

# Bulgaria's Historical Rights to Dobrudja

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## I.

**Dobrudja. — Cradle of the first Bulgarian Kingdom. — From the time of Asparouch to Berlin Congress it has remained Bulgarian. — The thesis of Roumanian rule over the Dobrudja groundless. — The place called „Onglos“ is the northwestern corner of Dobrudja. — Bulgarian toponymy of Dobrudja before Asparouch. — The ancient bridge by Issaktcha, where probably Asparouch crossed the Danube. — The crossing of the Danube by Asparuch an extension of the Trans-Danubian Bulgaria, already founded by Kubrat.**

1. Dobrudja is the land within which, at the end of the VII<sup>th</sup> century, Asparouch founded the Bulgarian Cis-Danubian Kingdom.

Since then and until the fall of Bulgaria under Turkish rule, Dobrudja has remained a Bulgarian province, the political destiny of which is closely connected with that of the Bulgarian nation and the Bulgarian state.

On this point in the history of Dobrudja an issue has been raised in Roumanian historical literature. The Roumanian historian Hajdeu maintains that the Dobrudja before its fall under Turkish rule has been for thirty years under the rule of Wallachian voyvodes, that in 1372 Vladislav Bessarab had taken it by force of arms from the Bulgarian King Shishman, and that subsequently

the Turks conquered it not from the Bulgarians but from the Roumanians. (*Extension territoriale de Valachie jusqu'en 1400*).

This historical theory appears to be an invention, and is based on the false titles of some Wallachian voyvodes and on the keen imagination of the Roumanian chauvinistic writers. Thus is explained the fact that subsequently the Roumanian historian Yorga, himself a noisy Roumanian patriot, saw himself constrained to reduce somewhat these historical fictions to a claim of possible rule over Dobrudja by the voyvode Mircho. Speaking on this disputed point and accepting the thesis of Yorga, a third Roumanian historian and geographer — captain Jonescu, comes to this conclusion: In spite of all personal antipathy which a historian might naturally have against the Bulgarians, the documents and sources of the time prove to us that Muntenia (Wallachia) under Vladimir and Radu-Negru Bassarab never ruled Dobrudja, and that such a rule took place only after the year 1386 under the voyvode Mircho (see *Dobrudja at the Threshold of the XX<sup>th</sup> century — Dobrugea in pragul veacului XX-lea p. 549*).

In reality, however, even this moderation of Roumanian patriotism is far from the actual truth, because incontestable historical documents establish the fact, that after 1386 Dobrudja passed under the power of Ivankou, the son of Dobrotitch, who succeeded his father to the throne and who conjointly with Shishman waged war against the Turks during the years 1389—1390, when Bulgaria was finally conquered and when Silistra and all Dobrudja were subjected by the Turks. As we shall see below, the *chrysobulls* (charters) and titles of Mircho as ruler of Dobrudja, on which titles is

based the so-called Roumanian rule of this province, are, some of them ambiguous, others are explained by a mere participation of Mircho as an ally of Sultan Bayazet in the capture of Silistra during the years 1389—1390.

Of a subsequent rule of Dobrudja by Mircho after this date there is no evidence, for according to Roumanian sources, we see that in 1391 Mircho was banished to Brussa, as Bayazet's captive, and Wallachia was enrolled in the registers of the Porte as a vassal of Turkey.

As a Turkish vassal Mircho was set free in 1392, and in 1393 he invaded Turkey through Svishtov, but he was soon beaten and driven beyond the Danube by Bayazet.

Then comes the battle of Nicopolis in 1394. On account of some misunderstanding among the allies of Sigismund among whom Mircho also figured, the latter abandoned the campaign before the beginning of the battle of Nicopolis and surrendered to Bayazet.

In the same year 1394 the Bavarian, Schiltberger, who took part in the battle of Nicopolis and was taken captive by Bayazet, calls Dobrudja — "*the Haird Bulgaria*", and the Roumanian historian Yorga in his work "*Studii istorice*" p. 60 quotes Schiltberger in order to prove the existence of "*a Maritime Bulgaria extending to the Kylia mouth of the Danube*".

Finally, the Byzantine historian Chalcocondilas, speaking of Mircho and his epoch during the years 1396—1398, says: "The Wallachian country extends from Transylvania to the Black Sea and is bounded on the right by the Danube as far as the Black Sea, and on the left by Bogdania" (i. e. Moldavia).

Hajdeu himself, commenting on the incorrect interpretation of this quotation by Engel, says: "But who does not see that the Byzantine writer *speaks exclusively of the northern part of the Ister*? And had the matter concerned Bulgaria, Chalcocondilas would have said: "having as a boundary on the right the Balkans and on the left the Danube" (Hajdeu, *Historia critica a Românilor*, p. 4). So that independently of the fact that such a rule as is groundlessly ascribed to the Wallachian voyvode Mircho could not of itself create any historical rights of Roumania to Dobrudja, the alleged rule itself appears to be a fiction purposely invented to the detriment of historical truth.

Casting this false statement aside from its history Dobrudja appears in its true light a pure Bulgarian land and province throughout the entire long period — from the time of Asparouch down to the Berlin Treaty, because during the Turkish rule it was known and always counted as Bulgarian, and as an inseparable part of Bulgaria.

The Greek writers, especially Theophanus, who describe the coming and settling down of Asparouch in Dobrudja, say that this happened in the country called "*Oglos*", "*Olgos*", "*Onglos*", as the Bulgarians themselves called this country. Shafarik explains, as this is plain to everyone who knows the Bulgarian and Greek languages, that this designation is nothing but the Greek expression of the Bulgarian term *Ungle* or *Ugle*.

The fact that the Greek historians designate this country from the very first moment of the coming of Asparouch not with a Greek but a Bulgarian name, shows that this country had, until that time, no other name



and that the toponymy of Dobrudja was Bulgarian, or at least Slavic, before its invasion by Asparouch.

This circumstance is fully explained by the theory of the Scyth and Slav origin of the Bulgarians, which at the same time explains not only the Slavic toponymy of Scythic and Thracian lands, but also a series of unsolved and unexplained historical problems bearing on the prehistorical period of the Bulgarian state.

If this theory is accepted, Dobrudja will then be regarded as the land of our forefathers from time immemorial, because in the time of Herodotus it was the land of the Geti and the Scythi or Scyths; in the time of Ovid — the Geti and Sarmati, which are one and the same people; and later on, up to and after Asparouch, in the time of the decline of Rome, the weakening of Byzantium, and the regeneration of the Scytho-Thracian rule, the Bulgarians appear in the Greek annals to be of the same race as the Huns, Avars, Slavs, and other Scytho-Thracian peoples, which in concert or separately, wage constant wars for the establishment of their rule over the lands which Rome had conquered and Byzantium inherited.

2. The ancient Dobrudja or "Ungle" bears to this day traces of Asparouch's achievements and of the history of his settlement in the Dobrudja. The northern part of Dobrudja without the Danube delta has the form of a triangle, the north-western and eastern points of which bear the designation of "Boudjak". The local population calls also Boudjak the place embraced in the north-western and eastern angles of this triangle, the tops of which coincide to the north-west with the elevation 86 called "Boudjak", to the south with the village of Petchenyaga, and to the east with the village

Bey-Boudjak. Evidently the designation "Boudjak" has been handed down from the time of the Turkish rule. It has substantially the same meaning as the term "Ugle". This designation is neither arbitrary nor accidental, but definite expression of the geographical situation of the country which Asparouch occupied and in which he fortified himself after crossing the Danube. The fact that when Asparouch crossed the Danube the Greek annalists themselves call this country by its Bulgarian name shows that in this land, in spite of the Roman rule, the local population and language had preserved even during the Roman and Byzantine subjection their full sway.

By comparing the historical date which Teophanus gives with the country itself, and with the still preserved ancient Bulgarian trenches near the heights of Nicolitsel with a southeastern front, it can positively be affirmed that the angle in which Asparouch originally settled down is the north-western angle of Dobrudja.

The country itself, very hilly and mountainous, forms a natural fortress of "mountain heights", of which Theophanus speaks. There is no other country in Dobrudja like this, and the ditch which is about 15 kilometres long, and which encircles on three sides the passes leading to the interior at the north-western angle, shows that this is the Onglus of Theophanus occupied by Asparouch.

The town of Issaktcha is enclosed within the radius of this country, and at Issaktcha is the most convenient place for crossing the Danube. Just there the troops of Asparouch crossed the Danube and fortified themselves in the angle occupied by him. The well-known sociologist, Dr. E. Seliminsky, relates

that in his time, in 1840, there were discovered near Issaktcha the remains of an ancient bridge, which he considers to be the bridge of Darius, built about 600 B. C. It is, however, more probable that this bridge was the one built in the time of Asparouch, and not in the time of Darius, because it is incredible that a wooden bridge should for 2400 years preserve traces of its construction, and because it is known that the bridge of Darius was built on pontoons by his Sonian seamen, whereas Seliminsky relates that of the remains of this bridge in his time a good many wooden beams were taken out. Such a construction presupposes not only a temporary necessity, but also a vehical for constant intercourse with the opposite bank, where the Bulgarian Kingdom had already been organised by Koubrat.

From the investigations of our able archeologist, Mr. Carl Shkorpil, there is now no doubt, that the trenches of Nicolitsel, which the Roumanians call "Trajan's Wall", are Bulgarian, in the first place because they have the impress of the Bulgarian trench work of those times, with the same characteristic construction which is also seen in the trenches near Aboba-Pliscovo, and secondly, because they have a southern front, i. e., they are directed against an eventual attack on the part of Byzantine armies.

