1806) wrote: “If someone would trade with the Daco-Romanians or would travel through Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania, Maramureș,

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<sup>25</sup> Thus, in the so-called Moldavian language of the times of Cantemir, which is in fact Romanian, the beginning of what he calls *Prevorovire informuind cititorul* [Preface informing the reader] is as follows: “Istoricii dară, carii pentru mutarea romanilor din Dachia și Misia pomenesc, una numai, însă și aceia nu iușoară pricină arată, adecă: Avrelian împărat vădzind, dzic, că pe vremile împăraților carii fusese mai denainte de dânsul la împărăție, varvarii crivățului, cu câteva năbușiri Misia (supt carea să înțelege și Dachia), Thrachia, Thessalia, Machedonia, Iliria, Greția. . . au fost încongiurat. . . , să se fie lăsat de toată nedejdea că va mai putea apăra Dachia de călcăturile lor, și așe coloniile și alalți lăcuitori românești, carii de atâta vreme într-însa trăia, să fie poroncit să se rădice din Dachia și să triacă peste Dunăre decinde în Misia; care mutare să fie făcut, prepus nu iaste. Ce prepusul iaste, de s-au mai întors sau de nu s-au mai întors vreodată aceiași romani iarăși la moșiile lor în Dachia [Historians only mention one cause of this movement, meaning: Aurelian the Emperor seeing that barbarians have invaded Moesia (including Dacia), Thrace, Thessaly, Macedonia, Illyricum, Greece. . . realized he was surrounded. . . and he lost hope for defending Dacia against its invaders, so that the colonists and other Romanian inhabitants, who had been living there for so long, were ordered to leave Dacia and to pass over the Danube into Moesia; there is no question whether the retreat took place. The issue is whether they have ever returned to their households in Dacia]”—Dimitrie Cantemir, *Hronicul vechimei a romano-moldo-vlahilor*, edited and preface by Stela Toma (București: 1981), 90–1.

<sup>26</sup> Armbruster, *Romanitatea*, 231.

Hungary beyond the Tisa, Sylvania, Banat, *Cuțo-Valahia / Kuzo-Valachiam / [Koutzo-Wallachia]* (our emphasis), Bessarabia, and even in Crimea, he would first need to know Daco-Romanian before other idioms, as he will not hear a language more often used in the listed provinces”;<sup>27</sup> also: “*There are Romanians who live in ‘Machedoniia’ [‘Macedonia’]* (our emphasis) and *they are called Vlachs* (our emphasis), and because their lord, Hrisa, was a short man, some Greeks called them ‘condovlahi,’ meaning short Romanians. Others call them ‘cuțovlahi’ [‘Koutzovlachs’], lame Romanians, because when they settled there, many were lamed after battling against the Greeks.”<sup>28</sup>

– The historian Gheorghe Șincai (1754–1816), in a letter addressed in 1804 to Engel (“my old friend”), the Austrian historian in scientific disputes with the Romanian scholars from Transylvania: “I am planning to write the annals of the whole Romanian nation, hence also of the ‘*cuțo-vlahilor sau țințarilor (cumu-inumesc)*’ [Koutzovlachs and the Tsintsars (as I name them)] (our emphasis), which I did, starting from Trajan or, more accurate, from the first war of Decebalus against the Romans until 1660.”<sup>29</sup> Listing the various ethnonyms of the Romanians, “finally, the ones living on the other side of the Danube (in respect to Ancient Dacia) are called ‘țințari’ [‘Tsintsars’], and by the Greeks ‘vlahi șchiopi’ [‘Lame Wallachians’].”<sup>30</sup> We encounter, therefore, also in Șincai’s work the term of *țințari* [Tsintsars]<sup>31</sup> (widely used in those times), but used “later,”<sup>32</sup> as he will reveal also in the *Hronică*.

– Petru Maior (1761–1821), another coryphaeus of the Transylvanian School, author of the famous *Istoria pentru începutul românilor în Dachia* [The History of

<sup>27</sup> Samuil Micu and Gheorghe Șincai, *Elementa linguae Daco-Romanae sive Valachicae*, introduction and translation by Mircea Zdrenghea (Cluj-Napoca: 1980), 9.

<sup>28</sup> Samuil Micu, *Scurtă cunoștință a istoriei românilor*, edited by Cornel Cîmpeanu (București: 1963), 71; see also the text in the synthesis *Școala Ardeleană*, vol. 1, edited by Florea Fugariu, introduction by Dumitru Ghișe and Pompiliu Teodor (București: 1983), 233–34.

