PASTORALISM AND THE ROMANIANS’ HISTORY

2. PEOPLE, LANGUAGES, GENES AND THE LOCAL SHEEP BREEDS, IN NORTH-EASTERN BLACK SEA STEPPE

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Abstract

In 17 gubernyias of the former Russian Empire of 1740-1812-1918 years, was identified (1912-1924) some 7 breeds of the Romanian Walachian phyletic group, of sheep breeds and in some gubernyias the Romanian Tsigai breed. It seems that from the present Moldavian Republic to the rivers Bug and Dnieper the sheep production was of sedentary type, connected with some local Romanian inhabitants. It see also that over the Dnieper the breed presence was connected also with the transhumance practiced up to 1918 by the Transylvanian Romanian transhumance shepherds, some of them organizers after 1918 Romanian of sheep breeds association in Crimea and North Caucasus area. The official statistics from 1925 year registered in the former SSSR (without Bassarabia) some 259,324 Romanians. Different historical sources estimated a higher number (1.2 million, 600,000 just in Siberia) A possible explanation of founded sheep and man presence in this area can be the fact that it was the antique borderland between Thraco-Dacia and Scythia border, and the Walachian (=Romanian) sheep were the sheep of Thraco-Geto-Dacs, Romanian ancestors. Transylvanian transhumance and Romanian from SE Romania introduced later Tsigai in North Pontic, this breed being introduced later by Roman in Carpathian bend.

Key words: ethnogenesis, immigrant, indigenous, pastoralism, shepherding, transhumance

INTRODUCTION

The Wallachian sheep are raised on a wide area which includes 17 districts in South and South-East Russia, starting from Bessarabia up so South Ural” present day South Ukraine and Southern Russia) – M.F.Ivanov 1924

In 641 the official language of the former East Roman empire changed from Latin to Greek. The former vanquish able became vanquisher, the East Roman Empire become Byzantine and the area was invaded by aggressive migratory people. The Roman, Latin inhabitants of the former East Roman Empire have disappeared from the history as Romans and appeared, after some 400 years as Walachians. The main place of long-term ethnic salvation for them were the refuges, the marginal, isolated places, such as the mountains, forests, meadow and even the steppe, where shepherding was a major occupation for subsistence. The north-Pontic steppe, place of invasions, was seemingly such a refuge. Iorga was probably right that Romania was a Carpathian sheepfold in the way of wolves. The former Romans contributed and still do, not supported by the Romanian state, as Cavalli Sfoza (2000), Matley (1968) and others demonstrates, to the ethno genesis of the SE Europe people. That is the explanation of attention given by “Romanian and foreign scholars, historians, philologists, linguists, ethnographers, sociologists to pastoralism (I. Rusu). Hence the synonymy of the notions of shepherd and Walachian, which existed in the Greek and Serbian languages, the malicious speculations of the Tzar Nicolay II that “Romania (“Walachia”) is neither a nation, nor a state, just a profession”; hence the attempts to mistake transhumance for nomadism or for migration, with the clear purpose to contest the rights of the Romanians to a country, or at least of ethnic minority, hence the trend to change the name of the sheep breeds from SE Europe – a proof of the presence of Romanians as indigenous people.

The Romanian pastoralism was the object of many studies, but perhaps sometimes
subjectively or insufficiently presented by some historians. We mention as important studies the research of S. Opreanu (1931) and N. Dragomir (1938) on the transhumance of the Romanian shepherds to southern Tsarist Russia, which should have been compulsory in the animal husbandry list of references. They supplied documentation to Muller (1938) for his classical transhumance map in Europe, map continued by Braudel (1985) and Grigg (1974) Drăgănescu (1995 2006). Botzan (1990, 1998) also showed the real routes of transhumance and an imaginary transhumance travel. Golopenţia et al. (2006) identified east of Bug River numerous cases in which the Romanians have preserved their language, or at least their traditions. Dolha, Wikipedia synthesized many interesting historic aspects connected with the presence of Romanians in the Transnistrian area, which is in North Black Sea area. The complication of all these studies was that their authors were not familiar with the problems of sheep production (breeds, management, products etc.).