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## II.

**Struggles, movements, and attempts of Bulgarians before Asparouch to create an independent Kingdom in Dobrudja. — Kingdom of Irina in Dobrudja. — The revolts of Vitalian, Bulgara, and Dragan in Dobrudja and in Lower Mysia. — The wars of the Avars and the peace of Djurula. — Scytho-Thracian character of the Eastern Empire in the time of Justinian. — Achievements of Asparouch as the result of these struggles, and the political regeneration of the native population in the Dobrudja and Mysia. — Dobrudja the pantheon of our past.**

3. Before Asparouch, Attila's son — Irnik, founds in the Dobrudja, in the middle of the fifth century, a Hun-Bulgarian Kingdom semi-independent of the Eastern Empire. After the death of his father, the Hun state fell to pieces, and in the place of the united Hun people there arose the separate political and military organisations of Avars, Bulgarians and Slavs. The name of Slavs becomes subsequently the racial designation of all ancient Scytho-Thracian peoples and tribes. Together with the division of these peoples there takes place also the division between the three sons of Attila. The youngest of these, Irnik (Ernak or Hernak), whose name we find in the catalogue of Bulgarian Kings, found by Popoff, crosses the Danube as a friend and ally of the Empire and establishes his rule in the Dobrudja. This act of his is accounted for by his calm and peaceful character, which is attested by the fact, that in 466 he refuses to respond to his brother Denzerik (Dinzio or Dincho, according to the Gothic historian Jordanus) to commence jointly with him hostilities against Byzantium.

The subsequent fate of Irnik's Hun-Bulgarian Kingdom in Dobrudja is uncertain. But the revolt of the Thracian Vitalian in 514, with 60,000 Huns and Bulgarians, gathered in the Dobrudja and Lower Mysia, as well as a second revolt of the Bulgarians in the same country, which broke out in 538 under the leadership of the Bulgarian voyvodes Bulgar and Dragan, show that even after Irnik, Dobrudja remains the nucleus of the rising Bulgarian state on this side of the Danube.

The events transpiring after this are but the logical stages of the same political and social process, which is connected with the crossing of the Danube by Asparouch and the founding of the first Bulgarian Kingdom in Dobrudja. Such events are the wars of the Avars during the VI<sup>th</sup> century, the theatre of which is Dobrudja, and the first period of which ends with the peace concluded in 591 in Zurule, probably the present Djurulca, which place some historians think to be near Tchorlu in Thrace. As the Huns, so also the Avars, were an allied Scytho-Thracian people, composed of Huns, Bulgarians and Slavs. Their great deeds were but the deeds of our forefathers from prehistoric times. This fact explains the social and historical events which preceded the founding of Asparouch's Kingdom.

Of the Slavo-Bulgarian derivation of the Avar people speak the following two facts: 1. During the year 591 the Byzantine general Priscus crosses the Danube near Silistra and attacks the Slavs under Ardagast. The Avar king considers this a violation of the Zurule peace and declares war which was avoided after Priscus consents to set free the 5000 Slav captives, and to restore half of the booty taken from the Slavs. 2. During the year 597 the troops of Priscus begin new

military operations against the Avars and come in collision with a detachment of 1000 *Bulgarians*. "These barbarians", say Theophanus and Simothaca, "subjects of the Avar Kingdom, counting on the peace concluded, very quietly go on their way, when suddenly they are taken aback by the deadly arrows of the Romans (Byzantines). After an unsuccessful attempt of the Bulgarians to come to terms with the commander of the Imperial troops, they take position and kill the detachment that attacks them. Later the Avar King asked for explanations for this violation of the treaty and received the reply, that the collision was due to a mistake and ignorance on the part of the commander of the Byzantine troops."

4. Momentous for the time and work of Asparouch are also the following phenomena in the Eastern Empire itself during the time of Justinian. From a Roman the Empire was transformed into a Thracian, Scythian, Hun, "Barbarian Empire". After the success of Vitalian's revolt, Vitalian, son of Aspar becomes Byzantine general and consul of the Empire, who as such becomes blood-brother of Justinian, then a mere aspirant to the throne of his uncle Justin, who from an ordinary shepherd had become emperor. Both being of Thracian origin, the ceremony of blood-brotherhood was performed in accordance with the ancient Scythian custom, both drinking of one and the same cup of wine, mixed with their own blood.

Behind this blood-brotherhood Justinian conceals his hostile purpose, formed in consequence of his fear lest Vitalian should supplant him as heir to the throne, which he considered imperilled by the fame and great political influence of Vitalian. After thus getting every suspicion removed, Justinian hires assassins, who one

evening murder Vitalian, as he was going out of the palace. After his death Justinian assumes the post of imperial consul, as well as leader of the so-called "blue party", which was the party of the native population of the Empire, that is, the party of the Thracians, Scythians, Huns, and Slavs. The adherents of this party at that time never let pass an opportunity to manifest everywhere and in every way their national aspirations and peculiarities. They begin to dress their hair in Hun fashion and to let their beards grow long like the Scythians. Justinian himself followed their example, and Procopius reproached him for bearing himself like a "barbarian".

Thus Rome loses in the East at the time of the Thracian dynasties its influence and dominion, and at the time of Asparuch the Eastern Empire assumes more and more a Scytho-Thracian physiognomy, which prepared the way for the establishment of a Scytho-Thracian Kingdom in the Balkans. The political traditions of the state institutions of the Empire, however, constituted an insurmountable obstacle to any change in the political order; for the successful carrying out of such a change an external power was required, a power that would do away with everything that the violence and the tyrannical Roman rule had succeeded to create and establish in the Balkan Peninsula. This power which unites in itself the already awakened national consciousness of the native population, as well as its aspirations for political independence, makes its appearance in the Bulgarians under Asparouch, who after the political consolidation of the Bulgarians beyond the Danube, crosses to the right bank, in order to continue the work of liberating the then oppressed Scytho-Thra-

cian peoples, and to accomplish that political restoration in the Balkan Peninsula which really began in the Danubian lands with the flight of Aurelian from Dacia in 275.

At this juncture events were fast crowding each other. Rome was going, but together with the menacing rising up of all those "Danubian barbarians" over the political grave upon which Rome had grown, Hellenism also rose up. Behind the state traditions of the Empire and the proud designation of Romans the Greeks concealed their aspirations to inherit the Roman dominion over the Thracians, the Scythians, and the numerous other nations created by them, whose names fill this epoch of political ferment. This was the only serious resistance Asparouch had to encounter, and the struggle with this power constitutes the history of our conflicts and wars with Byzantium. The ethnical medium in the Danubian lands and in the whole Empire, which in its political aspirations had almost remained alien both to the Roman and Greek rule, facilitated this task, and in a short time the work of Asparouch is well rounded up in the strong Bulgarian Empire in the Balkans, by which the oppressed Scytho-Thracian peoples begin a new and a free political life.

The cradle of this life is Dobrudja, and every foot of ground in this country bears traces of our past, of our regenerating work, of our vitality and our misfortunes. In Dobrudja lies not only the guaranty of our security on the north, but there also is found the pantheon of our past national power, of our former national consciousness, and our political creativeness. There is the beginning and end of our history, although the Roman, Greek, Turkish and Roumanian rule have cov-



ered all this country with ruins and desolation, whilst Bulgarian self-consciousness and mind, oppressed during long centuries, left it in oblivion and silence.

5. Dobrudja is full of archeological monuments of our past history which the Roumanians, pretending to be the descendants of the Romans, publish as Roumanian, and many of those monuments which cannot be falsified, they simply minimise their importance or hide away.

The monument near Adam-Klisse which bears very plain and incontestable material marks of a grand work of Scytho-Thracian art, the inventive Roumanian mind of Mr. Tochilescu makes out to be a work of Trajan, erected as "a scare to the barbarians". The marked difference between Roman art and the sculptured work on the bas-reliefs of this monument Mr. Tochilescu explains with the probability of the memorial having been made by native workmen, as Rome was very distant, and it was very difficult to find Roman workmen. The rude gigantic figures of the medusae on this monument he explains by supposing that Trajan's object with them was to scare the native barbarian population; of the Thracian horseman, of the Sarmathian armour and trophy, adorning the top of the monument, he has nothing to say; the Sarmatian horseman on the bas-reliefs he represents as Roman, and the huge lions made of white stone, which adorn the façade of the monument, he passes with the remark that they were laid there to serve as a sort of water-spout. Mr. Tochilescu's inventiveness, however, is best shown in the Latin inscription of seven lines. This inscription he composes of seven letters collected and arranged by him in nine different pieces, found in various places in the

vicinity, without the possibility of these pieces being placed in such a way as to form a united whole, and without allowing the form of their hypothetical accord to correspond with the place in the façade of the monument, where he places them as a restored monumental inscription.

Asparouch's ditch near the village of Nicolitsel becomes for the Roumanians a Trajan's wall. "Trajan's wall" they also called the trenches along the line of Medjidieh-Constantza, when it is known that the northern double line of trenches in this locality was built in 377 by Valens for the defence of the Empire against the incursions of Goths and Huns, and the southern line of trenches was erected by the Bulgarians, and is of the same type as the Nicolitsel trenches or those of Aboba, designed for defence against an attack from the south.

The ruins on the heights of Yeni-Sala, the Roumanians hastened to call Cetatea Eraclea — Heracleian fortress — when it is plain that the fortress, the ruins of which have preserved its characteristic forms, is of hexagonal bastions, showing that it dates from mediaeval times, i. e., from the time of the Bulgarian ruler Dobrotitch, and that consequently this is one of Dobrotitch's fortresses.

