

Aging Levee

On the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Gottfried Schramm's *Ein Damm Bricht*

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Abstract. The article is both a survey of the literature since the publication in 1997 of Gottfried Schramm's book, and a critical review of the conclusions drawn by the most recent research. The survey focuses on the main theses put forward by Schramm (his famous eight theses on Romanian ethnogenesis) and the way they fared in the literature. His 1985 and 1986 articles, which formed the basis of the book's fourth part have been translated into both Hungarian and Romanian. However, there has been very little, if any engagement with Schramm's arguments, which are primarily, if not exclusively linguistic, and no retort came either from archaeologists or from historians. Much ink has been spilled on the political implications of his 'eight theses' for the presence of Romanians in Transylvania, but few have noted that the key to the understanding of Schramm's viewpoint is his envisioning of the Slavic migration. The article brings to the fore the results of the archaeological excavations in the countries of the central Balkan region and in Romania (both north and south of the Carpathian Mountains) in an attempt to verify Schramm's theory of a migration of Vlach pastoralists from the Balkans to the territory of present-day Romania. The last part of the paper discusses the episode of the Romanian immigration that appears in the so-called Cantacuzene Annals, the earliest chronicle of Wallachia.

Keywords: migration, transhumance, Transylvania, Vlachs, settlement archaeology

“It's got what it takes to make a mountain man leave his home”
(Robert Plant, “When the levee breaks,” *Led Zeppelin IV*, 1971)

Gottfried Schramm (1929–2017) disliked archaeology. Besides being unable to say much about Vlachs and other such mountain dwellers who rarely leave behind any solid and ethnically specific traces, archaeologists avow that they can recognize

linguistic changes by means of their trowels, even though neither potsherds nor skulls speak any (specific) language.¹ Percy Ernst Schramm's second son taught Modern and East European history at the Albert-Ludwig University in Freiburg for more than thirty years.² In other words, he was a historian of "conquerors and denizens" of both Russia and Poland.³ He privileged written sources for the modern period, and linguistic data for the early Middle Ages, particularly place names.⁴ Out of his five books published before 1997, two were on the early modern period in European history. *Ein Damm bricht* was, therefore, his fourth dedicated to the early Middle Ages.⁵ Unlike the other three, the 1997 publication was largely based on earlier articles, especially his famous 'eight theses' on the Romanian ethnogenesis, which are included in the first chapter of the book's fourth part.⁶ That is the part that, in fact, received the greatest attention, being immediately translated into Hungarian, and later into Romanian.⁷ In Romania, it had no echo whatsoever and received no reviews.⁸ In Hungary, it is still regarded as "elementary writing of a German author."⁹ Without citing Schramm, many leading historians in Hungary have uncritically reproduced his basic tenets—that the dispersal of Romanians was made possible by the rise of early medieval Bulgaria¹⁰ and that 'vigorous waves' of Vlachs came to the lands north of the Danube after the formation of the Second

1 For useless archaeology, see Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 282, 284.

2 For Schramm's life and work, see Nachtigal, "Zhizn' i trudy."

3 Schramm, *Eroberer und Eingesessene*.

4 Schramm, *Nordpontische Ströme; Altrusslands Anfang*.

5 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*. His earlier books, in chronological order: *Der polnische Adel; Nordpontische Ströme; Eroberer und Eingesessene; Anfänge; Europäische Renaissancen*.

6 Schramm, "Frühe Schicksale" (1985); "Frühe Schicksale" (1986); "Frühe Schicksale" (1987). The chapter on Venedi, Slavenes, and Antes is based on Schramm, "Venedi, Antes, Slaveni, Slavi." For Schramm's more recent opinions on this matter, see Schramm, "Ortsnamen und Lehnwörter." For eight 'new' theses, see Schramm, "Lieengelassene Probleme."

7 Schramm, *Korai román történelem* (translated by the Hungarian Albanologist István Schütz); Schramm, *Destine* (translated by the Romanian prehistorian Tudor Soroceanu).

8 To the best of my knowledge, Saramandu, "A propos de l'origine du roumain" is the only Romanian reaction to *Ein Damm bricht*. Schramm is basically accused of completely ignoring the (most recent) works of Romanian linguists and historians.

9 Thoroczky, "Some Remarks," 253, with note 26 cites *Ein Damm bricht* "for a negative assessment of the Dacian-Romanian [sic!] theory of continuity," so that he could not be accused of bias.

10 Makkai, "The Emergence of the Estates," 187. Like Schramm, whom he did not cite, Makkai believed that Romanians began to appear in the region between the Carpathian Mountains and the River Danube during the tenth century. By contrast, others believed that as soon as the Vlachs began to disappear from Bulgaria during the first half of the thirteenth century, they appeared in great numbers in Hungary, without any stop in Wallachia (Györffy, "Abfassungszeit," 221).

Bulgarian Empire.¹¹ Schramm has by now been dubbed the (last) follower of Robert Roesler (1836–1874), whom, however, he only occasionally cited.¹²

In his own country, Schramm's *Ein Damm bricht* received a cold reception. Although it appears to be less “science-fiction” than some of Schramm's other books, he still relied more on fantasies than on evidence, especially when dealing with the name of the Vlachs and with those of the Slavs.¹³ His etymologies and linguistic theories based on (place) names have received a good deal of criticism.¹⁴ *Ein Damm bricht* is full of historical reconstructions based on Schramm's *outré* interpretation of linguistic facts. For example, he claims that the *Urheimat* of the Slavs must have been in the Dnieper area, because the word *Sclavene* supposedly derives from an old name for that river—Slovota.¹⁵ The shift from the longer (*Sclaveni*) to the shorter name (*Sclavi*) of the Slavs supposedly happened under the influence of an old Albanian word borrowed from the language of the Thracian tribe of the Bessi.¹⁶ The (East) Germanic influences upon Common Slavic must be attributed to the Gepids, who, according to Schramm were the dominant population in the lands north of the Lower Danube, in what is now eastern and southern Romania.¹⁷ The Romanian language came to

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- 11 Vászary, *Cumans*, 27. The idea goes back to Roesler, *Romänische Studien*, 117. Unlike Roesler, however, Vászary also claims that “there is no compelling historical evidence that any serious Vlachian [sic] settlement existed north of the Danube in the twelfth or thirteenth century” (Vászary, *Cumans*, 135).
- 12 Hegyi, “Continuité daco-roumaine.” Hegyi is right. It was Roesler's idea to use language contact (particularly the relations between Romanian, Turkic and Slavic languages, Greek, Hungarian, and Albanian) as a chronological indicator of migration. Long before Schramm, Roesler used place names to write history. See Roesler, *Romänische Studien*, 123–34. For Hegyi's own Roeslerian views, see Hegyi, “Roumains.”
- 13 Kristophson, “Review,” 489–90 (“Der Hauptfehler bei G[ottfried] S[chramm] besteht nicht darin, daß er eine Form oder eine Etymologie falsch ansetzt, sondern daß offenbar ein Wissen davon fehlt, was man rekonstruieren darf und aus dem Rekonstrukt schließen kann.”).
- 14 Schmid, “Review”; Udolph, “Review.” According to Peyfuss, “Grundprobleme,” 212, Schramm engaged in linguistic bungy jumping. To reduce the Romanians of the Middle Ages to a community of transhumant (or mountain) shepherds is no better than the Hungarian stereotype about Romanians being descendants of a Roman penal colony (Peyfuss, “Grundprobleme,” 213).
- 15 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 190–91; Schramm, “Ortsnamen,” 63–64. In reality, that is not an old name for the Dnieper, but an *epitheton ornans* attested only in the seventeenth century (Mesiarkin, “The Name of the Slavs,” 9).
- 16 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 206. The shorter name first appears in the works of Agathias of Myrina and John Malalas, neither of whom ever visited the Balkans. Being residents of Constantinople and Antioch, respectively, they had no contact with any population in the Peninsula (Curta, *Making of the Slavs*, 45). For the word *Shqâ* in the Geg dialect of northern Albania and its cognate in Romanian, *şcheau*, see Mihăilă, *Studii*, 16; Poruciuc, “Relevanța.”
- 17 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 140. At the same time, Schramm, much like Roesler, denied the existence of any words of Germanic origin in Romanian. In reality, there is a large number of

the present-day territory of Romania with immigrants from Bulgaria, as indicated by most Slavic loans in Romanian that cannot be dated before ca. 900 because of the metathesis of the liquids.¹⁸