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

After we analysed some aspects of shepherding, sheep breeds and people in the Balkans, the longest Romano-Thracian admixture, the purpose of this study is to continue the studies based on documents and discuss some aspects of pastoralism, sheep breeds, people, language, genes, in the north-Pontic steppes, as the presence of Romanian shepherds, Romanian sheep breeds, was noticed in this area and in antique borderland between Thraco-Geto-Dacia and Scythia.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Some geographical, historical and genetic information on the NE Black Sea steppe

The NE Black Sea steppe includes the coastal area from the Dniester River perhaps to the Dnepr even Don river. The area was for some millennial in antiquity a borderland between Thrakia (Dacia) and -Scythia, and a gate for Middle Ages entrance in Central Europe. It is noted (Wikipedia) that the Tyragetae (a Getae Thracian tribe) inhabited the area around the River Dniester (called "Tyras" in ancient documents) and from 56 AD, the Romans occupied the coastal area around the city of Tyras for nearly four centuries. Considered by Braudel (1985) as seemingly uninhabited, the settlement in the NE Black Sea is older that any recorded historical document. Really a lot of turmoil quoted by Dolha and mentioned in Wikipedia (occupied by Moldavians, by the Tartars, by Turks, the uprisings of the Slavs, whose groups of soldiers also included Moldavians). The residents whoever they were, needed food and the old local sheep breeds can give some indications on the real old local inhabitants. The incoming of the Russians who occupied with military forces in 1740 the area between the Dnepr and the Bug, occupied Crimea in 1772, arrived on the Dniester in 1792, occupied in 1812 half of the Moldavian country (Bessarabia (1812), imposed systematically their language to settlers and local people and assured some political stability and more information, perhaps with some subjectivity.

The paleogenetic research of the human’s populations from the area can reveal interesting aspects. It seems however that the Romanian scientists do not pay enough attention to this subject, fact who support some incorrect historical speculations. “In comparison with other European ethnic groups, it is comparatively hard (Andrada Dacian 2012) to find detailed data on Romanian DNA”. Nevertheless, she find the following estimates for the frequencies of Y-DNA haplogroups among Romanian people: 7.4% E, 5.6% G, 22.2% I or I2, 5.6% J, 20.4% R1a, 13% R1b. “Haplogroup I is also common in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Serbia, in Croatia, in Sardinia, and in Scandinavian countries. Some of these peoples, especially Sardinians and Serbs, are believed to primarily descend from among the earliest European settlers, prior to successive waves of new immigrations from the Near East. Haplogroup I2a1b is found in especially high frequencies in northeastern Romania,
Moldova, and central Ukraine. She tried to parse out ethnic Romanians in Family Tree DNA’s "Romania" group. As far as I can tell, for non-Jewish non-Hungarian non-German non-Roma ethnic Romanians their Y-DNA haplogroups include E1b1b1, G, I1, I2a, Q, and R1b1a2. This is in line with the expectations from the frequencies above. Their mtDNA haplogroups include H, H7, I, J, K1c1, M, U4, and U5.

For some studies of Romanians we note the followings.

Alexandru Varzari (2007) et al performed an analysis of 12 binary autosomal markers in samples from six Dniester-Carpathian populations: two Moldavian, one Romanian, one Ukrainian and two Gagauz populations. The analyses allowed a distinction between Balkan-Carpathian (Macedonians, Romanians, Moldavians, Ukrainians and Gagauzes) and eastern Mediterranean (Turks, Greeks and Albanians) population groups.

G. Cardos et al (2004) performed an analysis of skeletal remains of some old Thracian populations from SE of Romania, dating from the Bronze and Iron Age in order to show their contribution to the foundation of the modern Romanian genetic populations.