<sup>29</sup> *Apud* Manole Neagoe, “Prefață,” in Gheorghe Șincai, *Cronica românilor*, edited by Florea Fugariu, preface by Manole Neagoe (București: 1978), XXIII.

<sup>30</sup> Gheorghe Șincai, “Elementa linguae Daco-Romanae sive Valachicae,” in *Școala Ardeleană*, vol. 1, 598: “Qui demum respectu antiquae Daciae Trans-Istrianas inhabitant Provincia uno nomine, Țintiári, Graecis Κότσο, sive Κοτσο-Βλάχοι, Claudi Valachi appellantur.”

<sup>31</sup> For the use of this ethnonym in Serbia, see also the title of a known book published in Belgrade and translated in Romanian by C. Constante: D. I. Popovici, *Despre aromâni (= O Țințarima). Contribuțiuni cu privire la chestiunea formării negoțului nostru* (București: 1934) (a supplementary edition, published in Belgrade in 1937 under the title *O Țințarima. Prilozi pitanju postanka našeg gradanskog društva*). About this ethnonym see also D. Dascalescu, *Scrisori din Țara Țințarească și Poezii Noue* (Iassi: 1856). The respective nicknames do not refer to the Tsintsars in the Balkans, despite the title, so that the presentation of this work in the *Bibliografia macedo-română* (Freiburg), 70, is not justified—see E. Ciornaia, “Поэзия луй Д. Дзскзлеску,” in *Лумба ши литература молдовняскз*, no. 4 (1972): 62–73.

<sup>32</sup> Gheorghe Șincai, “Hronica românilor,” tome I, in *Opere*, edited and linguistic study by Florea Fugariu, preface by Manole Neagoe (București: 1967), 49.

the Beginnings of the Romanians in Dacia] (published in Pesta, in 1812), a work that represented a new methodological approach to this historical subject, in which the past of the South-Danubian Romanians was also included (the whole work stops at the 13<sup>th</sup> century). The following are the titles of the segments of the book reserved for this issue: Chapter XII: *The events of the Romanians across the Danube, from the days of Aurelian to the arrival of the Bulgarians in Moesia*; Chapter XIII: *The events of the Romanians across the Danube, from the arrival of the Bulgarians in Moesia to the days of Isaac Angelos, Emperor of the Greeks*; Chapter XIV: *The events of the Romanians across the Danube, during the days of Isaac Angelos, Emperor of the Greeks*; Chapter XV: *The state of the Romanians across the Danube, after Isaac Angelos*.<sup>33</sup>

Petru Maior commented extensively on the opinions of the Byzantine writers regarding the Balkan Vlachs:

*From what has been said above—Petru Maior concludes—, it becomes obvious that the name Koutzovlach is not an old name. And for no other reason has this name been given to the Romanians across the Danube by the present Greeks, but because in these latest times, envy has come between the Greeks and those Romanians, especially between the traders (our emphasis) and many of the Greeks who learned the Romanian language of these Romanians here, in Wallachia, and who have noticed that it does not exactly match the language of the Romanians across the Danube, because—Petru Maior explained knowingly, as proof of his direct contact with the Aromanians—a multitude of Greek words were borrowed by the Romanians across the Danube as a result of their closeness to the Greeks. And because they found no other reason to mock them, they called them Koutzovlachs, i.e. lame Romanians (our emphasis), meaning their language is not exactly the same with the Romanians on the other side of the Danube. This is why that name, Koutzovlachs, does not taint the origin of those Romanians—Petru Maior clearly concluded. Even if their language had suffered that modification, still their blood is purely Romanian and they are true Romans (our emphasis), whose ancestors, in the days of Gallienus, crossed from this side of the Danube over, and then went as far as Thessaly. It is sad that even though they know themselves to be Romanians, still many are rather using Greek instead of cultivating their Romanian language and cleaning it of Greek.*<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> In Romanian: cap. XII: *Întâmplările românilor celor dincolo de Dunăre, din zilele lui Aurelian până la descălecarea bulgarilor în Misia*; cap. XIII: *Întâmplările românilor celor peste Dunăre, dela descălecarea bulgarilor în Misia până în zilele lui Isaachie Anghel, împăratul grecilor*; cap. XIV: *Întâmplările românilor celor peste Dunăre, în zilele lui Isaachie Anghel, împăratul grecilor*; cap. XV: *Statul românilor celor peste Dunăre, după Isaachie Anghel*.

<sup>34</sup> Petru Maior, *Istoria pentru începutul românilor în Dacia*, edited and linguistic introduction by Florea Fugariu, preface by Manole Neagoe, vol. 2 (București: 1970), 264–65.

