

EUROPEAN CARPATHIANS VS MARGINAL CARPATHIANS

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Summary: The author presents the geographical situation of Dacia (the present geographers consider the north of Carpathians being the center of Europe) and the political situation between the period of Augustus and Justinian.

Moesia and Dacia were Danubian border provinces on the Danube: Augustinian Moesia and Trajanian Dacia, respectively Aurelian and Constantinian ones. Over 600 years Roman and Roman-Byzantine rules had grounded the Latin language in the Carpathians and at the Danube, and in other order the Roman *forma mentis*.

The solid contacts with the Latinity were strengthened during the paleochristian period in south-eastern Europe (there were 14 bishoprics and 40 paleochristian basilicas along the Danube).

Latin and Christian scholars, as Nicetas of Remesiana, Dionysius Exiguus and John Cassian have had an important contribution, which should not be disregarded, to strengthen the relationship (definitively Christian one) between Dacia and the western Latin part of Europe.

Keywords: Carpați, Te Deum, Dionysius Exiguus, John Cassian, Danube

It is widely known that the landmark of the center of Europe was set by the present „surveyors” of the continent in the north of the Carpathian Mountains (Ukraine). However the Carpathians and the whole Carpathian-Danubian area are geo-politically considered as part of the Southeast Europe, with the precise indication: from the *north* of the Balkan Mountains chain.

From the Romanian Carpathians guarding like a huge bird the „nest” of Transylvania, the Carpathian lands spread their wings in the three horizons, in three huge geographical and geo-morphological amphitheatres:

A. The eastern amphitheater: the Eastern Carpathians, the foothills of Moldova, high plain and low plain (the buried soil) of the Romanian „Mesopotamia”, up to the high seafont of the Nistru river;

B. The western amphitheater: the Western Carpathians, the foothills, the high plain and low plain (former wetland) of the Romanian Western Plain up to the Tisza’s low beach and

C. The southern amphitheater: the Southern Carpathians, the foothills, the high plains and low plain (Bărăganul), the Romanian Plain, to the shine of the descending Danube, downstream (as the poet V. Voiculescu wrote – on „the descending Danube, downstream”) and even beyond the Danube, on the southern shore of the former Moesian piedmonts, far into the northern porch of the Balkans. Areal strongly supported by the south Danube *spur* of the Măcinului horst, between the Danube Delta and the northern Balkan piedmonts: it is Dobrudja, the *Dobrudja* in the south of the Danube, famous Romanian province.

On this *land* blessed by God and the Destiny, as there seems to be only one alike, that of Canada – of course, the latter huge in size, is, in our opinion, the place where the Romanian people was born – the Romanian ethnic nation, today even a *political nation*, truncated, because Bessarabia is missing, as we refer to the one from December 1, 1918.

It is the land of the *Romania from the Carpathians* and the Danube, the land of the Romanian language, Latin language spoken today by the Romanians, with all the Latin race consciousness – from the Romans we come, the seal of *Rome* in the suggestive words of Nicolae Iorga, and not suggestively, but really the only neo-Latin people that kept the Roman name, the Romans' name (*cives romani*) until today, as a sign over the centuries and especially the Latin, Western *forma mentis* never broken up to this day. But Rome is not on the Tanais (Don), nor on the Volga, but on the Tiber, in central Europe. To say that not only geographically, but demographically, geo-politically, humanly, the Carpathians are European is not only a scientific finding, but rather an unavoidable political and cultural reality which we like it or not, must be RESPECTED.

In this space – of today's Eastern Romania – many interests have interfered over time, some temporary, others persisting for centuries. It was rarely, however, that the principalities that reached the Danube's delta and the Carpathians got to dominate the *whole space*. There were *always* marginal dominions (sided, we might say, metaphorically), so *marginal Carpathians*, from *their* point of view. Here they are:

A. Dobrudja shore, the Left Pont, as it's sometimes called, is crowded with the Greek cities: Histria, Tomis, Callatis, Tyras, Dionysopolis. After Aristotle's **Politics** in Histria, 2500 years ago there was a *democratic regime*. Some cities were part – marginally – of the Athenian marine empire, the marine League of Delos. The situation was perpetuated – as a domination – in the Hellenistic period too;

B. Augustus – his generals incorporated the Dacian territory between the Danube and the Balkans (Moesia) in the Roman Empire, a century before the north-Danubian Dacia. Trajan, turned Dacia (the known areas) in 106 into the new Carpatho-Danubian imperial province, into the PROVINCE DACIA, the last massive Roman conquest (of a country) in Europe (until his death in 117 AD, he conquered in Asia the provinces – Armenia, Assyria, Mesopotamia), Dacia remained, slightly modified by Hadrian, Roman until 271-275, when Aurelian organized in the south of the Danube – the *Aurelian Dacia*. However, Dacia always remained a *marginal* part of the empire, but the matrix of a strong and unshakable Latinity. Untouched to this day by the cruel bite of time.