[...] Computing the frequency of common point mutations of the present-day European population with the Thracian population has resulted that the Italian (7.9%), the Albanian (6.3%) and the Greek (5.8%) have shown a bias of closer genetic kinship with the Thracian individuals than the Romanian and Bulgarian individuals (only 4.2%). [...] So far they just supposed, that the old Thracian populations would have been able to contribute to the foundation of the Romanian modern genetic pool and supposed that more mtDNA sequences from Thracian individuals are needed in order to perform a complex objective statistical analysis.

Rodewald et al. studied the genetic relationships at mitochondrial level, old human populations from Romania who have shown closer genetic relationship to Turks of Thracian origin, while modern Romanians were closer to modern Bulgarian, Italian, Greek and Spanish populations (“Moldavian”, Romanian, Ukrainian Gagauz), compared with the Southeast Europe found small genetic differences between them. The observed homogeneity suggests either a very recent common ancestry or a strong gene flow between them.

Concerning the local sheep breeds, about which we will speak, we note that the Walachian is a Thracian sheep, introduced there some two millennia BC from Mesopotamia, where it was supposedly created some two millennia earlier. Walachian breeds, that is Romanian, group of sheep breeds was named in literature Zackel, the German name of. Corkscrew Horns Walachian breed.

Local sheep breeds in north-Pontic are- Romanian breeds

Studying the animal production of 19th and 20th centuries in the south-western steppes of Ukraine, Borinevici (1925) shows that in that area he identified the following sheep breeds: Voloh (Pârnaie)*, Țsigai, Țuşcă (or Moldavian, as Dobrohotov said), Karakul, Merinos etc. Table 1 shows their proportion in the former Odessa district of that time, which actually included parts from several others former districts (Cherson, Tavrici, Podolsk).

The great scientist P.N.Kuleşov (1922), cited by M.F.Ivanov (1924) had drawn attention to the fact that actually, the correct name of the Voloh sheep is Walachian, and the Moldavian Țușca is clearly included in Romanian Țurcana (Walachian) breed and, Borinevici attested that it arrived, same as the Voloh sheep, from Bessarabia. It is obvious that the Walachian, Țuşcă and Tsigai are Romanian breeds and, they were not raised only in Odessa district only.

The Voloh, (Walachian) breeds shows clearly that they were Romanian. The Oxford dictionary shows that Wallach is a “member of a population speaking Romanian, population widely spread in south-eastern Europe, mainly in Romania, normally known today as Romanians”.

By an elementary mistake, which the scientists don’t understand, or don’t want to understand, these sheep breeds are called Zackel.
Table 1. Proportion of the Romanian sheep breeds and the stock of sheep in Odessa district in 1923 (data by A.A. Borinevici 1925)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total number of sheep*</th>
<th>Breed, %</th>
<th>Other breeds (Merinos, Karakul)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tsigai</td>
<td>Ciuşca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wallachian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total Tsigai + Ciuşca + Wallachian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Odesa Gubernia</td>
<td>155 504</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>45.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19.54</td>
<td>67.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bălţi**</td>
<td>23 355</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>71.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>75.11</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>24.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zinoviev**</td>
<td>33 256</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>78.61</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>6.44</td>
<td>85.25</td>
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<td>14.75</td>
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<td>Pervomaisk</td>
<td>11 407</td>
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<td>14.89</td>
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<td>17.56</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>67.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Odesa</td>
<td>13 631</td>
<td>17.17</td>
<td>47.86</td>
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<td></td>
<td>24.17</td>
<td>89.20</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niccolaev</td>
<td>26 052</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>54.36</td>
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<td>20.04</td>
<td>77.42</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>12.58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cherson</td>
<td>42 803</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40.79</td>
<td>46.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>53.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*of the total 812 027 sheep recorded at the 1923 sheep census
**included probably between 1925-1940 in the former Transnistrian Moldavian Republic which existed at that time within the USSR.