Against Schramm's Neo-Roeslerian tenets, one could easily summon the results of recent linguistic research. Moreover, while Daco-Roman continuity cannot be proved on the basis of place names in the lands north of the Danube, place names south of the river do not indicate a Romanian ethnogenesis anywhere in the Balkans.¹⁹ Building upon earlier ideas advanced by the German linguists Ernst Gamillscheg (1887–1971) and Günter Reichenkron (1907–1966), it has been suggested that Romanian did not originate as an ethnolect (i.e., a specifically ethnic language), but as a *koiné*.²⁰ That, at least, is the conclusion one can draw from the relative uniformity of all Romanian dialects, both north and south of the Danube.²¹

However, those and several similar arguments do not address the issue of historical reconstruction, especially the question of migration. Historical interpretations based on linguistic evidence are fraught with many problems, the most important of which is the inability to date any phonetic and/or linguistic changes with sufficient precision for historical reconstruction. Because of that, nothing helpful for historical reconstruction could be gleaned from recent studies on the linguistics of migration.²² Similarly, because for the area and the period at the center of

such words, which point to linguistic contacts north, not south of the River Danube. See Poruciu, “Problema vechilor germanisme”; “Linguistic-historical implications”; “The fortune of the Old Germanic loan *fara*.” Because of the early origin of the Gothic word for silk, Schramm imagined a vast commercial network organized by the Goths in southern Russia between the third and the fourth centuries and linked it to the Silk Road (Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 141–42).

18 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 333, 338 (with the word for ‘one hundred’ as an example of a Slavic loan after the metathesis of the liquids). The greater part of Slavic loans in Romanian are of bookish origin—Church literature, charters, and popular literature (Nandriș, “The Earliest Contacts”). Only fifteen words can be attributed to a Common Slavic influence on the basis of their phonetical treatment (Mihăilă, *Studii*, 16; Duridanov, “Die ältesten slawischen Entlehnungen,” 15). All of them appear in all Romanian dialects, both north and south of the River Danube (Mihăilă, “Criteriile,” 355). For *sută*, the Romanian word for “one hundred,” as of Thracian (Dacian), and not Slavic origin, see Paliga, “100 Slavic Basic Roots,” 67–68, 83.

19 Solta, *Einführung*, 63.

20 For the (socio)linguistic concept of *koiné*, see Siegel, “Koinés and Koineization.”

21 Solta, *Einführung*, 70; Holzer, “Der Walchen-Name,” 177–78. To that, one could add the observation of Peyfuss, “Grundprobleme,” 213, according to which out of all Romanian dialects, Aromanian, spoken by people who live(d) closest to speakers of Albanian, provides the smallest number of Albanian–Romanian lexical parallels. Conversely, the closest parallels to Albanian in Romanian in terms of pronunciation (e.g., rotacization) and vocabulary (e.g., *nea* for ‘snow’) appear in the northwestern region of present-day Romania.

22 Krefeld, *Einführung*; Morgenthaler García, “Introducción.”

Ein Damm bricht, there is little to no direct evidence, one cannot do anything with another model of analysis that may seem otherwise promising. That model is based on the distinction between language as something that a child, for example, might hear around him or her (the so-called ‘external language’) and the mental system characterizing a person’s linguistic range and represented in that person’s mind (the so-called ‘internal language’).²³ The model allows for a re-conceptualization of glotto-genesis, but cannot be used for tracking the migration of people.

The Hungarian archaeologist István Bóna (1930–2001) was therefore right: “there are many problems that cannot be resolved by archaeology.” However, archaeologists are definitely in a position to tell “whether or not a region was inhabited at any given time.” They also have the ability to confirm with some degree of certainty “whether or not the settlement was a lasting one.”²⁴ There has recently been a great deal of discussion about migration among archaeologists, who now distinguish between long- and short-distance migrations, as well as different patterns of migration that may be recognized in the archaeological evidence.²⁵ In short, it is perhaps time to evaluate the historical reconstruction proposed by Gottfried Schramm twenty-five years ago in the light of archaeological and historical evidence. In doing so, I will shift the emphasis from ethnicity to migration: while, as Schramm was quick to observe, archaeologists cannot ‘read’ linguistic changes in material culture, Bóna was equally (if only intuitively) right when noting that they are in a privileged position when it comes to tracking movements of population.

According to Schramm, the Peutinger Map shows the ethnic configuration in Eastern Europe during the first centuries AD, when the Slavs of the forest-steppe belt did not have any contact with the Roman world but through the Goths and the Gepids, who until the sixth century blocked the Slavic access to the Roman Empire.²⁶ Because of that, the Slavs reached the Danube frontier of the Empire from two directions—from the Middle Dnieper to the Lower Danube across present-day Ukraine,

23 Lightfoot, *How New Languages Emerge*. Equally inapplicable are the conclusions of recent studies on linguistic ideologies, for which, see Silverstein, “Language Structure”; Kroskrity, “Language Ideologies”; Rodríguez-Ordóñez, “The Role of Linguistic Ideologies.”

24 Bóna, “The Hungarian–Slav Period,” 139.

25 Anthony, “Migration in Archaeology”; Härke, “Archaeologists and Migrations”; Burmeister, “Archaeology and Migration”; Curta, “Migrations.”

26 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 149, 151 (with the map). According to Schramm, Venedi was another name for the Slavs. He took the double mention of the Venedi on the Peutinger Map to indicate the western and eastern Slavs, respectively (Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 166–75). Moreover, the Slavs borrowed from the Goths or the Gepids the name for the speakers of (Late, vernacular) Latin (Vlach, from Germanic *walha-*), the name of the River Danube, the word for emperor (*tsar*, from *Kaiser*), and the words for ‘lion’ and ‘elephant’ (Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 150).