At Karanassouf was found an almost wholly preserved fortress with subterranean passages and an ancient Bulgarian Church built of stone; with these findings the excavations stop, after allowing some slabs to be broken and others buried again.

Under the very plateau of the present village of Prislava lie buried the ruins of the ancient Bulgarian capital Preslava — the former Megalopolis of Anna

Comnena which city has been erroneously searched near Haemus; it was situated near the Danube.

From the beginning and down to the wars of Svetoslav, the history of Dobrudja is the history of Bulgaria. Dobrudja is the centre of the latter's political, cultural, and intellectual life. Here lie the monuments of our material culture, here is the great burying-ground of our forefathers, over which hovers an undying spirit which has withstood all cataclysms and has inspired all subsequent generations in their ceaseless struggle with the enemies of Bulgaria.

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### III.

The Bulgarians the first Slav people who after the disintegration of Rome organise the old Scytho-Thracian peoples into a permanent state system, based on the principles of contemporary statecraft. — The wars of Svetoslav in Dobrudja as a manifestation of Scythian and Slav separatism, and as a counter-check in the historical march of the political preponderance of the Slav peoples. — Dobrudja, prosperous land. — Preslava the centre of the Slav lands. — The site of the ancient capital Preslava in Dobrudja.

6. The Bulgarians make their appearance as the first Scytho-Thracian people, who after the desintegration of the Roman dominion succeed to create a permanent state system on the principles of national sovereignty, and to begin an independent political life. This accounts for the great extent of the Bulgarian state in the Scytho-Thracian lands on both banks of the Danube in the first years of its founding, as well as for the cultural influence of this state on all other Slav peoples and states, who later on follow the example of the Bulgarians. The Scytho-Thracian character of the new Bulgarian state and of the Bulgarian people, though often disputed, is none the less evident and undoubted. "Dirty Scythian people", Nicephorus calls the Bulgarians, the extraordinary envoys, whom Tsar Peter had sent him during the X<sup>th</sup> century, in order to collect the tribute due to Bulgaria. Besides, even Herodorus speaks of the culture of the Scythians, and in describing their vices, he also makes mention of their good qualities and virtues, their manners, customs, morals, their religion, and their dress, in which description one cannot but

see a striking similarity, very often a full identity, with those of our people and with the Slav peoples in general.

While Dobrudja was under Roman and Byzantine rule the incursions into the country from without never cease. There comes even a time when it becomes completely torn away from the Empire, in spite of its strong fortresses along the Danube. With the founding in it of Asparouch's state, however, these incursions cease, in order to follow those of the Bulgarians to the South — into the Empire. This circumstance shows that the wave and movement of the Scytho-Thracian peoples struggling and waging war for their political restoration coincide with the work and penetration of Asparouch in the Balkan Peninsula. This work stops with the wars of Svetoslav. These wars come as an unexpected blow against the general Slav impetus into the Balkan Peninsula, so fortunately facilitated by the Bulgarians in the first period of their development and so fatally arrested by Svetoslav. The spirit of political separatism and of tribal egoism, going hand in hand with political credulity, shortsightedness, and pettiness, characterising the history of the Scythian peoples, find their manifestation in the recent and more modern Slav states.

Svetoslav's fleet surprised the Bulgarians at the mouth of the Danube where they suspected no danger. To this fact is due the rapid success of Svetoslav and the crushing defeat of the Bulgarians. Bulgaria becomes the victim of a treachery cunningly prepared by Nicephorus, who powerless to undertake a war against the Bulgarians to whom he paid tribute, sends Kalokyryus to Svetoslav, to induce him to consent to his perfidious plan, by

striking in the rear the Bulgarian troops which were directed to the south.

The theatre of Svetoslav's war is again Dobrudja, and the first blow is dealt on the town of Preslava. The hastily collected troops for the occasion do not succeed to repel the unexpected attack. Tsar Peter defeated retreats and shuts himself in Silistra, where he shortly dies, and Svetoslav becomes master of all Dobrudja, where according to Nestor, "*he captures Preslava and 80 other towns*".

Since then, from the time of Igor — father of Svetoslav — the Dobrudja has been known as a rich and fertile land, and the above quotation from Nestor attests her thick population. All this, together with the rich bribe of 1500 pounds of gold, helps to draw Svetoslav into the intrigues of Nicephorus and Kalokyrus, and becomes the cause of this fatal war for Bulgaria. Beaten and humiliated by the Russians, Bulgaria accepts the assistance of her natural enemy in the south, who drives the Russians back, but along with this, he subjects Bulgaria also. Thus Svetoslav, owing to the inherent political shortsightedness of the Slavs, becomes the cause of changing the political order of things in the Balkan Peninsula, of putting Bulgaria in chains, and of weakening his own state, which during his wars in Dobrudja, was attacked and overrun by the Petchenegs, who later on penetrate even into the Danube lands and into the Dobrudja itself. In vain his mother and his boyars exhort Svetoslav to remain in Kiev and not to leave his own land. He answers: "I do not like to stay in Kiev, I wish to go to *Preslava on the Danube, because there is the heart of my country, and because there are gathered all good things*: from Greece gold, silk,

wines, and fruits; from Bohemia and Hungary, silver and horses; from Russia, furs, wax, honey and slaves.”

The misfortunes of nations have often had as their cause such petty motives of material character and greed for personal enrichment. For these things Svetoslav, despite the exhortations of his mother and his boyars, leaves Kiev for Preslava for the second time. Zimiscet, however, about this time threatens Bulgaria, in consequence of which Svetoslav leaves his general Sfenkelia in Preslava, and goes and fortifies himself in Silistra, where he shares Tsar Peter's fate, and whence humiliated he flies to his ships. Thus the Eastern Empire already hellenized and powerless as regards Bulgaria destroys both the Bulgarian tsardom and Svetoslav.

7. From the original writers who have described these events it is evident that the capital of Bulgaria at this time (967—969) is *Prezlava on the Danube*, near the ruins of which is situated the village of Prislava. From the investigations made in this very place we learn that this village was built about 850. The Roumanian immigrants call it Prislava, and the Bulgarians Prezlava. So it was called from the beginning, for the very locality bore that name from the name of the ruined city under it.

Tcherrkoff in his work on the wars of Svetoslav, in which he gives quotations from Nestor, Kedrinus, and Leo Diaconus, bearing on this subject, in his explanatory note No. 60, page 189, says: “From the work of Anna Comnena it appears that there were two cities called Prezlava: The Great and the Little Prezlava. *The first was situated near the Danube* and was the most beautiful city in that country. The Greeks called it Megalopolis; the second, or Little Prezlava, is known

in our annals under the name of Pereyaslavets, *may be* in distinction from the Great Preslava. *Our Pereyaslavets was situated near the Haemus mountains, far from the Danube.*"

Anna Comnena herself says: "*The celebrated city of Preslava is situated near the Danube.* Formerly this city had no barbarian but a Greek name and was called Megalopolis. But from the time when the Bulgarian Tsar Mokr and his descendants, especially Samuel, like Jewish Saducees, had commenced to attack the dominions of the Empire, this city began to be called Great Preslava."

Notwithstanding all this, the prevailing view is that our ancient capital was on the site of Preslav near Shoumen. This view, after having the negative results obtained from the archeological excavations made on that site, can no longer be maintained. The valuable findings at Aboba do not support it, for they discovered the ancient town of Pliscovo, which was situated near Little Preslava, a fortress at the foot of the Haemus mountains.

The reason for the above erroneous view is to be found in the fact that in Tcherrkoff's book and in the quotations from Nestor, when Preslava on the Danube is spoken of, the expression "Pereyaslavets on the Danube" is used. And as Tcherrkoff himself says: "Little Preslava known in our annals under the name of Pereslavets, may be in distinction from Great Preslava". Tcherrkoff's "*may be*" has been taken for the fact itself, and Great Preslava becomes Little Preslava, and the Little, Great Preslava. Tcherrkoff himself, however, in the explanatory note quoted above, tells us that the Preslava on the Danube is Great Preslava, and that



near the Balkan mountains is Little Preslava, and on the other hand, in the text of his book he himself uses indiscriminately the name of Pereslavets both for Little and Great Preslava, whence it follows that this expression is due to the peculiar softness of the Russian language — the disposition to express in a diminutive form the designation of that which is to be presented as dear and beautiful.

Our ancient capital, therefore, was situated at one of the most northern points of Dobrudja, near the mouth of the Danube, and has for ages been waiting the restoration of the Bulgarian rule, in order to resuscitate from its ruins the spirit and aspirations of our forefathers.

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#### IV.

The extent of the Bulgarian rule at the time of the first and second Bulgarian Kingdom and the falsity of the historical claims of the Roumanian aspirations towards Bulgaria. — Pages from the history of the Wallachian voyvodships and their Bulgarian character down to 1700. — The Slav origin of the terms Vlach (Wallach) and Vlachia (Wallachia), and the distinction to be made between the notions of these terms and the terms Roumanian and Roumania. — The enslaved condition of the Roumanians in Wallachia down to the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, their origin and their political lack of personality down to 1882.

8. The limits of the first Bulgarian Kingdom embraced almost all the Scytho-Thracian lands on both banks of the Danube. In it were included, *not only the two Wallachian voyvodships*, now constituting the Kingdom of Roumania, but also Transylvania, Banat and the whole of Panonia, lands which before the Roman rule formed Dacia and Panonian Sarmatia.