It is important to keep in mind how Petru Maior does not lose the opportunity of adding to his comments on the Byzantine text also his thoughts about the tendency of Balkan Romanians to lose their nationality, urging them to cultivate their native language and “to clean it of Greek.”

Eftimie Murgu, a revolutionary who participated in the 1848 Revolution, circumstantiates the existence of the Balkan Romanians, providing historical and philological arguments that stand behind the conception of the Transylvanian School, within the general frame of Oriental Romanism and the modern Romanian spirit: “If Romanians from the other side are unknown to Mr. Thunmann (German historian and philologist of the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century—our note), then *I possess much more knowledge about them to not signal that they are one and the same people* (our emphasis)”—the young Romanian intellectual and patriot from Banat strongly stated in 1830.<sup>35</sup>

### “Outpost of Romanianism”

In the Romanian Principalities, the strongly and systematically pervading interest in the history and the cultural-national state of the Balkan Romanians began to manifest itself during the 1830s, as soon as the first generation of young Moldavian and Wallachian intellectuals (the Forty-Eighters) came in contact with the new European ideas that were popular in those times, i.e. the progressive and revolutionary ideas whose corollary was the affirmation of the principle of nationalities.<sup>36</sup> In Bucharest and Iași, the first magazines and newspapers were published, and they played a very important role in both conveying information and in shaping public opinion and modern mentalities. As the conscience of the first Aromanians beyond the Danube awakened, and they became aware that they shared the same blood with their brethren, they no longer wished to be called neither Albanians nor Greeks, but Romanians. As such, they attracted the interest of both the ruling circles within the Principalities and also of the public opinion to this part of the Balkans. At the same time, the young modern state defined and developed a national policy advancing more explicitly strategic features in the broader context of Romanianism and in promoting its geopolitical, national, and state interests.<sup>37</sup>

Mihail Kogălniceanu is the first Romanian intellectual in the Danubian Principalities who, in the Modern Era, elaborated on the Transdanubian Vlachs, integrating them into the history of the Romanian people. The great patriot and historian did this in a well-known early work, published in French in Berlin, in 1837. In the first part of the fourth book (*Histoire de la Dacie*), he referred to the

<sup>35</sup> Eftimie Murgu, *Scrieri*, edited and introduction by I. D. Suci (București: 1969), 315.

<sup>36</sup> Lascu, “The constitution,” 83–110.

<sup>37</sup> See id., “Românii balcanici,” 58–69.

history of the Transdanubian Vlachs until the destruction of their kingdom by the Turks in 1394.<sup>38</sup> The intention towards the breakdown of national history is clearly revealed in the very first paragraph of the chapter, when the author states: “It is not my plan to analyze the entire history of these Vlachs up to the present day; I only want to speak about the period during which they formed an independent state; for after they were defeated by the Turks in 1394, their history fell under the Ottoman Empire”—which is his explanation for limiting the narrative. Kogălniceanu also disputed the correctness of the monikers given by the Greeks—“*Cutzovlaques* or lame Wallachians,” categorising them as “nicknames given as banter,” same as “*țințari*” (*Cințari* = five), which, he concedes, have the same derogatory connotation. The true origin of the latter is, in his view—after reading Petru Maior—that of Cinciani, worthy descendants of the illustrious Roman family Cinciana. As for their situation after 1394, they were no longer able to remain an independent, separate state, continuing, however, to exist in the Ottoman Empire: “Today, they live in Turkey and Macedonia, where they grow animals as opposed to what they would once have done, which is waging war (sic!). They preserved, however, their customs and language, i.e. the Latin language, although it is mixed with a lot of Greek and Turkish words. When they write, they use the Greek alphabet, which they adapted to their own dialect. They are known—*Kogălniceanu states*—as Wallachians, *cuțovalahi*, *morlacs*, *maurovlachs*, *țințari* [*Çințiares*] (pron. *Tzintziares*); *but they always call themselves Romanians* [in the original text, French = *Romanians*] *and regard as insults any other names that they are given* (our emphasis).”<sup>39</sup>