Moldova and Romania; and from southern Poland through the Moravian Gate to the Middle Danube.²⁷ In a recent book, I have pointed out that no evidence exists of an ‘emptying’ of the *Urheimat* of the Slavs in the Middle Dnieper region (or farther to the north), which would presumably accompany the mass emigration of the Slavs.²⁸ Nor is there any evidence of a wave (or waves) of settlers moving out from that *Urheimat* to the Lower Danube. The many settlements excavated in eastern and southern Romania—several of them on the territory of present-day Bucharest—provide abundant evidence of communities of agriculturists and of a relatively long-term occupation of sites.²⁹ Moreover, like settlements in Wallachia and Moldavia, those excavated in western Ukraine, particularly in the region between the Dnieper and the Dniester rivers cannot be dated earlier than the late sixth or early seventh century. Assemblages with the so-called Prague type pottery (which is traditionally, albeit wrongly attributed to the Slavs) appear almost simultaneously in various parts of western Ukraine, but without any precedents that could be dated to the first half of the sixth or to the late fifth century—the time of the presumed migration that Schramm had in mind. Those were hardly communities ‘on the move’, much less migrants on their way from the *Urheimat* to the warmer climes of the Balkans.³⁰

Can one imagine a migration of the Slavs to be tracked by means of the Prague-type pottery into the Carpathian Basin? For several decades, archaeologists in East Central and Eastern Europe insisted that that pottery appeared in territories that had previously been evacuated by the late antique population.³¹ In other words, the migration of the Slavs filled a vacuum left behind by the Germanic population. Whatever one can make of such criteria, there is absolutely no indication of an end of the sites previously occupied by the late antique population. In fact, during the sixth century, there is no vacuum. The archaeological evidence from Hungary that has been dated to the Early Avar age (ca. 570 to ca. 630) and attributed to the Slavs (e.g., the cremations found in Pókaszpetk or the pottery found in Oroszlány) has nothing in common with materials from sites in the regions from which the immigrants are supposed to have come.³²

Schramm inadvertently subscribed to the theses of the Romanian archaeologists working under Ceaușescu’s regime, when claiming that by the mid-sixth century, the Slavs had established themselves in the lowlands of Wallachia, as well as in

27 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 216, 220 with Map 6.

28 Curta, *Slavs in the Making*, 126–35.

29 For sixth- to seventh-century settlements in southern and eastern Romania, see Curta, *Making of the Slavs*, 276–307.

30 Curta, *Slavs in the Making*, 128–29.

31 Godłowski, *Frühe Slawen*, 94, 98.

32 For a detailed discussion of the evidence, see Curta, *Slavs in the Making*, 69–89.

southeastern Transylvania. In those parts of present-day Romania, the newcomers lived in close quarters with the natives.³³ Who the natives were with whom the Slavic immigrants coexisted is not clear. However, judging by Schramm's own statements about the territory of Romania in the sixth century, those must have been either the Goths or the Gepids. There is no evidence—written or archaeological—of any of those two groups in mid-sixth century Wallachia. On the other hand, while the assemblages with handmade pottery found in the Covasna and Harghita Counties of present-day Romania on such sites as Poian, Cernat and, more recently Miercurea Ciuc-Șumuleu have indeed been attributed to the Slavs, those Slavs came from just across the Carpathian Mountains, where similar assemblages have been excavated, for example, at the Royal Court in Bacău.³⁴ This was not the migration that Schramm envisioned and its direction was from east to west, and not from north to south or southwest.

The title of Schramm's book, *A Dike Breaks*, hints at the presumed collapse of the limes in 602. To Schramm, that was *the* "catastrophe of the empire."³⁵ As soon as Phocas's rebellion broke out, the defense of the Danube frontier (the 'dike') crumbled, and the Slavic tide invaded the Balkans. The Roman inhabitants of the Peninsula who could not find refuge in Thessalonica and other cities in Macedonia or farther to the south, took shelter in the mountains. In time, the refugees turned to transhumant pastoralism, an economic form previously unknown in the Balkans. The population of sheep-raising Roman refugees (*schaftzüchterische Fluchtromania*) clustered within a limited region in the central Balkans between the forty-one- and forty-three-degrees north latitude.³⁶ However, the idea that the Danube frontier collapsed in 602 turns out to be a historiographic myth. Several hillforts along the Danube frontier had already suffered heavy destruction by fire at some point between Justinian and Maurice's reigns, at least twenty years before Phocas's rebellion. However, in almost all cases, destruction was followed by rebuilding and reoccupation.³⁷ The archaeological evidence in that respect correlates well with the information in the written sources suggesting that the Roman army returned to the Danube

33 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 295 ("Altsiedler").

34 For sites in southeastern Transylvania, see Székely, "Așezări" and Botár, "Finally, Slavs." For the site in Bacău, Mitrea and Artimon, "Descoperiri prefeudale." For the analogies between the sites in southeastern Transylvania and those in the Bacău County, see Curta "An Ironic Smile," 52–53.

35 Schramm, "Die Katastrophe."

36 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 309. In reality, transhumance in the Balkans is first documented archaeologically in the Bronze Age (Takács, "A balkáni vlachok kutatásának," 261).

37 Madgearu, "The End of the Lower Danube Limes"; Turlej, "Upadek"; Custurea and Talmațchi, "Regarding the Fall of the Danubian Limes." For the numismatic evidence, see Gândilă, *Cultural Encounters*, 183–84; Custurea, "Anul 602."

after overthrowing Maurice, in order to continue operations against both the Avars and the Slavs. The hillforts and towns along the frontier, as well as in the hinterland were then abandoned ca. 620, most of them in an organized fashion, as indicated by the careful removal of everything essential from the buildings left behind. The reason for the general withdrawal from the Balkans was that Emperor Heraclius needed all troops in Europe on the eastern front. Those troops never returned to the Balkans but were instead relocated to western Anatolia. Between ca. 620 and ca. 690, when the Thracian theme first emerged, there were no Roman troops in the Balkans anymore.³⁸ Nor was there any Slavic tide flooding the Peninsula. The only evidence in the written sources of Slavs permanently settled in the Balkans is that of the Slavene tribes besieging Thessalonica in the early years of Heraclius's reign. Even that may, in fact, be a projection back in time of the anonymous author of the second book of the *Miracles of St Demetrius*, who was writing at some point between 680 and 700.³⁹ At any rate, during the seventh century, following the supposed 'catastrophe of the empire', there were no Slavs in Macedonia to force the local Romans fearing for their lives to move to the surrounding mountains. Judging from the archaeological evidence, the interior of the Balkan Peninsula experienced a severe demographic collapse in the 'short seventh century' between ca. 620 and ca. 680. No Slavs from the territories north of the River Danube rushed to grab the lands supposedly left behind by the local Roman population.

A distribution map of all settlements known or supposed to have been in existence in the Balkans during the seventh century shows that the central part of the Peninsula is devoid of any sites whatsoever.⁴⁰ Only on the right bank of the Danube do a few settlement sites appear, and some even on islands in the middle of the river.⁴¹ Those are the first open, non-fortified settlements in the Balkans in more than 150 years, with an economic profile not unlike that of the communities in the lands north of the River Danube.⁴² The distribution of all isolated burials and cemeteries dated with some degree of certainty to the same period (seventh century) shows a clear cluster of sites on the northern boundary of the Balkans, which is directly

38 Curta, *The Making of the Slavs*, 189.

39 Curta, *The Making of the Slavs*, 62, 113–14; Panov, "Reconstructing 7th-Century Macedonia."

40 Curta, "The Beginning," 213, Fig. 12. The first to note the demographic collapse was Popa, "Review," 79.

41 Garvan: Văzharova, *Srednovekovnoto selishte* (see Grozdanova, "Relative Chronology," 22–26, for the earliest phase of occupation on the site). Popina: Văzharova, *Slavianski i slavianobălgarski selishta*. Mihajlovac: Janković, "Le site d'habitation medieval." For the settlement (initially and wrongly interpreted as a cremation cemetery) discovered in 1977 on the western side of the island Ostrovu Mare, see Stîngă, "Cercetări arheologice"; Boroneanț and Stîngă, "Cercetările."