The western boundaries of Bulgaria beyond the Danube touched those of Charlemagne's Empire and later on those of Hungary. The centre of political life, however, after the founding of the Cis-Danubian Kingdom in the traces of the dying Roman dominion, is transferred here, while the government of the Trans-Danubian possessions is left in the hands of vassal voyvodes and princes, for, apart from the wars of the Bulgarian ruler Krum with the Avars — which probably had the character of an internal war for the hegemony over the Scytho-Thracian groups there, formerly composing the Avar Kingdom — history does not, during this epoch, record an event showing that the new Bulgarian state was threatened by any serious external peril.

With the fall of the Cis-Danubian Eastern and Western Kingdoms and with the destruction of the ruling dynasties, the political life of the Bulgarian state is arrested, without, however, the subjection under foreign rule of the Trans-Danubian possessions.

There was wanting an enterprising voyvode, who, with an well organised military force from the northern Bulgarian possessions, should attempt to drive away the enemy, and restore Bulgarian rule on this side of the Danube.

This task is undertaken by the two brothers of shepherd origin, Assen and Peter, who towards the year 1185, after a successful revolt, and with the organisation of a military force brought from the Wallachian voyvodships, restore the Bulgarian Kingdom within its former limits. Assen was crowned Tsar in Tirnovo and founded the dynasty of the Assenides who assume the title of "Tsar of Bulgaria and Wallachia", which in the letters of Innocent IV. to the Bulgarian Tsar Kaloyan, is translated *Rex Bulgarorum et Blacorum*.

This title, transmitted in a distorted form and with a reverse meaning, offered an opportunity to the Roumanian historians to call the second Bulgarian Kingdom „Roumano-Bulgarian Empire“, and to maintain that it had a Roumanian character, inflaming thus the imagination of the new Roumanian generation with claims to Bulgarian territories. These perversions of history were disseminated into foreign literature for the purpose of creating public opinion in support of their moribund aspirations.

The title itself, however, as well as the incontestable historical data, prove just the reverse of what the Roumanians maintain and proclaim. This proves that

Wallachia formed a part of the first as well as the second Bulgarian Kingdom, and that the Bulgarian character of the Wallachian voyvodships was preserved until the middle of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century, a fact explicitly admitted by the Roumanian historian Xenopol, one of the staunchest Roumanian nationalists.

In his "History of the Roumanians" (French text), after striving to prove the Roumanian character of the second Bulgarian Kingdom by various sophisms, play on words, and distorted judgments, he asks the question: "*How is it then, that the Wallachians disappear from the subsequent history of the Wallacho-Bulgarian empire, and that this Empire is in time transformed into a purely Bulgarian Empire, a fact, which cannot be denied?*"

To this question he replies: "Every one will easily understand, that after a certain time the Wallachians ceased to form the predominating element, but subject to the Bulgarians, they were numbered among the peoples composing their state".

Xenopol quotes also the following text from Theiner: "The letters of Kaloyan, the ruler of the Bulgarians and Wallachians, sent to Pope Innocent, were translated *from Bulgarian into Greek and from Greek into Latin*". In view of this text and the above perplexity of Xenopol in regard to the disappearance of the Wallachians and his own theory on the subject, that Wallachians, in the sense of Roumanians, did not then exist, it will be seen that no one having regard for historical truth would dare to maintain Xenopol's thesis.

9. Nearer the truth is his colleague, D. A. Teodoru, who in "La Grande Encyclopédie", though he maintains the same view in regard to the Roumanian character of

Assen's state, ends with the following statement on the question.

“The successors of Assen and Peter bore the titles of tsars (emperors) of the Bulgarians and Roumanians, *or of Bulgaria and Wallachia.*” The same title bore also the patriarch of Tirnovo, “Patriarch of all Bulgaria and Wallachia”. The analysis of the contemporary documents of this epoch shows that this Wallachia of the Assenides cannot be looked for south of the Danube, where the lands bearing this name did not belong to the Assenides. This Wallachia was bounded by Hungary, and is evidently the Wallachia north of the Danube. Of this Wallachia speaks Ivanitsa (Kaloyan) in his correspondence concerning his frontier disputes with Hungary. This Wallachia, therefore, is the so-called Great Wallachia by foreigners to this day. The contemporaries of the time referred to called it Black Roumania, and later, Black Wallachia, Kara-Ulaghi, and *on account of the Bulgarian rule in the country—Burgaria, preserving the designation Bulgaria only for the lands south of the Danube.*

“In this Wallachia was also organised a banship which the Tartars found in 1241 and of which Hungarian documents speak in 1247. This Roumania is the only principality *subject to the Assenides.* In the correspondence of Kaloyan with the Pope mention is made of some princes subject to his empire. One of them is in the south, the other two in the north of the Danube. We have spoken of the first. The second is Bassarabe of Oltenia, whom the chronicle of Rashid of 1241 calls Bassarab-ban or Bassaraba, while this same Rashid calls Kara-Ulaghi the people inhabiting great Wallachia. *This banship has existed from the time of the first*

*Bulgarian Kingdom, and we see it now subject to the Assenides, in exact accord with the tradition of the Bulgarians. This tradition we are bound to accept as true, in order to give any sense to the Roumanian tradition, according to which the Oltenian Bassarabs were voluntarily subject to Negru-Voda — a mythical person to whom is ascribed not the founding of the first Roumanian dynasty, as was generally believed until recently, but of the Roumanian state. This Negru-Voda is said to have come from a foreign land and not from Transylvania, as the Wallachian chronicles lately interpreted the tradition; and he represented the suzerain Bulgaro-Wallachian authority of Wallachia over Oltenia.”*

“So that before the incursion of the Tartars the Roumanian element is organised into voyvodeships: in Transylvania under the Hungarians; *in Wallachia and Oltenia, under the Bulgarians*; while in Moldavia are formed communities without any connections . . . The two Wallachias (Wallachia and Oltenia) form an inseparable part of the Roumano-Bulgarian Empire.”

The same author says:

“The destruction of the Avar Kingdom by Charlemagne in 796 strenghtened the Bulgarian rule in the province of Theiss. Under the sovereignty of the Bulgarians the Bassarabs organised in Oltenia the first Roumanian state, and the church of these provinces of which we treat, acknowledged the supremacy of the Patriarchate of Ochrida.”

From all these data, taken and quoted from Roumanian sources, it is evident that the title of the Assenides “Imperator et Dominus Bulgarorum et Blaccorum”, means ‘Tsar and ruler of Bulgaria and Wallachia, and not

Roumano-Bulgarian Emperor“, as the Roumanian historians distortedly give it, and that in the time of the second, as well as during the first Bulgarian Kingdom, the boundaries of Bulgaria embraced as well the lands of modern Bulgaria and Dobrudja, as also those of modern Roumania, which existed then as a Bulgarian province under the well-known at the time Slavic designation of Vlachia or Wallachia, which does not mean Roumania, and which is far from giving an idea of the ethnical character of the people inhabiting it.

10. In order to see plainly the artificiality and falsity of the Roumanian historical theories in regard to the Roumanian character of the second Bulgarian Kingdom and the hypothetical Roumanian claims to the Dobrudja, we must also have in view the following explanation: “Vlach” and “Vlachia”, in the time of which we write, do not mean “Roumanian” and “Roumania”. This the Roumanian historians know well. In spite of it, however, by means of these designations they identify the history of Wallachia and of the Bulgarian population inhabiting it with that of Roumania and the present Roumanian people, who should be remembered, belong to an altogether new political and ethnical formation. The terms “Vlach” and “Vlachia” are Slavic, they have as their root the terms “volok” and “voloki”, “fur” and “furs”. Etymologically these terms mean “fur wearers”, “land of the fur-wearers”, but their ordinary meaning is “shepherd”, “shepherd settlement”, “pasture land”. This is explained by the fact, that the names of Vlachia (Wallachia) and Vlachs (Wallachs) are also applied to certain provinces in Cis-Danubian Bulgaria, to which an allusion is made in the quotation of Theodoru. These designations did

not then bear the force of an ethnical denomination of the Roumanian people and of the lands they inhabited. These designations were applied to the Trans-Danubian Bulgarian voyvodships, for the reason that Transylvania and Panonia presented extensive pasture lands, whence the designations Vlachia, Black Vlachia, White Vlachia, Great and Little Vlachia, have been transferred to the newly formed Danubian voyvodships, when the Bulgarians founded the Cis-Danubian Kingdom.

It is true, however, that among these shepherds there was a large number of Roman colons, romanised Roman Slavs, who were included in the general designation of "Vlachs", and it is possible that this designation was also applied to the Roman slaves in whom were included the romanised Scythians; *but it is no less true that all these Roman remnants in Wallachia, in distinction from the free Bulgarian native population, were called by a special designation of „Roumanians“, who not only did not constitute the ruling element in Wallachia, but on the contrary, their ethnical name became in that country synonymous with the word "slave". "Slavery in Wallachia", — says Xenopol himself, "has ever been designated with the term „Roumania" (Rumunya), and the slave with the term "Roumanian". It is a strange fact that the ethnical name of a people should serve as a designation of the most degraded class.*" (Xenopol, vol. I., p. 205.) And when the free Bulgarian peasants were compelled to sell themselves to the landowners, they stipulated in the contracts, *"they sell themselves and their children as Roumanians with all their land".* (Ibid p. 225).

Such was the civil and political condition of the Roumanians in Wallachia, which is equally explained



by the fact, that with his withdrawal from Dacia, Aurelian must have taken with himself *all Roman citizens*, leaving only the Roman shepherds and colons, deprived of citizenship, as by the fact, that the Roman helots thus abandoned fall under the power of the native Dacian and Slav population.