Zackel is the German for the name which Linnaeus gave to a breed from another phylogenetic group of breeds, O. a. strepsiceros, (strepsiceros = zackel = straight, pointed horns), the sheep which Buffon, then Darwin called Walachian, correctly named Corkscrew Walachian (Valaşca Vitoroga) by the Serbians, wrongly named Raţca (Racka) by the Hungarians and Romanians, which means Serbian and which belonged to the group of sheep descending from the former Egyptian sheep.

Stimulated by the quality of the „Voloh” sheep, which he had seen at the Imperial agricultural exhibition from 1912, M. F. Ivanov conducted extensive research on this breed, publishing an article (1924) and a monograph. He found that the breed was raised in 17 districts from the south and south-east of the former empire and it had 5 sub-breeds described in 1950 (also in the Romanian edition of his book). The districts with the largest number of Walachian sheep were: Herson, Tavrig, Ekaterinoslav, Don, Voronej, Stavropol, Astrahan, Cuban. Lower stocks were found in Orlov, Harkov, Kursk, Riazan, Penza, Tambog, Saratov, Samara, Oremburg. The Walachian breed has been replaced by absorption with the Merino in almost all its former area. It is presently reared only in Northern Caucasus (Dimitriev and Ernst 1989). Şoimaru (Reniţă 2006) shows that even in our days in the Krasnodar area from this region there are 8 villages inhabited preponderantly by Romanians.

Other two breeds for leather from Ukraine - Sokolki (brown + black) and Reşetilov (black), from the regions of Poltava, Harkov and Dnepropetrovsk are presented as resembling to Țușca, therefore to Țurcana, originating probably from brown and black Țurcana sheep existing in Romania too. The Sokolki sheep display chronic tympanum disorder in the homozygous lambs (Dimitriev and Ernst 1989). Cooperation with Ukraine would probably be useful to preserve the Romanian brown and black Țurcana sheep, as well as the Grey Steppe breed.

The new breeds, Mountain Ukrainian and Carpathian Ukrainian are obviously, with changed names, the Maramureș Țurcana and Bucovina Țurcana.

The five "types" of Walachian sheep presented by Ivanov were clearly different in terms of development and body conformation, economic features. There are two factors which explain this variation: 1. Țurcana breed of sheep is not a uniform breed, an actual breed, rather a complex of emergent breeds (Drăgănescu 2004); 2. In Russia it evolved influenced by selection and by the cross with some local breeds, as mentioned by Ivanov too. The “purest” type, according to Ivanov, is the steppe Walachian sheep, which was reared mainly in North Caucasus, Don, Astrakhan, being presently conserved in North Caucasus. The Russians also use the Romanian terms for some dairy products („brânză”, ”caşcaval”), and sheep milking in the north-east Pontic area has been introduced and practiced just by
the Romanians; the author, who was wearing in 1949 in Russia a homespun suit was surprised by a North Caucasian Russian who recognised the fabric as being homespun, saying that in his village they produce exactly the same fabric (mixture of white and black Tsigai wool)

**How and when did the Romanian breeds arrive to the North-Pontic steppes becoming autochthonous breeds?**

“The flow of colonists arrived here, in the southern steppes, from north and west. Different sheep breeds came along with the people”

A.Borinevici, 1925, p 71

Ivanov (1950) said that “The Walachian sheep descend from the thick tail sheep brought to southern Russia from Asia, more than sure through Wallachia. This explains the name of the Walachian sheep (p. 163). The great scientist has two flaws in his statement. First, the sheep descended from the long, thick-tailed sheep (o. plathyura), but they actually belong to dolichur sheep, with long, thin tail. The second flaw is that he avoids saying how, by whom and when have the sheep been brought (they didn’t come by themselves!).