42 Curta, *The Long Sixth Century*, 75–76.

comparable to that of rural settlements.⁴³ However, cemeteries and isolated burials also appear in great numbers along the western coast of the Peninsula, from the Peloponnese to Istria, with a prominent cluster in the mountain region of northern Albania. On sites in Albania, as well as in western Macedonia, burial assemblages are typically associated with ruins of old churches.⁴⁴ Most typical for several cemeteries in northern Albania of the so-called Komani culture is the deposition of weapons—swords, arrow and lance heads, as well as battle-axes.⁴⁵ The burial rites are remarkably homogeneous: stone or brick cists; furnished burial; the occasional deposition of weapons; the use of cenotaphs and multiple burials; the west-east grave orientation; and stark gender differentiation.⁴⁶ The clear evidence of continuity of late antique practices—deposition of water jugs and of fibulae with bent stem—may be interpreted as an indication of a Roman population.⁴⁷ Very little is known about the settlements associated with those cemeteries, but recent research at Komani suggests that the settlement, which was established in Late Antiquity, not only continued but even grew in the seventh century. The excavator suggests that refugees from the northern parts of the Balkans were responsible for the population growth.⁴⁸ Could they have been members of Schramm's *schaftzüchterische Fluchtromania*?⁴⁹ Very few agricultural tools were deposited in graves of the Komani culture, and no animal bones have been found in cemeteries excavated in Albania, Montenegro, and Macedonia. There are no signs of transhumant pastoralism, and the tools known so far bespeak purely agricultural occupations.⁵⁰ However, the eco-

43 Curta, "The Beginning," 214, Fig. 13. The picture does not change much if one adds isolated burials or a few finds from presumably destroyed graves, for which see Daskalov and Dimitrov, "Ein Paar anthropozoomorpher Bügelfibeln"; Petković et al., "A Non-Wandering Soldier's Grave?"

44 Maneva, "Nekoi aspekti"; Nallbani, "Urban and Rural Mortuary Practices."

45 Agolli, "The Distribution of Arrowheads"; Bowden and William, "Social Anxiety," 353–55. See also Zagarčanin, "Ranosrednjovjekovna nekropola," for similar finds in neighboring Montenegro.

46 Nallbani, "Transformations et continuité," 487.

47 Nallbani, "Résurgence"; Curta, "Seventh-century Fibulae."

48 Nallbani, "Early Medieval North Albania," 339–40. At any rate, the finger-rings with Greek inscriptions found on sites in Albania (Spahiu, 'Bagues') suggest that, whatever the language they spoke, the population burying its dead in those cemeteries was in some way associated with, or at least maintained close ties to the Empire. For the population of the Komani culture as speaking a Romance language, see Takács, "A balkáni vlachok kutatásának," 263–64.

49 According to Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 321, in the seventh century the proto-Albanians and proto-Romanians lived side by side in a mountain region.

50 A couple of billknives known from Komani (Ippen, "Denkmäler," 17, Fig. 26.11; Spahiu, "Gjetje të vjetra," Pl. II/4) do not match the expectation of a population practicing transhumance. The same applies to the billknives and mattocks from Shurdhah, which have been tentatively dated to the seventh and eighth centuries (Spahiu, "La ville," pl. VIII/1-3).

onomic profile of the communities burying their dead in those cemeteries remains unknown. Equally unclear is how late the cemeteries of the Komani culture could have been in use. In at least one case, there is evidence of continued use well into the ninth century.⁵¹ Similarly, new excavations at Koman show that the town was occupied without interruption through the thirteenth century.⁵² In other words, nothing indicates that, following the migration of the supposed sheep-raising Roman refugees, the population shrank, much less that there was any large-scale migration to some other place in the Balkans.

Could the *Urheimat* of the Romanians have been in the region of eastern Macedonia around Štip, on the River Bregalnica, as Schramm had it?⁵³ From an archaeological point of view, at least, the problem with that idea is that at the time in question, the region seems to have been depopulated.⁵⁴ In other words, nobody was there to participate in the supposed ethnogenesis of the Romanians. The earliest post-Roman sites in the valley of the Bregalnica cannot be dated before ca. 800. This is clearly the case of the cemetery at Krušarski Rid (in Orizari, in the district of Kočani), which has been dated between the ninth and the tenth century.⁵⁵ To the tenth century may also be dated the glass bracelets from Star Karaorman near Štip.⁵⁶ The population making its appearance in eastern Macedonia after ca. 800 probably came from Bulgaria in the context of that state's westward expansion during the early ninth century.⁵⁷ The lead amulet with Cyrillic inscription containing a prayer against *nezhit*, which was found in Creshka, between Štip and Veles, may well be the earliest incontrovertible evidence of Bulgarian culture in the region.⁵⁸ Judging

51 Doda, "Varreza arbërore."

52 Nallbani, "Nouvelles formes d'habitat," 70. For a church built at Lezha in the eighth or ninth century, see Nallbani, "Nouvelles formes d'habitat," 79.

53 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 325.

54 For Macedonia as a region depopulated between the seventh and the ninth century, see Rashev, "Kām problema za materialnata kultura," 97.

55 Beldedovski, *Bregalnichkiot basen*, 65. A similar date may be advanced for the finds from Begov Dab (in Dulica, district of Delčevo; Beldedovski, *Bregalnichkiot basen*, 66), Goren Kozjak (Aleksova, "Pridones," 14), Kavaklija (Beldedovski, "Ranoslovenski naodi," 227, 228, Figs 3–6), and Krupište (Beldedovski, *Bregalnichkiot basen*, 56), all three in the district of Štip.

56 Beldedovski, *Bregalnichkiot basen*, 64. For later finds in the region, see Maneva, "Srednovjekovniot period"; Trajkovski, "Vizantiisko-slavianskie otnosheniia"; Dzhordzhievski, "Kumanovskiot region"; Guštin and Krstevski, "Ranosrednjovjekovni nalazi."

57 Rashev, "Kām problema za materialnata kultura." See also Stanev, "Bregalnica," who believes that Macedonia was organized in the early ninth century into a separate administrative unit centered upon Strumica.

58 Chausidis, "Oloven amulet." The lead amulet can clearly be dated only to 900 or shortly after that.

from the archaeological evidence, therefore, the situation is exactly the opposite of what Schramm imagined. He believed that the 'Romans' (Vlachs) had a prominent role in early medieval Bulgaria as the second imperial nation (*die Stellung eines zweiten Reichvolkes*). In that capacity, they could presumably move freely wherever they wanted and took advantage of the situation to move out of Macedonia to all directions, but still within the boundaries of the Bulgar polity, sticking to the mountains.⁵⁹ However, instead of being the source of emigration, Macedonia was actually populated during the ninth century with immigrants most likely coming from the Bulgar lands to the east. No signs exist so far of an out-migration, and everything points to a growing population after ca. 900. Nor are there any signs of transhumant pastoralism anywhere in Macedonia. Most likely aware of this problem, the Hungarian archaeologist Miklós Takács has proposed a different *Urheimat*, much farther to the northwest. According to him, the settlement excavated at Mušići, in the valley of the Drina River in eastern Bosnia, cannot be attributed to the Slavs, but to a transhumant population, most likely the Vlachs.⁶⁰ He apparently drew that conclusion on the basis of a number of settlement features of circular or irregular plan, which he interpreted as temporary houses (shelters) of shepherds. Leaving aside the fact that those settlement features appear in the ruins of a Roman villa, the pottery found on the site indicates two periods of occupation, one dated to the fifth and sixth centuries, the other to the late seventh and eighth centuries. It is not clear, therefore, whether the features in question are of a late antique or an early medieval date. Similar features have been identified on another site located farther to the north, at Jazbine in Batković near the confluence of the Drina and Sava Rivers. There are clear indications there of iron-smelting as well as weaving, while the features in question cannot in any way be associated with a transhumant pastoralist group.⁶¹

According to Schramm, the Vlachs reached the lands north of the River Danube only after the conversion of Prince Boris of Bulgaria.⁶² Therefore, he argues

59 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 326; see also Makkai, "The emergence of the estates," 187.