The above circumstances are established from Latin chronicles which record the withdrawal of Aurelian from Dacia, from the chronicle of the Magyar anonymist Balae, and that of Keza, in which it is said that "the Roman citizens of Panonia also withdrew to Apulea, but their shepherds and colons remained in Panonia". (Xenopol, vol. I., p. 151.)

This condition of the Roumanians continued until the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, and Xenopol, in answer to the Magyars, who reproach the Roumanians with being slaves and guests in their own land, strives to prove that slavery in Roumania is the result of subsequent social and economic causes.

It becomes, however, evident from the quotations which we give in the next chapter that the Roumanians left in Dacia get in former Dacia last in the great mass of Slav peoples, and instead of their own history, which in fact they do not possess, Xenopol appropriates that of the Bulgarians in the Wallachian voyvodships, which until the time of Matthey Bassarab and Vasil Lupu (1650), more than 300 years after our subjection by the Turks, preserve their purely Bulgarian character, only to fall in their turn under Hellenism, from which they get emancipated in the beginning of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, with a neo-Latin tendency assumed under the influence of the Transylvanian Roumanians who had just then begun to manifest

an independent national consciousness, in the midst of the enslaved Roumanian race.

In view of such historical facts it is absurd to speak of the Bulgarian state having Roumanian character, of Roumanian influence upon the political existence of the Bulgarians, or of Roumanian rule in Dobrudja.

A people in such a condition whose ethnical designation serves as a name for the most disinherited class of society in which they lived cannot play any part in, and assert any influence on, the political life of such a strong and predominating element, as were at that time the Bulgarians, rulers not only of the Balkan Peninsula, but of the whole of Dacia with a frontier bordering on the Hungary of those times.

The title of the Assenides, then, is far from attesting any Roumanian influence on the Bulgarian Kingdom and its political destiny. It only testifies that Wallachia was one of their possessions, and that the Roumanian element played no part even in the fortunes of the Wallachian lands, which then and much later, were Bulgarian lands, with a Bulgarian government, Bulgarian culture, Bulgarian church, and Bulgarian literature, and with a predominating Bulgarian language, which was then the language of the Wallachians also, as we shall see below.

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V.

Pages from Roumanian history. — Until the epoch of Matthey Bassarab and Vassil Lupu, 1634—1654, and ten centuries before this, the voyvodeships of Wallachia and ancient Dacia wholly Bulgarian. — The five Bulgarian voyvodeships in present Roumania, Dacia and Panonia before the creation of the Wallachian voyvodeships. — The Bulgarian language predominating in all these lands and voyvodeships from the time of the disintegration of the Avar Kingdom down to 1650, when the Wallachian voyvodeships fall under the Turks. — The beginning of the Roumanian national consciousness in the nineteenth century.

11. The incontestable Bulgarian character of the Wallachian voyvodeships until the end of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century is of great importance in view of the claims of the Roumanians that the Wallachian voyvode Mircho is supposed, as a Roumanian prince, to have ruled Dobrudja, whence they get the ground for their alleged rights to Dobrudja, by which they also vindicated their violent Roumanising régime in that province.

The voyvode Mircho, however, as well as all other Wallachian voyvododes, down to the XVII<sup>th</sup> century, were all Bulgarian voyvododes, and his rule in Dobrudja cannot create for Roumania any historical rights over that territory.

True it is that the Wallachian voyvodeships begin an autonomous life: Wallachia in the time of Alexander Bassarab in 1325, and Moldavia under Bogdan in 1365, but long after this, their purely Bulgarian character is preserved, as will be seen from the quotations given below from the Roumanian history of Xenopol (French text). In some of these quotations, however, in order to avoid any misunderstanding and

error, one should not confound the term "Roumanians" with the term "Wallachians", for Xenopol in his thesis speculates with these designations in such a manner, as to attribute to the Roumanians what the original sources write for the Wallachians, i. e., for the population of Wallachia.

"The Wallachian voyvodes", he says, "*until the creation of the principalities were subject first to Bulgaria, later to the Magyars*" (v. I., p. 220).

Until the creation of the principalities, — that means, until the above quoted initial dates 1325 and 1365, it is evident from the very quotations, that before these dates these principalities had no independent political existence, as the author strives to prove in many places of his book.

"It is natural, that as long the Wallachians lived in the mountains, the noble, ruling Roumanian class could make no appearance; this happened in the time of the Bulgarian rule in Dacia, where Roumanians and Slavs began to descend in the plains" (vol. I., p. 229).

"Towards 650 the Bulgarian king Koubrat shakes off the Avar yoke and extends his rule over the lands of the ancient Trajan Dacia. His son Asparouch crosses the Danube and establishes the seat of the Bulgarian power in Mysia. Notwithstanding this, however, it goes without saying, that the Bulgarians still retained their power in the provinces north of the Danube which they ruled in the time when they inhabited the Onglos. Thus the Daco-Roumanian population which was already under Slav influence was subjected anew to this influence under the Bulgarian rule."

"*The Bulgaro-Slav influence was begun and exerted through religion. It continues for nearly eight cen-*

*turies—until the reign of Mattey Bassarab in Wallachia (1633-1654) and Vassil Lupu in Moldavia (1634-1653)*”.

“The introduction of the Slavic church service among the Wallachians is easily explained as a result of the Bulgarian rule in the ancient Trajan Dacia” (v. I, pp. 133 and 133).

“The geographer of Ravenna who wrote in the beginning of VIII<sup>th</sup> century speaks of the provinces which the Bulgarians occupied then along the lower Danube and gives a list of the towns . . . (here follow the names of about 25 towns). All these towns are included within the limits of Dacia. Although he erroneously includes these towns in Lower Mysia, retaining the name of Dacia only for the province embraced in the present Banat, still he gives Dacia as the dwelling place of the Bulgarians, and does not forget to say that this part of Lower Mysia is north of the Danube.

“Another geographer, from Bavaria, who wrote in the end of the IX<sup>th</sup> century, enumerates among the peoples who live on the northern bank of the Danube: the Tchechs, Moravians, and Bulgarians, who had become neighbors of the Kingdom of the Franks.

“The fact of this neighborhord is also confirmed by Suidas, who testifies that the Bulgarian king Kroum subjected the Avars who were then threatened by the Franks in 797. Enhard, Heriman, the annalist Saxo, the annals of Fulda, record facts, which make the Bulgarians neighbours of the Franks, up to the river Theiss — their eastern frontier.

“In the Life of St. Gerard it is explained that towards 1007 *the Bulgarian gospodar of Transylvania, Atyum*, had usurped the right to impose transit custom-

duties on the salt which was carried from Muresh to Theiss.

“That is why the Hungarian chronicles quote several Bulgarian voyvodeships in Transylvania, and that is why, too, for a long time Transylvania and especially Wallachia was called Bulgaria, land of the Bulgarians, among others, by the Persian annalist Fazil Ullah Rashid, who in 1303 wrote a history of the Tartar incursion in Dacia in 1240, based on authentic documents taken from the archives of the Mongol Khan in Persia by order of Mahmoud Gazan Khan.

“We will also give a document of 1231 which recalls the former rule of the Bulgarians in Transylvania, and speaks of one of the quarters of the town of Brashov (Cronstadt), the one that is now inhabited by Roumanians, and which to this day bears the name of Bolgarzeg (vol. I., pp. 131—134).

The eastern Slavic church service was introduced by Cyril and Methodius. The Bulgarian Tsar Simeon organised the Bulgarian Church and created a patriarch in Preslava. The Bulgarian patriarchate in the time of Tsar Samuel in 1010 was transferred to Ochrida.

“We possess no data in regard to the time of the introduction of the Bulgarian church service among the Wallachians. The following three facts are, however, well established:

1. *“A general spreading of this church service in the time of the first Bulgarian Kingdom.”*

2. *“The existence of this service among the Wallachians from the very first days in which they make their appearance in history.”*

3. *“The spreading of the Bulgarian rule north of the Danube in the lands inhabited by the Wallachians, in the first days of the first Bulgarian Kingdom.”*

*“It is quite natural to take the second of these facts as a result of the other two.”*

*“The Wallachians had accepted not only the Slavic alphabet, but the Slavic language also.”*

“The dependence of the Wallachian Church on the Bulgarian is seen also later on. Thus one of the patriarchs of Constantinople in a letter addressed in 1390 to Mircho I. calls the patriarch of Ochrida “Your patriarch”, and the Moldavian voyvode, Stephen the Great, asks of the Ochrida patriarch the investiture for one of his metropolitan bishops.

From the disintegration of the Avar and the rise of the Bulgarian Kingdom until the coming of the Hungarians, *during more than 200 years*, the Wallachians were able to lead a peaceful life with the Slavs and to settle down in the plains south of the Carpathians.

“This renewal of their political life was effected under the auspices of the Bulgarian rule, which, together with the social and political order, gave them also the new religion in the Slavic language.

“That is why most elementary notions of state life are expressed by the Wallachians in terms of Slavobulgarian characters.

“The chief of the state is called “voyvode”, and the men of the high ruling class “boyers”, from the Bulgarian “bolyars”. This order existed *before the coming of the Hungarians*. They also borrowed in the beginning the term “voyvode”.

Thus we see that not for eight but ten centuries have the Bulgarian influence and the Bulgarian character dominated over the Wallachian lands, the history of which, according to Xenopol himself, commences with the disintegration of the Avar Kingdom and the beginning of Bulgarian history.

12. "The oldest Magyar chronicle — that of the anonymous Bela — enumerates three voyvodeships found in Trajan Dacia: the Manomir (Menoumorut), Glad, and Galu voyvodeships, to which later documents add a fourth — the Kean voyvodeship.