C. In the 600 years (15-602 AD) the Carpatho-Danubian Latinity went through two stages, the first *from Augustus to Aurelian* and the second phase in 275-602, the Roman-Byzantine stage. Emperor Constantine the Great made – from our point of view, of course – three great works, symbolical *immortal* constructions:

a) *St. Peter's Cathedral* in Rome (under the present Renaissance cathedral);

b) The new capital of the Eastern Roman Empire (NB: Roman-Byzantine!), Constantinople and

c) The stone bridge on the Danube, between Oescus and Sucidava (Celei) that bounded the Constantinian Dacia from the north of the Danube to the Roman-Byzantine Empire. The territories from the north of the Danube, economically important and the defense line – *along Danube* – of Constantinople's defense against new attempts – „the *German flow*” (the *Visigoths*, the *Ostrogoths*!) and the „*Slavic flow*”, the latter causing the „loss” of the Danube, of the border on the river. Not long after the fall of the Danube, the LATIN Roman-Byzantine Empire, became a Greek language Empire, still multiethnic, but with this dominant language (in the military, governmental, cultural fields), so the Byzantine Empire. But in spite of the firm Roman-Byzantine Empire's domination at the Danube for yet 300 years, the Dacian provinces either from the south or north of the Danube were still marginal. The *Carpathians* were still marginal, like during the Greek-Hellenistic rule of the Romans and now, of the Roman-Byzantine Empire.

Was there a change *though*? Yes!

The change was huge, just as the *Latinization* of the world of the Carpathian - Danubian territories – the northern Balkanic ones – it was a

fundamental, and so far, final change – in terms of culture and conscience – the Christianization of the Latin and *non*-Latin world in these territories. Christianity whose foundations were laid still in the apostolic age (while Dacia from the north of the Danube for 100 years, between 15-106 AD was *still* free), and now the unmistakable realities of Christianity and church organization were founded – 15 bishoprics on the Danube and in Dobrudja and over 40 early Christian basilicas. And these realities were no longer marginal, because Christianity was unique – CATHOLIC = UNIVERSAL (naturally without the known churches which were more or less Monophysite) and the area of the south of the Danube (ever since the time of the apostles, Andrew, Paul, Titus), as all the Balkans (*via Egnatia*) had become a second paleo-Christian area (after Israel and Syria-Antioch). Starting here Apostle Paul goes to Rome by sea, while Apostle Peter goes by land (he was in Epirus), to decisively build the *Roman* Christianity. The Carpathians become again European Carpathians. Let us remember with reverence the great SCHOLARS that DOBRUDJA, the Southeast of the former Dacia – gave to the Christian world and we stress to the Western European Christian civilization:

A. *Niceta of Remesiana* left us the *Te-Deum* (*Thee, O God, We Praise*) sung today during religious services by over 2,500,000,000 people (yes, two and a half billion Christians);

B. *Dionysius Exiguus* (Dionysius the Small), *author* of the *Christian* calendar, that we have to this day, since the time of Jesus Christ, for almost the whole of humanity; and

C. *John Cassian*, who left to know the Christian world, reaches *Massalia* (Marseilles) where he founded and structured the Western *monasticism*. But John Cassian is *Cassiodorus*'s teacher, and through him (or through both of them) the medieval Western Christian civilization and culture is conceptually defined. This is not something to be taken lightly or to be overlooked. The current medievalists say it.

These *Christian*, ORIENTAL SCHOLARS – who contributed to the transformation of the European world into the WESTERN CHRISTIAN civilization are relevant for their work. They had gone from the *Carpathians*, from the Danube and the Carpathians, but the Danube was European, the Carpathians were "marginal", but through them they become fully *European*.

So, the *European Carpathians* (*geographically*), marginal in terms of imperial power, become *European* through the *Christian humanity*,

universal (= CATHOLIC) until the *Great Schism*, which was not *schism* as it is clearly known today.

The Scholars „of Dacia” aulicly made the connection with the royal Dacian La Tène (European like the Celtic one, of the old Germans and so, of the Slavs) and imposed a new Christian, medieval norm in the Medieval West. *Stressing*, if still necessary, the Latinity and the Christianity – first the paleo-Christianity – from the Carpathians and the Danube. Latinity = language and *forma mentis*, it means Christian western culture, even before a part of the West, it also means the European Carpathians, the Carpathians of the Romanian, Latin people. And this *Latinity* was not shallow (surviving during about 1000 years of Slavic domination – VI century – 1688 – the Bible from Bucharest) this Latin language of the Romanian nation, not of a part of the boyars = Boliari. *Antonio Bonfini* was right when he said that Romanians defended in their history - "more their language than their life", the Latin language of the Romanian peasants and shepherds spoken in their Carpathians, which were European *not* only geographically, but in spirituality too.