60 Takács, "A balkáni vlahok kutatásának," 260–61.

61 Čremošnik, "Die Untersuchungen." For the settlement features of circular or irregular plan, see Čremošnik, "Tipovi slavenskih nastambi." For the dating of the early medieval pottery from Mušići, see Curta, *The Making of the Slavs*, 296. For the interpretation of the Jazbine site as the settlement of an itinerant group of agriculturists migrating southwards from Avar Pannonia during the Late Avar Age, see Dzino, *From Justinian to Branimir*, 135–36.

62 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 336. Schramm seems to have been unaware of the Romanian archaeologist Kurt Horedt (1914–1991) claiming that the Romanians came to southern Transylvania in the early ninth century, when the region was conquered by the Bulgars. See Horedt, *Siebenbürgen*, 185–86 (echoed by Makkai, "Transylvania," 430), who brought the Romanians directly from Bulgaria, with no stop in Wallachia. Horedt did not make any such claims before his emigration to West Germany in 1981.

that a Romanian presence on the territory of present-day Romania could not be dated before the tenth century.⁶³ The Hungarian historian László Makkai (1914–1989) was also convinced that between 900 and 1000 there were Romanians in the region between the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube, which is now included in southern Romania (Wallachia).⁶⁴ However, there are no indications either of a migration or of an ‘infiltration’ from the lands south to those north of the Danube. The occupation on many settlement sites excavated in Romania that may be dated to the tenth century, in fact, began one or two centuries earlier. On those that began in the tenth century, the associated pottery is not unlike that of older settlements.⁶⁵ On such sites, most animal bones are of cattle and of pig, not of sheep or goats, the two species commonly associated with transhumant pastoralism.⁶⁶ To be sure, the high percentage of cattle bones, as opposed to sheep and pig, that were found on the twelfth to thirteenth-century settlement site excavated from 1979 to 1985 in Dridu-Metereze (near Slobozia, Ialomița County), has been interpreted as an indication of nomadism or semi-nomadism.⁶⁷ Those were supposedly nomads from the steppe lands in Eastern Europe (Pechenegs), not Vlachs from the Balkans. That much, at least, results from the interpretation of the large number of clay kettles found on the site.⁶⁸

63 Within one and the same territory (Wallachia), Hungarian historians and archaeologists used to identify graves of Magyar warriors (Róna-Tas, *Hungarians*, 118; Fodor et al., *The Ancient Hungarians*, 438). For a critique of such views, see Gáll, “The grave.” For their nationalist roots, see Melnyk, *Byzantium*, 88–89.

64 Makkai, “The emergence of estates,” 187. Hungarian historians, however, typically bring the Romanians to Transylvania directly from Bulgaria, with no stop in Wallachia. Northern Bulgaria most definitely witnessed a demographic decline in the twelfth century, when the Vlachs are mentioned in the written sources as inhabitants of that region. Following the success of the 1185 revolt led by the two Vlach leaders, Peter and Asen, large numbers of people were moved more or less forcefully from Thrace to northern Bulgaria. That migration may have been responsible for the final assimilation of the local Vlachs, as well as the Pechenegs and the Cumans (Stanev, “Migraciata,” 214, 220, 226).

65 For the lack of cultural differences between settlements of the eighth and ninth centuries, on the one hand, and those of the tenth century, on the other hand, see Ciupercă, “Așezări.” The largest number of settlement sites is in southern Romania, between the Argeș and Mostiștea Rivers; those sites have been occupied between the ninth and the eleventh centuries without interruption (Corbu, *Sudul României*, 30).

66 Preda, “Săpăturile de salvare,” 507–9; Bejenaru, *Arheozoologia*, 165; Stanc, *Relațiile omului*, 173.

67 Ioniță, *Spațiul*, 43. The ditch identified next to the settlement features has, in turn, been interpreted as a corral (Ioniță, *Spațiul*, 41–42). The dating of the settlement to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries rests primarily on a spur find (Ioniță, *Spațiul*, 96).

68 Ioniță, *Spațiul*, 70–71. By the second half of the twelfth century, the dominant nomads in the lands north of the Danube must have been the Cumans, not the Pechenegs.

Tarrying in Wallachia for a couple of centuries, the Vlach population that had supposedly come from the Balkans before the demise of early medieval Bulgaria and the Byzantine conquest of the central and northern parts of the Peninsula, decided, suddenly, to cross the mountains into Transylvania.⁶⁹ The Vlachs remained pastoralist throughout the entire Wallachian period, so they arrived in southern Transylvania together with their flocks of sheep.⁷⁰ Shortly after 1200, according to Schramm, the Vlachs occupied the lands south of the River Mureş and reached the lands north of the river only in the fourteenth century. Some Vlachs abandoned transhumant pastoralism and within a short while became agriculturists.⁷¹ One would, therefore, expect to recognize their settlements in the archaeological record of Transylvania. However, the evidence of settlement sites in the southern part of the province, to the south from the River Mureş is non-characteristic. The coin-dated settlement sites at Sânmiclăuş and Bratei produced the same materials, especially clay kettles, as those to the north of the same river.⁷² Nor can any discussion of a presumed migration of

69 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 336, 342. According to Makkai, “The Emergence of the Estates,” 192, the Romanian shepherds came to Transylvania at the invitation of the Hungarian kings. Initially, the Romanians were grazing their flocks on the pastures of the Transylvanian Alps but were based on the lower reaches of the Argeş River. The Hungarian king (presumably Béla III) needed the Romanian shepherds to undertake frontier guard duties. To win them over, that king handed over to the Romanians the area between the Olt and the mountains, “which was already settled by Hungarian and Saxon communities.” Makkai did not notice that his Romanian shepherds were recipients of a royal grant and lorded it over Hungarians and Saxons. Makkai, “Transylvania,” 352 has a bizarre twist: Romanians arrived in the Lower Danube region from the Southern Carpathians, moving their herds to winter pasture. In other words, Romanians lived already in Transylvania (at least on its southern border) and it is from there that they moved to Wallachia, not the other way around.

70 Zsoldos, *The Árpáds*, 182.

71 Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 337. The mention of the village of Olahteluk in a charter of King Ladislaus IV dated to 1283 is interpreted as the first piece of evidence pertaining to the sedentarization of Romanians (Schramm, *Ein Damm bricht*, 342; *oláh*, in Hungarian, is the word for Romanian). For the charter, see *Documente*, Vol. 2, 246; *Erdélyi Okmánytár*, 261. However, the village in question is mentioned along with two others (present-day Uileacu de Criş and Cuiuşd) as estates in the Bihar County, thus at a great distance to the north(west) from the River Mureş. If Schramm’s interpretation is taken at face value, it would mean that within less than a century, Romanians abandoned their pastoralist economy of subsistence and turned to agriculture. Moreover, their presence near Oradea before 1300 would indicate that they had apparently crossed the River Mureş at a much earlier date than Schramm presumed. Within less than a century, Romanians were apparently able to move over 150 miles, as the crow flies, from the Olt to the Criş River, about 150 miles. It took them twice as long to cover the same distance when moving from the Lower Danube to the Olt River.