"*The first voyvodeship*, that of Manomir, lay north of the Temesvar banship. This Wallachian (Rumanian according to Xenopol) principality was, however, under the Bulgarian dynasty, for the anonymous Magyar analyst says that when Arpad demanded of Manomir to cede this territory, he replied "in a true Bulgarian spirit", that he has no intention of doing anything of the kind.

The second or Glad's voyvodeship embraced the Temesvar banship. Glad was also a Bulgarian, born in Vidin, and his army was composed of Bulgarians, Wallachians and Koumans. The voyvode Atyum, of whom mention is made in the Life of St. Gerard, was his successor, and was baptised in Vidin.

"The third or Gelu's voyvodeship, in northern Transylvania, was inhabited by Wallachians and Slavs. The anonymous author of this chronicle calls the Wallachians "Roman shepherds", explaining that after the death of Attila the Romans called Panonia "pasture land", for there their flocks grazed.

The same is said in the memoirs of the priest Ricardo who wrote in 1237, and who says that Hungary



formerly, before it was peopled by the Hungarians, was called "Roman pasture land".

Archdeacon Thomas in 1266 also writes that Hungary was formerly called "Roman pasture land", and in Keza's chronicle it is said: "In the time of Attila the Roman citizens of Panonia withdrew to Apulea, and the Wallachians who were shepherds and colons of the Romans voluntarily remained in Panonia.

"The fourth voyvodeship, equally subject to the Bulgarians, is Kean's voyvodeship, south of Transylvania. Conquered by St. Stephen, this latter replaces the Bulgarian voyvode by his uncle Zoltan.

"Finally a *fifth or Salan's Bulgarian voyvodeship* is recorded by the anonymous author, who places it in Panonia.

"The Wallachians who had not abandoned their country created for themselves *states under Bulgarian rule, which in Dacia* replaced that of the Avars. The study of Hungarian sources makes us acquainted with these states."

"The Wallachian people had preserved their autonomous order under their *national chiefs*, and especially under their nobles, called "voyvodes", and under their village boyars called "knyazes" (Princes). Thus two kinds of chiefs are found in the oldest documents down to the middle of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century, when they begin to disappear. These chiefs enjoy a certain independence and we see them very often in rebellion against the Magyars. Thus three princes (knyazi) Kosta, Stanchu, and Pope (priest) Vulkou, whom we know as Roumanians by their names (sic), after their revolt against the Magyar authorities, flee to Moldavia, after destroying their principalities in 1345.

“This organisation of the Wallachians under the leadership of voyvodes and princes — Slavo-Bulgarian titles — arose in the time of the Bulgarian domination — etc., etc. (vol. I., p. 118).

*“Until Mattey Bassarab and Vassil Lupu, the Slavic language was the form and medium by which the authorities expressed themselves.”*

*“In the Slavic language were written, above all, all Church books, and then all official documents issued by the princely chancelleries, also sale contracts, and all other contracts made between private persons, and the more we go back in the past history of the Roumanian people, the more we meet with the Slavic language as the language in general use; and that not only in Wallachia and Moldavia from the time of their organisation, but among the Roumanians of Transylvania as well, as also in those little voyvodships which preceded the organisation of the first two principalities”.*

All this is set forth in Xenopol's Roumanian History. Xenopol in his efforts to present the political life of the Trans-Danubian Bulgarian voyvodships as history of the Roumanians falls into a very strange and comical position.

Notwithstanding all this, the academician and professor Xenopol passes for an authoritative writer, known as such in continental Europe, and his *Histoire des Roumains* was issued under the patronage of, and with a flattering preface by, the French historian Rambaud.

Nevertheless, we see from the data of the history carefully collected therein that this author zealously strives to Roumanise the Wallachian population. The Roumanian population in the Wallachian voyvodships, down to the time of Mattey Bassarab and Vassil Lupu,

remains in object slavery, without any political or cultural vitality, while the history which Xenopol attributes to this population is the history of the Bulgarians and their voyvodes in the Wallachian lands.

Until that time the Roumanian population in Wallachia is altogether lost in the Bulgarian ethnical mass, and since then under the oppression of Hellenism (the Phanariote Greeks) it begins its national emancipation, accomplished about 1821, when the first signs of Roumanian national culture and consciousness are conspicuously seen. Their political emancipation the Roumanians win in 1856, when the Roumanian chauvinism also begins. This chauvinism with the cession of Dobrudja to Roumania degenerated into a rapid Bulgarophobia and a morbid greed for Bulgarian lands. As soon as Dobrudja became part of Roumania, the Roumanian Government introduced an exclusive regime in it, with a view to a speedy assimilation and Roumanisation of the population in which the Bulgar element predominated.

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## VI.

**Dobrudja in the time of the second Bulgarian Kingdom. — The division of Bulgaria; Dobrudja a separate state. — The four rulers of Dobrudja: Ivan Assen, Balik, Dobrotitch, and Ivankou. — The truth in regard to the Turkish settlement in Dobrudja under Sari-Saltuk. — Balik and his epoch. — The epoch of Dobrotitch and Ivankou. — The fall of Dobrudja under the Turks. — The death of Ivankou.**

13. During the second Bulgarian Kingdom, Tirnovo instead of Preslava, becomes the capital of Bulgaria. The historical destiny of Dobrudja, however, continues to be that of Cis-Danubian Bulgaria, even after the division of the Kingdom by Ivan Alexander (1330—1373). Under the influence of his second wife, Sara Deodora, he divides Bulgaria among his three sons: Ivan Strashimir, Ivan Shishman, and Ivan Assen; and Dobrudja falls under the rule of Ivan Assen. According to Mavro Orbini (*Il regno dei Slavi*, p. 472), Dobrudja ceded to Ivan Assen consisted of Preslava with the Thracian country belonging to it, and from this time until the Turkish conquest, Dobrudja led an independent political life under her own rulers, but in full accord with the Kingdom of Tirnovo. Of the life and activity of Ivan Assen as a separate ruler of Dobrudja little is known. The Russian historian Sirku, however, tells us: "The assertion of Mavro Orbini is taken from Bulgarian sources and its truthfulness is not to be questioned, but as Ivan Assen was killed in a battle against the Turks and the Byzantines during his father's life-time, his possessions must have fallen to Shishman."

This supposition of Sirku's is refuted by the fact that after Assen in 1346, we see Dobrudja under the rule of a voyvode (archont) Balik, probably one of

Assen's generals who succeeded him after his death as an independent ruler of Dobrudja, and as such, according to the memoirs of John Cantacuzenus, sent to Byzantium in 1346 armies from Dobrudja, under the command of his brothers Dobrotitch and Todor, to help Anna of Savoy in her war against Cantacuzenus. After Balik, the throne of Dobrudja was occupied by his brother Dobrotitch Ivankou, in whose time Dobrudja shares the same fate as Bulgaria, that is, was subjected by the Turks in 1389 or 1390, when Ivankou was killed in the battle of Silistra.

14. The version, that Balik was a Turk and heir to a Turkish dynasty, founded in Dobrudja in 1263 by Sari-Sultuk, is devoid of any foundation.

Mr. Balastcheff who for the first time set forth these fictions in our history (see Nos. 33—36 of *Voenny Ivestia*, 1917) errs, because of his lack of critical acumen, his weakness to appear original in history, and his Turcmania. The very data which serve as a basis for the thesis fo Mr. Balastcheff show that Sali-Saltik's colony from Asia Minor was nothing but a temporary peaceful settlement of some Turcoman families, and that their leader and prophet Saltuk was neither a sultan, nor a general, nor a ruler designing to found a state or a dynasty in Dobrudja.

Prior to Balastcheff the history of this Seljuk colony in Dobrudja was described in detail by Hammer as follows:

"In 622 of the Hegira (1263), after Michael Paleologus had found refuge in the court of the Seljuks, and after he had returned and occupied Constatinople, he deposed Lascaris anew and ordered his eyes to be put out. Lascaris was the legitimate heir to the Byzantine

throne; about this time a colony of 10—12,000 *Turcomans* came under the leadership of Saltuk-dede and settled down on the western banks of the Black Sea, in the country called Dobrudja. *Not long after this the colony emigrated to the Crimea*". (Hammer vol. I., p. 165).

"With the coming of Michael Paleologus in Constantinople the relations between Byzantium and Bulgaria were broken off. Constantine Tich on his accession to the Bulgarian throne had contracted intimate ties with Lascaris and had married his daughter."

"Through the intercession of Alladin, the Sultan of Iconium, the Kiptchak and Crimean Tartars, under the command of Berke-Khan, come to help Constantine Tich, and favoured by a severe winter, cross the Danube on the ice, reach the walls of Constantinople, where they seized the Byzantine throne. Azedin on his way to the Crimea, *takes with him the Turkish colony of 10-12,000 people, who under Saltuk-dede had settled in Dobrudja.*" (Hammer vol. I., pp. 46 and 164).

According to the Turkish historian Evliya, Saltuk-dede was esteemed a saint, who enjoined on his disciples, that after his death, they should bury his remains in seven different ghiaour towns, so that his successors should not know where he is interred, and the Turkish pilgrims, looking in these different places for the tomb and not finding it, should induce the Turk's to seize these provinces in which Saltuk is supposed to have been buried. In accordance with the wish of the saint certain of his remains were buried in Babadag. (Hammer vol. XVI., p. 247).