Logically speaking, the Walachian sheep (“Voloh”) is called so, because it came, as Kuleşov says, cited by Ivanov (1924), from Asia through Wallachia (the 5th edition seemingly avoids to say „through Wallachia”), because it was the sheep of Wallachian people, who lived there before other people who came later. Borinevici (1925), wrote that the Wallachian sheep came from Bessarabia, and Dobrohotov wrote that it “had unknown origin”. If the Walachian breed would have arrived to southern Russia after the empire was installed, it is very probably that he Russian scientists would have known its origin.

How did the Romanian breeds arrive to the North-Pontic steppes?

The explanation of the presence of the Romanian breeds in the north-east Pontic steppes might be a triple one: (1) importation; (2) transhumance from the Romanian countries and (3) presence of Romanian inhabitants in this area from ancient times. The first hypothesis is dismissed from the beginning. There were no imports of Țurcană and Țigaie sheep in the former Russian empire, which came to the area only in the 18th and 19th centuries (it occupied Crimea in 1772 and arrived on the Dniester in 1792). We are left with the other two hypotheses.

**Transhumance.** Transhumance, the spectacular and efficient system of animal production, sheep mainly, presented for the first time by Varro (116-27 B.C.), was clearly practiced by the shepherds from the 4 centres from the Southern Carpathians (Mărginimea Sibiului, Bran) and from the Bending Carpathians (Şâcele, Covasna-Breţcu) towards Crimea, North Caucasus (Opreanu 1931, Dragomir 1938, Botzan 1996, Drăgănescu 1997 ș.a.).

The sheep herds crossed the Carpathians, crossed the Prut at Galaţi-Reni, crossed the Dnester at Tighina, the Bug at Nicolaev, the Dniepr at Cherson, entering Crimea; from there they were travelling on the shore of the Azov Sea through Taganrog, Rostov towards the Caucasus (Krasnodar, Terek) and Volga (Astrakhan). The travel from Bessarabia to Crimea took about 25 days, and from Crimea to Astrakhan about 6 weeks.

Opreanu (1931) estimated that each year, about one million sheep were wintering in Crimea, and at the mouth of the Dniepr, some 300 herds. The village of Poiana Sărată only, had 30 sheep herds in Crimea. A shepherd from Sibiu, who moved to Mosdok in the North Caucasus, had about 40,000 sheep. The Țigaie sheep arrived early from the Bending Carpathians to the Romanians from the north-east Pontic steppes, where it was noticed by Borinevici (1924). It was further introduced in Crimea and in the Northern Caucasus by transhumance, by the shepherds from the Bending Carpathians. The arrival of the Tsigai sheep to Crimea and North Caucasus is clearly depicted by Opreanu, but not by Ivanov (1928 p 226). Here is what Ivanov says: “The Tsigai sheep from Crimea were brought by the Transylvanian shepherds from Romania, shepherds who, before the First World War, were coming here each year with their sheep herds from Transylvania and were grazing on the pastures from the Iaila Mountains, leased from the Tatars.
Late in autumn they were returning to their country with their sheep. Some of these shepherds were wintering here, leasing hill pastures from the Tartars. The 1914 war, which started in summer, caught them in Crimea. They had to remain in Crimea and keep rearing sheep there. When the pasture area from Crimea narrowed because the region was colonized, part of the shepherds moved to the northern Caucasus. The experimental station from Ascania Nova bought 100 Tsigai sheep from a Transylvanian shepherd.

The Romanian shepherds had to organize associations in the newly established USSR. In 1929-1930 there were 6 Romanian associations in Rostov on Don, for the Northern Caucasus, Salsk, Poltava, Taganrog, Mariapol, Simferopol, some Romanian-Russian associations in Krasnodar, Stavropol, Borozdnica etc and a Union of the Transylvanian Shepherds in Crimea. In 1929, this Union was liquidated and together with the sheep confiscated from other shepherds (Socolov 1960, p. 154), the authorities have established the first elite sovhoz for Tsigai sheep in the former USSR, Sovhoz No.8 Orlov, Rostov Region. 