72 Bratei: Ioniţă, *Aşezarea* (fragments of clay pans associated with an anonymous denier, most likely struck for Stephen III, see 130–32 and 151–58; Pls 170–72 and 216–27). Sânmiclăuş: Anghel and Blăjan, “Săpăturile arheologice,” 288 (fragments of clay kettles associated with a

the Vlachs to southern Transylvania in the late twelfth century involve the cemetery excavated in Feldioara, the only one so far known from the lands between the Olt and the Mureș Rivers.⁷³ A hoard assemblage that I once associated with the Vlach presence in southern Transylvania is, in fact, more than 100 years later and, thus, linked to a completely different political context.⁷⁴

While the Vlachs cannot be recognized in the archaeological record of Transylvania ca. 1200, they make their appearance in the written sources shortly after that. In his charter of 1223 for the Cistercian abbey of Cârța, King Andrew II confirmed an earlier grant of the land of the Romanians (“*terram... de Blaccis*”), which had previously been taken from them by the king and donated to the abbey at the time when a certain Benedict was voivode of Transylvania.⁷⁵ Knowing that Benedict was voivode of Transylvania twice—first between 1202 and 1206 and, again, between 1208 and 1209—the charter of 1223 points to the existence of a ‘land’ in the possession of the Romanians during the first decade of the thirteenth century. One year earlier, in 1222, King Andrew II granted to the Teutonic Knights established in Burzenland (the southeastern part of Transylvania around the present-day city of Brașov) full exemption from tolls required when crossing the land of the Szeklers or the land of the Romanians.⁷⁶ The latter is clearly a ‘land’ different from that donated earlier to the Cârța Abbey, even though the tolls strongly suggest the presence of the royal authority. It is important to note that the Romanians appear in the first royal charters in connection to land, not to obligations.⁷⁷ In other words, there is no hint of a recent migration, of ‘guests’ or anything but people settled on

coin struck for King Coloman). The contemporaneous settlement site at Sighișoara has been dated by means of two spurs (Harhoiu and Baltag, *Sighișoara—Dealul Viilor*, 17, 42–43; 118, Fig. 1090; 127, Fig. 1099; 238, Pl. 26; 285, Pl. 72; 286, Pl. 73; 287, Pl. 74). Another settlement excavated recently at Miercurea Sibiului has also been dated by means of a spur and a bronze bracelet of Balkan model (Corneanu et al., “Prick spurs”). The clay oven from Sibiu-Gușterița was initially dated to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but it may well be later (Lupu, “Un cuptor”).

73 Ioniță et al., *Feldioara-Marienburg*, 65 (graves 26, 93 and 98 with anonymous deniers probably struck for Stephen III). Many of the 109 grave pits in the cemetery have head niches, a feature with no parallels anywhere in the Balkans.

74 Curta, *Southeastern Europe*, 354 (a mistake going back to Horedt, *Siebenbürgen*, 150–52); see now Lukács, “Tezaurul.” A later date may also be advanced for the enkolpion from Saschiz, for which, see Zrinyi, “Repertoriul,” 144.

75 *Documente*, Vol. 1, 379; *Erdélyi Okmánytár*, 15–59. See also *Documenta*, 9–10; Senga, “A románok nevei,” 19 with note 11. For the estates of the Cârța Abbey, see Tănase, “L’expansion de Cîteaux.” For the use of Blac(c)i as the exonym for Romanians, see Senga, “A románok nevei,” 17.

76 *Documente*, Vol. 1, 184; *Erdélyi Okmánytár*, 154–55. See also *Documenta*, 18.

77 A third charter of King Andrew II, issued in 1224 for the same Teutonic Knights grants them the “forest of the Romanians and the Pechenegs” (*silvam Blacorum et Bissenorum*) to use together with them, free of any service (*Documente*, Vol. 1, 384).

their lands. Romanians were not present only on those lands. A charter of King Béla IV of 1256 for Archbishop Benedict of Esztergom grants him the right to collect tithes from all Romanians, wherever they happened to be within the Kingdom of Hungary (ex parte Olacorum etam ubique et a quocumque provenientium).⁷⁸ Along with Szeklers, Romanians were to pay tithes either in cattle or in sheep.⁷⁹ This can hardly be taken as an indication of transhumant pastoralism, or else, the same would apply to Szeklers.⁸⁰ (Neo-)Roeslerian historians place a great deal of emphasis on the fact that Romanians appear in royal charters only during the first third of the thirteenth century.⁸¹ However, if that is an argument in favor of the late immigration of the Romanians, then one must note that both Hungarians and Szeklers first appear in the royal charters at that same time: the 1213 charter of William, Bishop of Transylvania for the Teutonic Knights grants them the right to levy tithes on all inhabitants of Burzenland, current and future, except Hungarians and Szeklers, who would like to go through that country, and who otherwise pay tithes to the bishop.⁸²

Romanians appear in written sources concerning events taking place north of the River Danube before 1200. There were Vlachs in Moldavia by 1164, when Andronicus escaped from prison and fled to the court of Yaroslav Osmomysl, Prince of Halych (1153–1187). As he reached the border of Halych, he was intercepted by Vlachs, who captured and turned him to Emperor Manuel.⁸³ Vlachs are again

78 There is clear evidence of population mobility in relation to the Romanians of Transylvania. King Andrew III's grant for the chapter of Alba Iulia gave permission to sixty households of Romanians to settle on the bishop's estates in Dara, Ampoița and Fylesd, free of any taxes and tithes (*Documente*, Vol. 2, 396; *Erdélyi Okmánytár*, 300; all three estates were north of the River Mureș). The same king's charter of 1293 orders that all Romanians settled on the estates of the nobles be recalled and brought back by force, if necessary, to the royal estate in Cunța (between Sebeș and Miercurea Sibiului). The sixty households on the Fylesd and Aiud estates of the bishopric of Alba Iulia apparently belonged to Romanians coming from other estates (*Documente*, Vol. 2, 401; *Erdélyi Okmánytár*, 238). In other words, those Romanians did not come from afar, certainly not from across the Carpathian Mountains or from the Balkans.

79 *Documente*, Vol. 2, 493; *Erdélyi Okmánytár*, 197. For the name change from *Blaci* to *Olaci/Olati* under King Béla IV, see Senga, "A románok nevei," 17, who notes that *Olat* may be a scribal error for *Olac* (based on the Hungarian word *Oláh*).

80 In a confirmation of 1262, the same king granted the church in Esztergom the right to levy the tithe on the cattle and herds of both Romanians and Szeklers (*Documente*, Vol. 2, 41–42).

81 E.g., Zsoldos, *The Árpáds*, 182.

82 *Documente*, Vol. 1, 371–72. If the date of mention in written sources is any indication of indigeneity, the ethnic group first attested in medieval Transylvania is that of the *Theutonici Ultrasilvani*, who appear in a letter of Pope Celestinus III written in Rome in 1191, confirming that the church of the Saxons was a free provostship (*Documente*, Vol. 1, 361; *Erdélyi Okmánytár*, 129).