Later on, in 1538, Sultan Suleyman passes through Dobrudja and Babadag on his way to Moldavia and

pays a visit to the tomb of Saltuk. (I. bid vol. V., p. 290). Tradition, however, says that when Suleyman asked to see the tomb of Saltuk, the burial place of the saint was unknown, and he applied for information to an aged shepherd, "Kuyum-Baba", who pastured his sheep on the outskirts of the town. The shepherd replies that he does not know of such a grave, but that he knows a place which his sheep carefully avoided to approach, and in getting to it, drew back, went around it, and after passing it, rejoined the flock. Suleyman verified "Kuyum-Baba's" words, and finding them trustworthy, came to the conclusion that in that place was concealed the tomb of Saltuk. So he ordered a monument to be built on that spot, and near it a mosque, which was to serve as teké (M. B. Jonescu, Dobrogea in pragul veacului XX<sup>lea</sup>, Dobrudja at the Commencement of the Twentieth Century).

This tradition appears trustworthy, because "Kuyum-Baba", becomes a greater saint than Saltuk himself. One of the summits of the Babadag Mountain bears his name, and there is supposed to be his grave which the Turks used to visit until recently during the Byram festival. An aged gagaouz of Babadag, Mitsika Atanasoff, who is not, however, one of Balastcheff's Ogous Turks, but an immigrant from Messemvria, related to us with a sarcastic smile that near this grave there was another which the Cristians used to visit on St. Sophia's feast-day and at Easter, and often quarrelled with the Turks in regard to the ownership of the grave which is now destroyed by fortune-diggers.

The history of Saltuk's grave in Babadag, however, seems to be a purposely invented legend, designed to

raise the courage of the Turks in Dobrudja in their frequent wars against the Russians. And history records that in 1709, the grand vizier Habil Pasha, after the defeat of his predecessor, Ali Pasha, calls the dervish Kalvety in his camp near Babadag in order to excite the fanaticism of his troops by means of this legend, namely, that one of the seven graves of Saltuk is in Babadag (Hammer vol. XVI., p. 247). This character of the legend is seen also in the number of these graves, some of which are said to have been found in Asia Minor, and in what is said of them by Evliya, and in the tradition in regard to the manner in which Sultan Suleyman is reputed to have found Saltuk's grave in Babadag.

The whole history of the settlement of Saltuk in Dobrudja, according to Hammer, begins in 1263 and ends in 1265.

Does this fact give a sufficient ground to maintain that Saltuk founded in Dobrudja "a powerful Oghuz state", that he created a dynasty in which we are to look for the descent of Balik and Ivankou?

From 1265 till the appearance of Balik in 1365, there elapse eighty years, during which time many events transpired, which eliminate any Oghuz or Turkish character from the political life of Dobrudja. After Constantine Tich, Ivailo, Ivan Assen III, Terter and Michael, there comes Ivan Alexander, then follows the division of Bulgaria into three states, the third of which — Dobrudja, passes in the possession of Alexander's son Assen. Only after him does Balik appear as ruler of Dobrudja. Where is the connection between the rule of Balik, Izedin and Saru-Saltuk? Evidently, in view of the above circumstances, it is altogether absurd to look for



such a connection in a haphazard intimation that the name of Balik recalled a similar Turkish word “baluk”, meaning fish.

Mr. Balastcheff himself says: “One brother of Balik bears the purely Christian name Todor or Theodore, and the other, the purely Bulgarian name Dobrotitsa, or Dobrotisha, and with these facts, it seems, every error in regard to the Turkish origin of Balik and of the Turkish character of his state, has been altogether eliminated”.

Not from the phonetics of names do we get to know the nationality of rulers bearing them, and still less the national character of the state and people they have ruled; especially is this true when these names are transmitted to us by foreign historians and in a foreign language. In the history of the Moldavian voyvodship we meet the name of Balk and Balsh, the former a Bulgaro-Moldavian voyvode (in 1349), of the province of Kuchnya, given him by Louis the Great, and the other, a Moldavian kaïmakam, a Levantine, temporarily appointed by the Porte as governor in 1856. These names are allied with the name Balik, as well as with the family name alluded to by Mr. Balastcheff. Does it follow thence that all these names are Turkish? Besides, let it not be forgotten that we have the purely Bulgarian name of Bancho, which, in all probability, was the real name of Balik, from which is derived the name of Baltchik, given by Balik to the ancient town of Kavarna or Karbona.

The Bulgarian origin of Balik and the Bulgarian character of Dobrudja realm may be attested by the fact that Balik appears in history as the successor of Ivan Assen, son of Ivan Alexander and ruler of a purely

Bulgarian country for centuries; that he is a brother of Dobrotitch, the most illustrious and powerful Bulgarian ruler of Dobrudja and uncle of Ivankou, the last Dobrudjan ruler, who falls in defence of Bulgaria in the wars against Turkey, in which wars he supported the Bulgarian Tsar Shishman.

15. In what manner Ivankou met his death is not known. The commercial treaty of 1387 concluded between him and the Genoese Podestà of Constantinople regarding the free navigation in Dobrudja sea, and the right to trade in his lands, shows that his country at that time was far from being exposed to any foreign peril.

The Russian historian Sirku, however, says: "The grand vizir Ali Pasha captured Aytos one night and sent Yakshish beg to attack Provat (Provadia) and capture Shoumen, together with all the fortified towns. Ivankou at this time attempted to take Varna, but did not succeed — from which it follows that about this time Varna was already in the hands of the Turks.

This occurs in the first period of the decisive wars of Tsar Shishman, when Tirnovo falls under the Turks and Shishman is forced to conclude peace with Murad at Nicopolis. As soon as Murad withdrew, Shishman refused to surrender Silistra in accordance with the treaty stipulations, which shows that Shishman must have negotiated also on behalf of Ivankou. Ali Pasha then advances from Shoumen and takes Silistra by storm, and lays siege a second time to Nicopolis, where he takes Shishman captive and orders him to be banished to Tuzla. After the battle and fall of Silistra Ivankou disappears, which shows that he must have perished in the aforementioned wars. All this occurs in 1390 (see Zinkeisen, Hammer, Iretchek, and Zlatarsky).

16. Dobrudja falls under the Turks as a Bulgarian land, in the reign of its last ruler Ivanku who defends his Kingdom to the end, conducting military operations in full accord with Tsar Shishman of Tirnovo.

However, not all the separate Bulgarian princes bans, and voyvodes, acted as nobly as Ivanku. Bulgaria was then divided among various boyars, and this fact was probably the chief cause of the fall of Bulgaria under the Turks.

In the wars of Shishman and Ivanku against the Turks Strashimir seems to have taken no part, and before the time of Ivan Alexander, the situation of Bulgaria was as follows: his son Michael ruled in Tirnovo from 1322 to 1330; Eltimir, and after him Svetoslav, along the river Tunja; Voissil, ruler of four towns on the Danube; Smilcho in Ihtiman and T. Pazarjik; the voyvode Momtchil in the Rhodope mountains; Krali-Marco in Macedonia; Ivanku and Alexander Bassarab in Wallachia.

The Turks at this time had traversed the whole of Thrace and South Bulgaria. The population having lost all hope for national security, abandoned towns and villages, fled to the monasteries, and founded new ones which assumed the form of small autonomous political organisations.

The spirit of separatism and the rival claims of the princes and boyars were the cause of the general weakness, which encouraged and emboldened the enemy who was supported and well received in the southern regions, and was thus enabled to work his way northward, assisted directly and indirectly by the Bulgarian boyars. Just at this time the connecting links with the

Wallachian voyvodeships get slackened and in 1325 Alexander Ban Bassarab initiates the history of Wallachia as a separate autonomous voyvodeship. He was a brother-in-law of Tsar Ivan Alexander by his first wife, and a son of Ivanku-ban Bassarab who ruled Little Wallachia, present Oltenia, then a Bulgarian province, with the town of Kravevo, the present Krayova, as its capital (1310—1325).

Ivan Bassarab gives his daughter in marriage to Ivan Alexander while the latter was yet heir to the throne. At the second marriage of Ivan Alexander, however, with the division of Cis-Danubian Bulgaria and the secession of Strashimir, nephew of Alexander Bassarab, the connection between Wallachia and the Tirnovo Kingdom ceases, and the family ties with Strashimir are only preserved and confirmed by the marriage of the latter with Anne, the daughter of Alexander Bassarab, and by reason of the common wars waged by Strashimir and Alexander's son Vladislav with the Hungarian King Carl Robert in 1365.

Thus more and more isolated the Tirnovo Kingdom was marching to its doom, and with it all other minor Bulgarian political organisations. A certain connection was preserved only with the Dobrudja, which at this time appears as the only strong Bulgarian state, for which reason during Turkish rule it remained the strongest Bulgarian centre, as we shall see later.

In 1351 the Tirnovo Kingdom put an end to its wars with Byzantium and Tsar Ivan Alexander, and in view of the Turkish peril, hastens to accept the proposal for peace which Cantacuzenus offers him. Dobrotitch, however, continues to interfere in the internal struggles of Byzantium and begins to play a decisive part in

its destiny. He enlarges his possessions in the south as far as Messemvria and Media, and in the north takes possession of Kilia and the castle of Licostomion (Vulcovo), on the left bank of the Kilian mouth, becomes master of the Black Sea, and threatens Trapezund with his fleet. He changes the succession to the throne of Andronicus Comnenus in favour of Michael Paleologus, his son-in-law, and dictates the commercial treaties with the Genoese Republic in the Crimea.

“It is evident”, says Sirku, “that Dobrotitch was one of the most powerful and illustrious rulers of Bulgaria. His name was given to Dobrudja.”