Existence of Romanian inhabitants in the north-Pontic steppes

The second hypothesis regarding the penetration of the Romanian sheep breeds in the north-Pontic steppes is the existence of an old Romanian population in this area, as suggested by Borinevici (1925), Opreanu (1935) and documented by Golopenția (2006). According to the 1925 census studied by Olsiewicz (1930), there were 259,324 Romanians, the third minority as population, after the Jews (1,576,769 and Germans (393,924). As shown in Table 2, they were living mainly in the rural area of the southern steppes (244,831) in the North Caucasus (10,108) and in the Donet Basin (9,328). Some researchers (Smochină, 1939; Diaconescu, 1942) consider that the 1926 census actually underestimated the number of Romanians, which they estimated to about 1.2 millions in the former USSR. They had given the figures of the 1773, 1834, 1897 and 1900 censuses, which were showing larger Romanian populations in some areas. Şorban (2001) estimated that there were 600,000 Romanians in Siberia! The Romanians living in this area didn’t enjoy the minimal rights of a national minority. The author had met a Russian in Harcov, whose name was Niculescu.

Moment of the Romanian shepherds spreading in the north-Pontic steppes

Oprean (1931) considers that the Romanian shepherds had spread in southern Russia a few centuries back, being the first inhabitants of the north-Pontic steppes.
This assertion cannot rely, however, on the tradition from the Mărginime, according to Dragomir, (1938). There are no written documents showing the moment when the Romanian sheep and shepherds had penetrated the north-eastern steppes. The fact is normal for an area which experienced a lot of turmoil (occupied by the Tartars, Turks, the uprisings of the Ukrainians, whose groups of soldiers also included Moldavians, the incoming of the Russians who occupied in 1740 the area between the Dnepr and the Bug and the Bug-Nistru area in 1792). The area was seemingly uninhabited, as Fernand Braudel (1985), noted. He wrote: (in the 16th century) “southern Russia was a deserted area crossed only by the nomadic cohorts of the Tartars from Crimea who were also riding towards northern Caucasus, towards the banks of the Caspian Sea and towards Moscow, which they had burned in 1572...”. However, it was not possible to be a deserted area. Both the tatars and the Turks, and the Russians later, needed something to use the local vegetation and to supply food, sheep meat, particularly. Obviously, this someone, were the Romanian shepherds living in this area, but there was no interest to mark this even in history.  

The Russian-Polish treaty of 1577 allowed the Romanian shepherds to cross the Dnistru