Coincidentally, just as Kogălniceanu was very clearly attesting that the Vlachs “are always calling themselves Romanians,” the first of them to adhere to the conscience of his nation as such and who firmly declared his belonging to Romanianism, without any inferiority complex, in the Principalities was just about to “breathe the Romanian air on the Dâmbovița shore,” as Grigore H. Grindea would write later, in 1868, in the review *Albina Pindului* (in Bucharest). It is Dimitrie Cosacovici (1790–1866) who “personifies *the idea of Pind Romanianism* (our emphasis). He was the most tireless promoter and defender of this idea.” The above-mentioned poet and publicist, who has known him personally, notes “he dedicated his entire life to this idea, and during old age, he still believed that he did not do enough for his brethren in the Pindus area, and eventually left them his fortune.” Indeed, one can say without any doubt that through D. Cosacovici, the high society of Wallachia entered in direct contact with the reality of the Balkan

<sup>38</sup> Mihail Kogălniceanu, *Opere*, vol. 2, *Scrieri istorice*, “Livre quatrième,” edited and introduction by Alexandru Zub (București: 1976), 67–76.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 76: “On les connaît sous le nom de Valaques, de Cutzovlaques, de Morlaques, de Maurovlaques, de Țințiares (pron. Tzintziares); mais eux, ils se nomment toujours Români et regardent comme une insulte autres noms qu’on leur donne.”

Romanians” existence, with their national sufferings and needs, taking advantage of information received not from the “Greeks,” but from the one who was called “the *Macedonian* or the *Aurelian*, names he was proud of.”<sup>40</sup>

Gradually, in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the public opinion in the Romanian Principalities became familiar with the historical past of the Balkan Vlachs, exclusively called “Romanians.” During the first years of the 1840s, the press in Iași, Bucharest, Brașov, and Blaj paid great attention to their history, integrating it into the history of the Romanian nation: “Romanians, who are named after the different provinces they inhabit, Romanians, Moldavians, or Dacians, meaning from Dacia,” are the brethren of those who, “displaced in Moesia” by Aurelian, separated from their “Mother Fatherland,” have gone to the mountains of Macedonia “to look for a life matching their own habits: those of a herding and warring people”; it is about “these Romanians [who], animated by the desire of independence, have very much contributed to the rebirth of today’s Greece.”<sup>41</sup> The second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century revealed to the public opinion and the officials of the young state, the national yearnings of the *armâni* = Aromanians, as they have always called themselves, or Aromanians, Macedo-Romanians, or Romanian Macedonians—the latter name was assigned by the generation of 1848.<sup>42</sup> It was during the Daco-Romanian rediscovery of their brethren south of the Danube, when the exiled revolutionaries have lived among them, so that they came to speak enthusiastically about the national virtues and moral qualities of their close relatives—as was done by Dimitrie Bolintineanu, Ion Ionescu de la Brad, Dumitru Brătianu, Cezar Bolliac, Ioan Heliade Radulescu, and Nicolae Bălcescu. A political vision regarding the future of Balkan Romanians was developed by Nicolae Bălcescu, who, in a letter dated 26 October 1849, sent to Ion Ghica, wrote: “When I returned from Constantinople, I was determined to settle among the Balkan Vlachs, for I reckon of utmost importance the development of nationality in this outpost of Romanianism”<sup>43</sup> (our emphasis). This was happening at the middle of

<sup>40</sup> Grigore H. Grandea, “Dimitrie Cosacovici,” in *Albina Pindului*, no. 3 (15 July 1868): 58.

<sup>41</sup> Morangiés, “Les Romounis de l’Anovalachie. Români din Anovalahia,” in *Spicitorul moldo-român* (July, August, September 1841): 1 (parallel French-Romanian text; the whole text is found on pages 1–16).

<sup>42</sup> The name *macedonean* [Macedonian] is unhistorical and completely false, because, as it is known, contemporary Macedonians are the Slavs in Macedonia (in fact, Slavo-Bulgarians in the area of former Yugoslavia); the affiliation with the ancient Macedonians does not exist as such from an ethnolinguistic and historical perspective, it is the perception of self-taught late romantic as well as of quasi-smart representatives who have certain phantasies regarding identity. As for the name *Machidon*, often used, unfortunately, in our media today, it is even more improper, Aromanians perceiving it as an imprecation and lack of consideration. Recently, see Stoica Lascu, “Intelectuali transilvăneni, moldoveni și ‘aurelieni’ despre românii din Balcani (anii ’30 – ’40 ai secolului al XIX-lea),” *Annals of the Romanian Academy of Scientists. Series on History and Archaeology Sciences* 8, no. 2 (2017): 5–27 and 28–50.