83 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 260; transl., 195. For this episode, see Stănescu, "Les »Blachoi« de Kinnamos," 585–88, who nonetheless believed the Vlachs in question to be those of the Balkans, a special

mentioned as recruits in the troops of Leo Vatatzes, who led one of two corps of the Byzantine army that crossed the Danube in 1167 against Hungary. Leo's Vlach recruits were most likely from the northeastern Balkans. They accompanied the Byzantine troops moving to Transylvania across the Carpathian Mountains perhaps through the Buzău Pass. Another corps, led by John Dukas attacked from "someplace higher up the Hungarians who live near Russia" and crossed the Carpathians probably through the Oituz Pass. Before reaching the central region of Transylvania, the Byzantine troops went through some "wearisome and rugged regions" and crossed a "land entirely bereft of men." There is no mention of Vlachs inside Transylvania, nor of any other ethnic group.⁸⁴ This, however, was the fourth time in the twelfth century that the Byzantine armies crossed the River Danube, from south to north. In response to a Cuman raid that reached the western part of Paradunavon, Emperor Alexius I crossed in 1114 into Oltenia (western Wallachia).⁸⁵ Fourteen years later, supported by the fleet equipped with Greek Fire, John II Comnenus crossed onto the left bank from Belgrade and attacked Zemun.⁸⁶ Finally, in 1148, Emperor Manuel crossed the river at an unknown location (possibly in western Dobrudja) and attacked a Cuman campsite next to a mountain named Tenu Ormon, "which extends to the boundaries of Russia," and managed to capture a Cuman chieftain named Lazarus.⁸⁷ Two of the four instances of Byzantine armies crossing the Danube in the twelfth century were, therefore, parts of the long confrontation with Hungary during the reigns of Emperors John II and Manuel.⁸⁸ This prolonged war has been associated with the so-called 'second South Danubian horizon,' visible archaeologically in inhumation cemeteries of the mountain region of the (Romanian) Banat.⁸⁹

unit sent to capture Andronicus; Curta, *Southeastern Europe*, 316. The problem this episode creates for advocates of a late Romanian migration from the Balkans has already been noted by Tomaschek, "Review."

84 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 260 (transl., 195–96); Choniates, *History*, 151–57 (transl., 86–89). For this episode, see Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization*, 157; Curta, *Southeastern Europe*, 316–17.

85 Comnena, *Alexiad*, 458 (transl., 467). See Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization*, 144.

86 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 11–12 (transl., 17–19); Choniates, *History*, 17–18 (transl., 11–12). For this episode, see Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization*, 149.

87 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 95 (transl., 76–77); Choniates, *History*, 78 (transl., 46). For this episode, see Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization*, 151–52.

88 Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus and Geza II"; Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus, the Hungarian crown"; Stephenson, "John Cinnamus." See also Szegvári, "Johannes Kinnamos."

89 Uzum and Lazarovici, "Așezarea feudală Ilidia"; Uzum, "Săpăturile arheologice"; Uzum, "Necropola feudală timpurie"; Boroneanț, "Cimitirul feudal timpuriu"; Uzum, "Considerații"; Țicu, "Cercetări de arheologie"; Țicu, "Necropole medievale," 238–39 and 258; Țicu, *Banatul montan*, 127 and 147; Țicu, *Studii istorice*, 23–60; Radu and Țicu, "Săpături arheologice." The phrase 'second South Danubian horizon' was coined by Oța, *The Mortuary Archaeology*, 188–89.

Burials in those cemeteries are characterized by bodies laid in the grave with arms folded, as well as a large number of ornaments of Balkan origin or inspiration.⁹⁰ As such, those burial assemblages have no precedent in the region, and represent either a new fashion or a new population. Some ornaments, such as the finger-rings with bezels decorated with crosses, have explicitly Christian symbolism. It has, therefore, been suggested that the local elites who buried their dead in those cemeteries were Orthodox Christians and that they maintained a strong sense of identity as long as the Byzantine power remained in the area, i.e., until the end of the twelfth century (ca. 1190).⁹¹ The Byzantine influence has meanwhile been noted on settlement sites as well (Ilidia-Funii, Gornea-Zomoniță and Berzovia-Pătruieni). From eastern Banat, this influence spread to the east, into Oltenia, where it survived longer, in contrast to the situation in the Banat, where the Árpáadian take-over and the establishment of the Banate of Severin shortly after 1200 effectively put an end to the 'second South Danubian horizon.'⁹²

Irrespective of the ethnic attribution of the finds from the cemeteries excavated at Cuptoare, Șopotu Vechi, Gornea, Moldova Veche, Svinița, and Nicolinț, could they be evidence of a migration from the Balkans? The Romanian archaeologist Silviu Oța does not exclude that possibility but insists upon the use of artifacts of Byzantine make or inspiration for the formulation of status claims and, thus, for the construction of an elite identity in the context of military conflict between Byzantium and Hungary taking place in the vicinity. Therefore, could the local elites have come to the Banat from the Balkans during the Byzantine-Hungarian wars? That, in fact, is the interpretation offered by the Romanian historian Ovidiu Pecican to the introduction of the earliest surviving chronicle of Wallachia, the so-called Cantacuzene Annals (*Letopisețul cantacuzinesc*). The introduction, a text that Pecican calls the "Legend of the Coming of the Orthodox Christians" (*Legenda descălecării pravoslavnicilor creștini*), tells of the migration of 'Romanians' from somewhere in the Balkans to the north. Upon crossing the Danube, they established themselves at Turnu Severin, while others moved to Hungary and established themselves along the Olt and the Mureș Rivers, on the Tisza, and reached as far as the Maramureș. The group that established itself in Turnu Severin extended its power to the east, up to the River Olt, as well as along the valley of the Lower Danube across

90 The great resemblance between the ornaments found in cemeteries of the mountain region of the Banat (e.g., Cuptoare-Sfogeia) and those of Macedonia has already been noted by Popa, "Review," 80. For analogies in northern Serbia and Macedonia for the earrings found in Cuptoare-Sfogeia, Gornea and Șopotu Vechi, see Guștin, "A Contribution."

91 Oța, *The Mortuary Archaeology*, 202.

92 Oța, *The Mortuary Archaeology*, 203, 345, Pl. 113 and 360, Pl. 128. Oța notes that, judging from the archaeological evidence, the authority of the Hungarian kings stopped in the twelfth century at the limit of the first hills in eastern Banat.

from Nikopol. The seat of power was first in Turnu Severin, then in Strehaia, and finally in Craiova.⁹³ The Basarabi clan took over as great bans, with other members of the family becoming smaller bans (*banoveți*). Because of the mention of the noble family of the Basarabi, Ovidiu Pecican believed that the entire story was about the migration of that family from the Second Bulgarian Empire, at some point between the late twelfth and the early thirteenth century.⁹⁴ He rightly viewed the story as propaganda for the Craiovescu family of great bans in seventeenth-century Wallachia, as members of that family claimed to be descendants from Basarab I, the first prince of Wallachia.⁹⁵ Pecican is right in shifting the emphasis away from an ethnic interpretation of this story, for throughout the Cantacuzene Annals, the meaning of the word *rumân* ('Romanian') is clearly social, not ethnic.⁹⁶ However, it is important to note that the family of the Basarabi is mentioned in the text after the migration brought the 'Romanians' to the lands north of the River Danube. Since the noblemen of the Basarabi family are explicitly said to have been selected from among those 'Romanians' at a relatively later date, Pecican's interpretation of the story cannot account for several key details, such as the Roman origin of the 'Romanians' or their simultaneous occupation of the lands in Wallachia and (further) migration to Transylvania.

Where did the author of the Cantacuzene Annals get this story? Romanian philologists and historians now agree that the Cantacuzene Annals, as we now have

93 *Cronicari*, 25–26: “Însă dintâi izvodindu-se de rumânii carii s-au despărțit de la romani și au pribegit spre miiazănoapte. Deci trecând apa Dunării, au descălecat la Turnul Severinului, alții în Țara Ungurească, pre apa Oltului, și pre apa Murășului, și pre apa Tisei ajungând și până la Maramurăș. Iar cei ce au descălecat la Turnul Severinului s-au tins pre sub poalele muntelui până la apa Oltului, alții au pogorât pre Dunăre în jos. Și așa umplându-se tot locul de ei, au venit până în marginea Necopolei. Atunce s-au ales dintr-înșii boiarii carii au fost de neam mare. Și puseră banoveți un neam ce le zice Basarabi, să le fie lor cap (adecă mari bani) și-i așăzără întâi să le fie scaunul la Turnul Severinului, al doilea scaun s-au pogorât la Strehaia, al treilea scaun s-au pogorât la Craiova. Și așa fiind, multă vreme au trecut tot ei oblăduind acea parte de loc.”