River and graze their sheep herds on the north-Pontic steppes. As Cantemir wrote (1716), the Turks had forbidden the Tartars to take the Moldavians in slavery. The Russian scientists do not name the transhumant Romanian shepherds “Wallachians”, rather “Transylvanians” which means that the term of Wallachian for sheep was used before the 1800s. This term was used in the Genovese strongholds from Crimea (Caffa, Gota, Mangup 1270-1475) to indicate not only their defenders, but also some of their inhabitants (Brun 1). Among the few historic documents which provide data on the beginning of the Romanian presence in the north-eastern Pontic area are information regarding: (1) the Romanian names existing in the registers of the Genovese notaries from Crimea in late 18th century (Brătianu 1925-1999 p.15); (2) the data regarding the Romanian soldiers recruited from the Transylvanian shepherds, who defended the Caffa garrison in 1463-1470 (Meteş, cited by Botzan 1990, p 102); (3) the soldiers of Ștefan the Mare who defended Caffa, Mangupul (1475); (4) existence in the documents from Caffa stronghold from Crimea, in 1290, 1496, 1470, of several Romanian names, probable (879) of Transylvanian Romans, because they were recorded as Hungarians. (Brătianu 1925..1999); a chronicle of Nestor in the 10th century cited a state of the Bolohoveni (Volohoveni) in the area of Kiev, Volhinia-Podoli, destroyed in 1241 by Danil
Romanovici, lord of Kiev (Smocină 1939). The Kazakh army from Ukraine used a large number of Romanians; among the 15 deputies of Bogdan Khmelnitski were Toader Lobodă, from Pereislav, Nestor Pușcaru from Poltava, Burlă from Gdeansk, Pavel Apostol from Mirhorod, Dumitraşco Race. One of the lad rulers from 1577 was named Potcoavă. During the rule of Duca Vodă (1681) the area of Ukraine the right of the Dnepr was incorporated in Moldavia (Iorga 1913, cited by Smocină 1939). The co-habitation of Cumans and the Romanians between the Don and the Dnepr, in the 12th century (H. Stahl) is another fact that can contribute to the clarification of the ancient presence of the Wallachian sheep in this region. We add the opinion of Scepkin, cited by Kuleșov (1860, p.140), according to whom, the “Tsigai sheep existed in Russia before the Merino sheep have been brought in”, therefore, before 1802. Among the **animal husbandry facts** which argue in favour of the ancient presence of the Romanians in the north-Pontic area are: 1. The large number of “Voloh” breeds formed in the north-Pontic area and their wide dispersal (17 districts) **presumes several centuries of existence in those areas of their owners, whose name they bear**; the transhumant shepherds from Sibiu didn’t recognize at the end of the 19th century, as Dragomor notes., in the “voloski” sheep the Turcan, Walachian sheep from Romania, and they called them “Russian sheep”. That means that this Walachian breeds were created in Russian area much before 19th century, there was enough time to genetically modify them, if initially were similar to the 19th century Sibiu sheep, or they were from their introduction different from the Sibiu Woloshian (Tsurcana).

2. The number of Tsigai sheep was much too large if the breed was introduced just after 1812 year, when the transhumance shepherds were granted officially the permission to pass the new borders of Russia, when they occupied Bessarabia. In 1894, Kuleșov (p.129) estimated that in Russia there were about 700,000-800,000 Tsigai sheep. The first Russian work on the Tsigai sheep was published before 1900 (Dereaghin H.H. Țigașskie ovțevodstvo ed II-1896). All these facts invalidate clearly the more recent statements according to which the “Tsigai sheep have been imported from Romania in 1914 through the Transylvanian shepherds” (Dimitriev and Ernst 1989), showing, at least, a poor documentation of the authors. The Tsigai sheep had entered Russia no later than the moment Bessarabia has been occupied (1812). In the counties from southern Bessarabia, as Scepkin (1860) wrote, cited by Kuleșov, “there is no village or even household without Tsigai sheep”. The Tsigai sheep were not reared in Bessarabia only. Also Scepkin indicated their presence in the districts of Herson and Tavrici, being reared by Bulgarians (?) and Moldavians, while in the “households of the Russians this breed is hardly accepted”. It is therefore possible that the Tsigai sheep had entered the southern steppe of Ukraine even before 1812, brought in by the western “colonists” mentioned by Borinevici.

**Toponymy** The old name of the places and breeds may show, as Brătianu (1988) mentioned, situations in which a people comes in place of another people, or situations in which the language of part of the population ends by assimilating the language of the other part of the population. Such situations might exist in the north-Pontic Toponymy. This matter is not an easy one because the old toponymy is usually wiped out.

**CONCLUSIONS**

It is perhaps correct to think, as Cavalli-Sforza (2000) did, that actually the **language sometimes extended by the force of domination**, as it was done in SE Europe, doesn’t actually document the people, its genes, its ethnogenesis. It is possible that the differences between neighbouring nations are much smaller genetically than linguistically. It is also possible that the Romanian language had been spoken also in many others area of the North Sea steppe, not just in the former Moldavian Transnistrian republic of years 1925-1940. Despite the deliberate action to
wipe out the Romanian language, it still exists, as Şoimaru noticed and as Golopenţia (2006) clearly demonstrated. Iorga was right to say that we have conquered land with our sheep, but we not able to keep it politically.

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