<sup>43</sup> Nicolae Bălcescu, *Opere*, vol. 4, *Correspondență. Scrisori, memorii, adrese, documente, note și materiale*, edited by G. Zane and Elena G. Zane, 3<sup>rd</sup> revised and expanded ed. (București: 1990), 174.

the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as part of the action of “rediscovering” those Romanians “who were spreading like a cobweb on the right side of the Danube.”<sup>44</sup> In the same letter, Nicolae Bălcescu also wrote: “If you could send a sane man there, to elaborate a report on their ethical and political condition, then we would be looking for a school, and we will offer the chance to work to so many young people who are starving. Your delegate should have a good relationship to the priests and the bishops and to— — — (missing text in the letter—our note) to obtain funds for opening the school”;<sup>45</sup> in another letter dated 4 July 1849, N. Bălcescu spoke at large about the spreading of the “Romanian nation” that has “the most beautiful future” of all the nations of the Orient: “It is big, about 10 million, it is compact, and it includes all the land from the Tisa to the Black Sea and from the Carpathians to the Balkans.”<sup>46</sup> In the letter sent also to Ion Ghica from London, on 1/13 January 1850, Bălcescu reminded him: “The decision of Ionescu (about the national organization of Romanians in Dobrudja—our note) is good, but you should not forget the Macedo-Romanians as well.”<sup>47</sup>

Although lesser known, the testimony of the agronomist Ion Ionescu de la Brad is also remarkable. He was the author of a letter published in 1855 under a very explicit title;<sup>48</sup> as requested by Vasile Alecsandri, the Chief Editor of the Iași magazine *România literară*, who asked for a “correct and unbiased report on the Romanians from Macedonia, Epirus, Albania, Thessaly, and other places where they had spread, with descriptions of their habits, traditional garb, language, etc.,” there was provided invaluable information. The author captured the spirit of the Balkan Vlachs at a time when they were not yet aware of the fact that they were owing a part of their ethnolinguistic identity to Hellenism—this is true especially for the wealthy strata, as opposed to the so-called “shepherds”:

*You know I love Romanians in general; but I love truth even more. Therefore, if I am to write in an impartial manner, take into account that I speak the truth and overlook things in favor of the truth. Starting from Monastir or Bitolia, city located at a certain distance from Thessaloniki, I will say that most of these Romanians receive Greek education and adopt the habits and political views of the Greeks. All merchants speak Greek. But their women, in order for us to acknowledge the quality they possess, none of them wants to learn this language. They are the only ones who still keep the feelings of nationality among their people (our emphasis). If you say to a woman that she is Bulgarian or Greek, she thinks she is being insulted; men, on the contrary,*

<sup>44</sup> Stelian Brezeanu and Gheorghe Zbucnea, eds., *România de la sud de Dunăre. Documente* (București: 1997), 22.

<sup>45</sup> Bălcescu, *loc. cit.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>48</sup> [Ion Ionescu de la Brad], “România din Macedonia porecliți koço-vlahi și țințari,” *România literară* 1, no. 45 (19 November 1855): 517–19.

*they think it is shameful to be called Romanian. When a woman learns Greek, she must do so with a teacher, and the other women criticize her. Most merchants and notable Romanians go to Vienna where they set up trade houses between Macedonia and that capital, known as Greek houses—a fact attested and often eluded even by historians.*

The revolutionary Ion Ionescu de la Brad, who was also exiled to Turkey after 1848 (he administrated, as agronomist, the lands of a high Ottoman official between 1853 and 1857), met directly “the Romanian shepherds who were coming from the Epirus and Macedonian Mountains to spend the winter with their numerous flocks on the beautiful and vast plains of Thessaly”; he later recalled one of his meetings with them:

*I was astonished seeing them all clean and well-dressed, white and ruddy, tall, beautiful, strong and... with mirth. But the women? They looked very good in their peasant trousers and sandals, with white embroidered shirts, plaits with red and blue ribbons, and covered with white towels made of flax and silk. As shoes they all had peasant sandals! The peasant sandals, the traditional Romanian shoes, made me say hello by taking off my hat. . . . I remembered that I am also from the country, where peasant sandals come from, so I said hello to my people!*

*– Folks, what are you doing here?*

*– We have come, said one of them in Greek, to spend the winter here with these flocks.*

*– But what are you?*

*– We are Romanians, said one who approached me bareheaded. I was bareheaded too.*

*– Are you Romanian? I asked in Romanian.*

*– Yes! I’m Romanian, Vlach, Christian.*

*– But whom do the sheep belong to?*

*– The sheep are ours, we are shepherds.*

The Romanian agronomist continued to remember:

*The Romanians, as shepherds, were driving their flocks to the mountains in summer and to the plains in winter. The Romanians lived in villages located in the Epirus and the Macedonian Mountains. The most eager among them were spending the winter with their flocks in the plains. Most of them were staying in the mountains and were sending their sheep with another shepherd who had his own sheep.*