94 Pecican, *Arpadieni*, 17. However, Pecican also believed that the so-called migration must be interpreted as an effort of administrative or political organization of Oltenia either by Symeon the Great, the tenth-century ruler of Bulgaria, or by the Assenids, who established the Second Bulgarian Empire in the late twelfth century (Pecican, *Arpadieni*, 32).

95 Pecican, *Arpadieni*, 18.

96 *Rumân*, for example, is the prince of Wallachia, Radu Șerban (1602–1610) in the speech attributed to the prince of Transylvania, Moses Székely (1603), right before the battle of Brașov on July 17, 1603: “Ia să vedeți acum acel rumân gros ce va să pață” (*Cronicari*, 67). *De moșie rumân* is also Radu Vărzariul, a bad nobleman under Matei Basarab, Prince of Wallachia (1632–1654) (*Cronicari*, 120). It is tempting to associate this usage of the word to the social meaning of *rumân*, ‘serf, dependent peasant.’

them, are the work of the logothete Stoica Ludescu (1612–1695).⁹⁷ For the period between ca. 1290 and his own lifetime, Ludescu, who may have finished the work shortly before his death, probably ca. 1690, relied on the (now lost) official chronicle of Wallachia, initially written under Prince Alexandru Mircea (1568–1577) in Slavonic, then translated into Romanian.⁹⁸ However, the story of the migration of ‘Romanians’ to the lands north of the River Danube was not in that chronicle. Instead, it was a later addition.⁹⁹ The addition was made in the seventeenth century, during the reign of Prince Matei Basarab (1632–1654), and its goal was to date the beginnings of Wallachia before Negru Vodă and his state foundation of 1292.¹⁰⁰ The Romanian historian Ștefan Andreescu has noted that the lands north of the River Danube upon which the story seems to focus are primarily in Oltenia (western Wallachia), with the bans moving in a (north)west-to-(south)east direction, from Turnu Severin to Strehaia and, ultimately, to Craiova.¹⁰¹ This rhymes with the idea of linking the ‘founding family’ of the Basarabi to the Craiovescu family, to which Prince Matei Basarab himself belonged. In other words, the introductory story about the migration of the ‘Romanians’ was clearly added in the 1640s or the early 1650s.¹⁰² Whoever the author of this addition was (perhaps the second logothete Udriște Năsturel, Matei Basarab’s brother-in-law), this story was clearly not based on local folk traditions. Instead, its learned, bookish origin is betrayed by the idea that the ‘Romanians’ separated themselves (*despărțindu-se*) from the Romans,

97 Mareș, *Scriere și cultură*, 225–30.

98 Andreescu, “Goran logofătul,” 789. Previously, Andreescu, “Din nou despre prima cronică” has advanced the idea that Stoica Ludescu used two non-extant chronicles dedicated to the Wallachian princes Radu de la Afumați (1522–1529) and Mircea Ciobanul (1545–1552, 1553–1554, 1558–1559), respectively.

99 Andreescu, “Goran logofătul,” 789. Initially, most likely struggling with the interpretation of this story, which he regarded as a dim recollection of the *Roman* colonization of the lands north of the River Danube, Andreescu, “Considérations,” 362 thought that the migration narrative was part of a complete history of Wallachia. Most recently, he has revised his opinion: initially, the chronicle’s introduction consisted only of the story about Negru Vodă coming from Transylvania to establish the principality of Wallachia in 6800 (AD 1292) (Andreescu, “Despre »faza Matei Basarab«,” reprinted in Andreescu, *Istoria românilor*, 78–94).

100 Andreescu, “Despre »faza Matei Basarab«,” 247. For unspecified reasons, Pecican, *Arpadieni*, 17 dates the text between 1323 and 1343.

101 Andreescu, “Despre »faza Matei Basarab«,” 247. Nikopol (Necopol) is located across the Danube (in Bulgaria) from its confluence to the River Olt, which separates Oltenia from the rest of Wallachia.

102 Andreescu, “Despre »faza Matei Basarab«,” 248 associates those dates with the foundation of the Monastery of Strehaia in 1645 and the consecration of the princely church in Craiova in 1651.

as if Romans and ‘Romanians’ were coeval.¹⁰³ The perspective of the narrator, on the other hand, is clearly from the south, namely from Bulgaria, for in order to describe the easternmost extension of the Basarabi power, the second town mentioned after Turnu Severin is Nikopol (Necopol).¹⁰⁴ It is also interesting to note that the narrative follows the group established initially in Turnu Severin, but has nothing to say about the one moving to Hungary, besides listing the names of the rivers that it reached in its expansion. Hungary does not seem to be inhabited by anyone at the time of the ‘Romanian’ migration, and unlike Wallachia, the ‘Romanians’ established no towns and no seats of power in Hungary. In other words, the author’s intention may have been to describe the maximum expansion of the ‘Romanians’ as a context for the rise of the Basarabi family as great bans. There is no other reason for the description of the ‘Romanian’ expansion into Hungary, which plays no role in the subsequent account of how the great bans of the Basarabi family ruled over Oltenia. In other words, the migration itself may well have been a narrative strategy designed to link the Basarabi clan to the Romans, perhaps in an attempt to boost the imperial pretensions of some of its past and (at that time) current members.

Neither the Cantacuzene Annals, nor the ‘second South Danubian horizon’ could thus be used to patch the levee Schramm believed that he was building around Roesler. The conclusions that he derived from the linguistic data do not align either with the historical or with the archaeological evidence. While he may have intended to revive Roesler’s theory about the Romanian ethnogenesis, he must have already been aware of the major holes in that theory, particularly in the light of the archaeological evidence accumulated within the century or so since that theory had been put forward. This is neither the time nor the place to produce an alternative. My goal has been only to delineate the holes in Schramm’s theory, which was meant to save Roesler’s essential arguments by erecting a dam separating historical reconstructions based on the linguistic evidence from those relying on the archaeological record. Neo-Roeslerianism was on life support already, and Schramm’s intervention happened too late. When *Ein Damm bricht* came out a quarter of a century ago, managing silt deposits and controlling erosion proved impossible for maintaining the levee

103 Another telltale is the use of *romani* instead of *rimleani* (or *râmleani*), the word of Slavonic origin commonly used at the time in reference to Romans. Exactly where this bit of information may have originated remains unknown, but the mixture of humanist ideas and Orthodox fervor is typical for Udriște Năsturel’s other works, such as the preface to the *Pentekostarion* published in Târgoviște in 1649. See Căndeia, “L’humanisme d’Udriște Năsturel,” 272.

104 It may not be an accident that Nikopol is also the only town established on the Danube by a fictional founding king named Nicephorus in the *Tale of the Prophet Isaiah of How an Angel Took him to the Seventh Heaven*, an apocryphal text preserved in a seventeenth-century Serbian manuscript, but probably dated to the fourteenth or fifteenth century. See Biliarsky, *The Tale*, 20, 104, 243, and 247.

system. Schramm may have thought that all he had to do was to put his finger in the dike. However, as Led Zeppelin put it, “when the levee breaks, have no place to stay.” Sticking a finger into the hole of the dike won’t make any difference. Besides, dikes do not break because of holes. And the whole story about the little Dutch boy is not even true. It was made up by Mary Mapes Dodge, who never visited Netherlands.

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