*Although they also spoke Greek, although they went to church where they read only in Greek, they still spoke their own language that they were speaking with each other; within their families, they spoke only their*

*language. They did not mix with the Greeks and did not marry them. They had other habits and customs than the Greeks. They had their own stories and they were telling these stories to one another during the winter gatherings. Their stories resembled our stories (our emphasis). Until today, they are a special nation in the Orient. Their language shows the nation they belong to, the Romanian nation. Many words, some of them correct and other damaged, show their Romanian origin. It seems—concludes Ion Ionescu de la Brad—they are the native people of the Balkan Peninsula.*<sup>49</sup>

Almost of the same relevance is the information contained in a documentary material attached to that letter and entitled *Statistics with the names and the populations of villages and local regions inhabited by Romanians in Epirus, Macedonia, Thessaly, Albania, and Bosnia*.<sup>50</sup>

In the summer of 1854, the poet and publicist Dimitrie Bolintineanu, an Aromanian himself (on paternal lineage), took a trip to the lands of his father's ancestors, namely to those in the region of Salonic (*Săruna*), of Mount Olympus and Bitolia (Monastir), from where—falling ill with malaria—he returned to Constantinople, thus being forced to interrupt his journey. The notes referring to his trip were written a few years later (in 1858), being published in 1863 under the title *Călătorii la românii din Macedonia și Muntele Athos sau Santa-Agora* [Trips to the Romanians in Macedonia and the Mount Athos or Santa-Agora]. Similar to other travel impressions Bolintineanu has left us, these also abound in digressions on subjects occasioned by the commentaries on what he has seen, in particular of historical-linguistic nature, and by doing so, this *Călătorii* is, in fact, an attempt to explain the situation of the Balkan brethren to the Romanian reader. At the beginning of his travel memoirs, the author states: “I hold dear the Romanians in Macedonia through many relationships. While Wallachia was my mother's homeland, Macedonia was that of my father, his language was the language of these Romanians; his blood, my blood, his hopes and sufferings, the hopes and sufferings of a million of these Romanians. I am a Romanian born in our own Romania, yet with sympathy for those of Macedonia.”<sup>51</sup>

### **“I am Romanian before I am Macedonian.”**

Taking advantage of the understanding shown by government leaders, the poet and publicist D. Bolintineanu, Minister of Education under Alexandru I. Cuza,

<sup>49</sup> Id., “Păstorii români din Tessalia,” in *Albumul macedo-român*, edited by V. A. Urechia (București: 1880), 55.

<sup>50</sup> Id., “Românii din Macedonia,” 517–19; “Statistică de numirile și populațiile satelor și polițiilor locuite de români în Epir, Macedonia, Tesalia, și vreo câteva în Albania și Bosnia,” *România literară* 1, no. 46 (26 November 1855): 532.

<sup>51</sup> Dimitrie Bolintineanu, *Opere*, vol. 4, *Călătorii*, edited by Teodor Vârgolici (București: 1985), 292.

exerted a strong lobby for the financial and moral support of the cultural needs of the Romanians living south of the Danube, joining his efforts with Dumitru C. Brătianu, Christian Tell, Costache A. Rosetti, Ion Ghica, Mihail Kogălniceanu, and Vasile A. Urechia. In 1863 there was launched a *Manifesto* addressed to the *Fraților români din Macedonia, Epir, Tesalia și Albania* [Romanian brethren from Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, and Albania]: “Think how much you, your women, and your children will enjoy studying in Romanian (and not in Greek—our note). How happy you would be to hear them saying that they learn at school in their maternal language to love God, their parents, and their country!” This message is accompanied by a preamble: “These Romanians are and wish to be Romanians; their brethren from Roman Dacia, from independent Romania, ought not to reach out and mingle with them and share with them the national soul (our emphasis) to elate (sic!) the hearts of those who desire to fight there for their nationality?”<sup>52</sup>

The epoch of Prince Cuza (1859–1866) is therefore particularly fruitful for the national-cultural revival of the Romanians living south of the Danube.<sup>53</sup> In 1862 there was published in Bucharest, “with the expense of the Macedo-Romanian patriots Dimitrie Cosacovici and Gheorghe Goga,” the volume *Repede idea de gramateca macedo-românească* [The Macedo-Romanian Short Guidebook], “printed in order to be distributed free of charge to the Romanians on the right bank of the Danube,” written by the Transylvanian professor Ioan C. Massimu. The next year, the *Grammar* of the Macedo-Romanian Mihail Boiagi (released in 1813) was reprinted simultaneously with the official launch of the government initiatives to directly support the Romanians settled in the Balkans. Engaging more effectively and responding to the imperative of strengthening Romanianism everywhere, the government under Prince Cuza, led by Kogălniceanu, decided in 1863 to subsidize the education of Romanians living in the Balkans. Indeed, Cuza’s first counselor included into the 1864 budget “a fund of 10 million with which to help former consecrated monasteries and the Romanian culture in the Balkans,” i.e. the amount of 14,000 lei for schools.

As a result of the sustained efforts of the Macedo-Romanian Committee’s members (founded in Bucharest in 1863), on 2 July 1864, the first Romanian school in European Turkey was opened at Târnova, a county close to Bitolia, by the tailor Dumitru Athanasescu, who “wrote his name in golden letters” in the history of the national revival of Macedonia; our worthy ancestor had “the merit of raising the first flag of Romanianism in the Balkan Peninsula”—as the journalist Sterie Diamandi had correctly observed.<sup>54</sup> It was a day of historical significance in the national-cultural revival of Balkan Romanians, perceived as such by the

<sup>52</sup> *Buciumul* 1, no. 3 (5 January 1863):10.

<sup>53</sup> See Victor Papacostea, “Documente aromânești dintre 1860 și 1870,” *Revista aromânească* 1 (1929): 81–7; Victor Papacostea and Mihail Regleanu, *Documentele redeșteptării macedoromâne*, edited by Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca and Ștefan Vâlcu, with the collaboration of Iuliana Deac (București: 2012).

<sup>54</sup> Sterie Diamandi, *Oameni și aspecte din istoria aromânilor* (București: n.d. [1940]), 287.

contemporary leaders of the Romanian government. “Onward, my friend, the wake of the Romanian element in Macedonia, acting as a strengthening factor for Romania”—as Prime Minister Kogălniceanu was writing in those days. The politician and writer Ion Ghica revealed the multiple meanings of the Romanian initiatives in the Macedo-Romanian communities throughout European Turkey: “I cannot rejoice enough receiving the news regarding the opening of the first school in Macedonia; the hardships faced so far will soon be overthrown once the Turkish government will understand its benefit from the awakening of the Macedonian Romanians.”<sup>55</sup>

In the decades to come, of course that the number of Romanian schools in the Balkan Peninsula increased,<sup>56</sup> and the Romanian political leaders were empowered to help the brethren in the Balkans: “*Romanians across the Danube know they are Romanians*, they wish to remain Romanians and to be able to count on our moral support for preserving their nationality.

*It is a duty of heart and of honor, it is a national necessity for us* (our emphasis)—*was said in 1880, in an appeal signed by Dumitru Brătianu*—to give our brothers from the Balkan Peninsula what they lack in order to be able to support their national life, to give them books, priests, and teachers.”

In their turn, the Aromanians established in *Țară* [the Country] (a term commonly used by the Balkan Romanians) had fully realized, without any exception, that they belong to the Romanian nation; in 1890, professor Ștefan Mihăileanu<sup>57</sup> publicly declared without any ambiguity: “I do not write as a Macedonian, no. *I am Romanian before I am Macedonian* (our emphasis).”<sup>58</sup> The same visionary, and also a martyr of Balkan Romanianism (he was assassinated in the center of Bucharest, in 1900, by a Bulgarian terrorist who fought for the annexation of Macedonia, located on the borders of the Ottoman Empire, to the Principality of Bulgaria) began an extensive study with the following assertion: “The issue of Romanianism in Macedonia must be important to any Romanian in

<sup>55</sup> *Apud* Virgil Stoicescu, Constantin I. Naum, and Constantin Petrescu-Birina, *Românii din Macedonia (Anii 270–1901)* (București: 1901), 74.

<sup>56</sup> For details see the valuable collection of published documents: Adina Berciu-Drăghicescu and Maria Petre, eds., *Școli și biserici românești din Peninsula Balcanică. Documente*, vol. 1, 1864–1948 (București: 2004), vol. 2, 1918–1953 (București: 2006).

<sup>57</sup> Stoica Lascu, “The Context of the Assassination in Bucharest of the Macedo-Romanian Ștefan Mihăileanu (1859–1900)—in the Light of Some Epoch Testimonies,” *Annals of the University of Craiova. History* 21, no. 1 (29) (April 2016): 25–39; id., “Asasinarea românului macedonean Ștefan Mihăileanu (1859–1900) în lumina câtorva opinii bulgare de epocă,” in *În amintirea unui istoric român—Nicolae Ciachir*, edited by Nicoleta Ciachir and Sorin Marcel Colesniuc (București: 2016), 540–64.

<sup>58</sup> Ștefan Mihăileanu, “Școlile din Macedonia,” *România* 7, no. 230 (19 October 1884): 1. Macedonian means Aromanian—not ethnically Slavic; see, in this regard, among others, Nicolae Batzaria, “A fi ‘macedonean,’” *Apărarea*, no. 13 (7 December 1930): 1—“In Romania, to be Macedonian (I understand Aromanian) and assert yourself as such. . . .”

two respects: love or brotherly sympathy and the mutual or common benefit.”<sup>59</sup> Three decades later, this Romanian feeling of the Balkan Vlachs was observed by professor Constantin I. Istrati, who made a journey through Macedonia: “National consciousness is very much alive in this nation. Its vision of the future *is turning full of love towards us, loving us as older brothers* (our emphasis).”<sup>60</sup>

There were, however, until World War I very many Aromanians named Grecomans (in fact, most of those educated in the European part of the Ottoman Empire, not to mention those from Greece), who were empowered by the Greek language and civilization, the Greek nationalists instilling in them the unscientific and politicized thesis that they would be the descendants of the Latinized Greeks:

*Everybody knows who these Grecomans are. They are brothers of ours, many among them being even related to the most prominent representatives of the Romanian movement in Turkey. Among them, in their families and outside their homes, the Grecomans speak Romanian, they feel and know they are Romanians—this was shown in 1906, in an article published in the newspaper of the Aromanians/Balkan Romanians that appeared in Bucharest, Românuł dela Pind—and even more, many of them would be offended if considered otherwise than Romanians. However, the cultural influences, old traditions, confused and misguided religious ideas have developed a craze in them, strange and almost inexplicable to many. Namely, continuing to speak Romanian and to call themselves Romanians, they struggled for the Greek cause, contributing to the extermination of their own nation, giving blows—often very painful ones—to the Romanian idea and schools. The Grecomans, why not say it, represent the strength and support of Hellenism in Turkey, where real Greeks may be found only near their borders (our emphasis).*<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Ștefan Mihăileanu, “Românismul din Macedonia,” *România* 7, no. 250 (14 November 1904): 2.

<sup>60</sup> Constantin I. Istrati, “Călătorie la românii din Macedonia. Aprilie 1911,” *Annals of the Romanian Academy*, series II, tome XXXIII, *Memoires of the Scientific Section (Romanian Academy)* (București: 1911): 18.

<sup>61</sup> “Noi și grecomanii,” *Românuł dela Pind* 4, no. 43 (185) (30 October 1906): 1. On another occasion, it was pointed out: “Generally, the Grecomans are those individuals belonging to the Macedonian Orthodox population, especially the Aromanians with the mania of posing as Greeks, true-born Greeks, inborn, native, cow tail” [“Grecomanii, în genere sunt acei dintre indivizii aparținând populațiunii ortodoxe din Macedonia, și în special aromâni, care au mania de a se da drept greci, greci neaoși, get-beget, coada-vacii”]—Amnar, “Grecomanii,” *Peninsula Balcanică*, series II, no. 1, IV, no. 10 (1 April 1912): 1. Nevertheless, Aromanians who did not recognize their affiliation with Balkan Romanianism, lived in the Kingdom as well, the Aromanian press often hosting blaming information in their respect: “It is about those Macedo-Romanians who, although settled in the Country, still persist in their error and, instead of helping liberate our nation across the Danube from the clutches of anarchical Graecism, they persist in the idea of becoming accomplices of our bitterest, bloody, and fatal enemy. This line of conduct constitutes a shame for them and proves that they lack the most elementary common sense. Lest they have no hearts in their chests? Lest their conscience was completely silenced?”—E. M., “Pentru rătăciții frați macedoneni,” *Românuł dela Pind* 3, no. 42 (142) (19 December 1905): 1.

On 23 September 1879, on the initiative of some Romanian public personalities, as Vasile A. Urechia shows in his opening speech, there was founded in Bucharest the Macedo-Romanian Cultural Society [Societatea de Cultură Macedo-Română], recognized as a legal entity on 15 April 1880, with the purpose: “a) to educate in schools the Romanian population over the Danube and the Balkans; b) to plead for the support of churches in the Romanian communities over the Danube and in the Balkans; c) to monitor existent schools and to improve the quality of education; d) to equip them with books, libraries, and machines. Schools must also support the publishing of books for the Romanians of those regions.”