All this, however, does not change the historical course of things in that province or prevent the weakness caused by the separation and the breaking up of the Bulgarian political organisations.

The Bulgarian Kingdoms succumbed one by one under the power of the Turks.

The joint efforts of Tsar Shishman and the son of Dobrotitch, Ivanku, at the close of the Turkish wars with the Bulgarians in 1389—1390, were all in vain; not so much, perhaps, on account of the Turkish might, as on account of the perfidy of the Wallachian voyvode — the Bulgarian Mircho, who does not wage war against the Turks, as Roumanian historians relate, but in common with the Turks, against Tsar Shishman, and who appears in the rear of the Bulgarian armies near Silistra.

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## VII.

The work of the Wallachian Voyvode Mircho. — Mircho fratricide and ally of the Turks. — Despite his titles as ruler of Dobrudja, he never ruled that country. — His part in the battle of Silistra against the Bulgarians, during the years 1389—1390. The piteous historical part played by Mircho in the fortunes of Bulgaria and Wallachia. — A fratricide and four perfidious acts ending with the enslaving of Wallachia and Mircho's vassalage. — Mircho banished to Brussa and a fugitive in Hungaria. — The falsity of Rumanian history.

17. Mircho is the son of Radu, second son of Alexander Bassarab. After the death of Alexander, his first son Vladislav succeeded him (1365—1372). He becomes voyvode of the two Wallachias, with Tirgovishte as capital. After Vladislav there comes his brother Radu (1372—1385), and after the death of Radu, comes Radu's son — Dano (1385—1386); Mircho, however, murders his brother Dano and takes his place (Xenopol, vol. I, p. 211).

Thus does Mircho become Wallachian voyvode. Him the Rumanians of to-day call Mircho the Great, though in his acts there is nothing great, except his vainglorious titles, the meaning of which, as compared with his actions, is given below.

In some of the Wallachian chrysobulls (decrees) issued by Mircho, and written in Bulgarian, he gives himself the following titles:

In the charter given to the monastery of Strugal in 1399, Mircho calls himself: “. . . and of both banks of the Danube as far as the great sea and ruler (Samodrjets — autocrat) of the city of Drustr” (Silistra).

In the charter to Pope (priest) Nicodemus of Tismana in 1406 is found the same title: "... and ruler (autocrat) of the city of Drustr" (Silistra).

In the treaty concluded with King Vladislav II. of Poland in 1390: "Terrarum Dobrodicii et Tristri dominus."

All these titles serve to-day as a ground for the Roumanian claims and historical rights to Dobrudja. However, the Roumanian historians who describe in great detail the life and acts of Mircho, point out no historical data and events to justify such titles. The fact is that these titles differ, and cannot therefore, form a well established proprietary claim. And were it not for the event set forth below and found in a Turkish source, we would not hesitate to declare these titles utterly false, as the Roumanians often make use of false documents, as in the case of the Campelung chrysobulls (decrees), manipulated in a manner to show a title-deed to a disputed possession.

In the history of Ahmed Djeved Pasha, vol. 3, pp. 282—283 it is said:

"At the time when the battle was raging between the Turkish and Bulgarian troops, the former led by the serdar Gazi Ahmed Pasha, and the latter by the Bulgarian King Shishman, the Wallachian voyvode Mircho came to the help of the Turks as their ally with five thousand Wallachian *pandoors*".

"He fell upon the Bulgarians from the Wallachian side and succeeded in capturing the Bulgarian towns of Silsitra, Svishtov, and Dobrudja (probably Dobritch). This success of Mircho was due chiefly to the fact of the Bulgarian King Shishman having been completely beaten by the victorious army of Gazi Ahmed Pasha."

The event is disgraceful, and it is easily explained why the Roumanian historians avoid relating it and confine themselves to emphasising the big titles of Mircho.

Since that time there was introduced in the Turkish army a special kind of Christian troops called "*pandoors*", as our translator and collector of Turkish historical materials from Turkish archives and literature — Ichtchieff, very well explains:

"The organisation of the *pandoors*", he says, "had its origin, according to the historical annals of Djevedet Pasha — Tarich-i-Djevedet — as well as other sources, in the time of Murad I. and his son Bayazet — Ilderim (1361—1402), when the latter with the help of the Roumanian voyvode Mircho who had 5000 *pandoors*—soldiers gathered from Wallachia and Kara-Wallachia, completely crushed the Bulgarian Tsar Shishman (Zitsman) near the fortress of Nicopolis, where the latter was taken captive with his family and embraced the Mohammedan faith, so that the *pandoors* got their origin in the Turkish empire, in which, agreeably to the wish of Sultan Bayazet, battalions of Christian people called "*pandoors* were formed." Ichtchieff: "*Rights and Privileges*, etc." pp. 108 and 109).

18. After the above event, Mircho betrays the Turks also, in consequence of which, Bayazet crosses the Danube and chastises him who gets beaten, taken captive, and banished to Broussa. Very soon, however, he is set free by the Turks who obliged him to pay tribute as a vassal. "That is why Wallachia", says the Roumanian historian Xenopol, "was put down as a vassal province in the registers of the Porte in the beginning of 1391." (Xenopol, vol. II, p. 255, Seadedin p. 165).



After this (according to Djeved Pasha and Ichtchieff), in the month of May 1393 (495 of the Hegira), Mircho invades again with his army the Turkish frontier possessions, and from the town of Svishtov he penetrates into the interior of the Turkish empire; but he was soon encountered by Gazi Ahmed Pasha, was completely beaten, and forced to flee and return to his voyvodeship.

Towards the beginning of this event also belongs a letter of Mircho to the king of Poland, dated August 1 (the year is not given), in which he adds to his other titles that of “gospodar . . . of many Turkish towns”. Thence it follows, that Mircho, himself vassal and captive, had the great foible of assuming titles as conqueror and possessor of lands he did not possess.

“During this time”, continues the same historian, “the voyvode Mircho, though he was, like the Transylvanian voyvode Svetoslav, a vassal of the Hungarian King, did not enjoy the confidence of the latter ruler, and therefore Mircho’s advice for joint action against the Turks was neglected or unheeded. Offended by the treatment of his suzerain, Mircho was constrained to apply for help to the Turkish Sultan Bayazet Ilderim and to send special envoys to Nicopolis, at the headquarters (ordughiahina) of the Sultan, to beg for mercy and pardon. Sultan Bayazet received these envoys and complied with their request, agreeing that in future the Wallachian voyvodeship should be treated as vassal of the Turkish empire. As a proof of the most august favour of the Sultan, a firman was issued, the most important passages of which read as follows:

“In virtue of *state necessity*, imposed by circumstances, for the weal and prosperity of our great and

glorious empire — we, sultan and monarch of the dinislam state, have consented and deigned to conclude peace and a lasting treaty with the voyvode of Wallachia — Mircho, who had opened a bloody war, but whom with the help of Almighty God and with the force of arms, we were enabled to bring to reason, so that *he repented of his crimes and begged for mercy and compassion*".

"The same Mircho shall be politically vassal of the illustrious Ottoman empire, and shall pay to us each year a definite tribute of vassallage. Therefore, we, by the grace of God, appoint and destine the said Mircho as lawful and real voyvode of the Wallachian province subject to us, allowing him to exercise justice, to punish those who refuse to carry out his lawful orders, and who would not be subject to him; to pardon and amnesty criminals, when they repent of their crimes.

"He shall not prosecute, menace, and attack those Mussulmans *who were formerly Christians and have consented to profess the holy orthodox Mohammedan faith*; such Mussulmans shall not be constrained by force to retract from the Mohammedan faith and be converted to the Christian religion. The voyvodes after Mircho shall always be persons professing the Christian religion. They shall be elected with a majority vote by the metropolitan bishops and boyars of the country. In exchange for this my august imperial favour which I *dispense to the people residing within the limits of the Wallachian province, the Wallachian voyvodship* is bound to pay through the voyvode to the imperial state treasury every year three thousand kazil grosh, as a tribute of vassalage, according to the present value of the said coins current *in the Wallachian land and in the Wallachian*

*voyvodeship.*” The kazil grosh was equal to 500 levas of our money.

“*The inhabitants of the Wallachian province* which is considered my lawful vassal country are written down in my imperial state registers as *rayas* of my empire, as is required by my established state regulations, and as is heretofore done with all other peoples and provinces subject to my empire, and who are considered obedient *rayas* of my dinislam kingdom”.

“My present imperial firman is issued in my military camp, in the fortress of Nicopolis, this day, in the beginning of the month of Rebiyul-evel, 795 of the Hegira (1393—1394).”

19. Then came the famous battle of Nicopolis in which Sigismund and his Christian allies fought against Bayazet, and which some historians place in 1396, but which, according to Schiltberger, direct witness and participant in this battle, took place in 1394, that is, the same year and immediately after the capitulation of Mircho to Bayazet. It is generally admitted that Mircho took part with his troops at the beginning of this battle, in concert with the allied Christian armies, but later, in consequence of a misunderstanding with the allies in regard to the manner and order of the attack, he withdrew and abandoned the battlefield before the serious fighting began.

“The duke of Burgundy, despite the order of Sigismund, attacked the enemy first, with his cavalry, but was repulsed and taken prisoner”, says Schiltberger (*Travels of Johann Schiltberger*, Translation of Bruno, p. 4).

“Mircho, having seen that it is impossible to continue the war, in consequence of the morally crushing effect of the defeat of the French army, abandons the battle-

field and returns to Wallachia” — adds Xenopol (vol. I, p. 258).

Although there is a doubt as to whether the Wallachian voyvode who played such inglorious part in the battle was Mircho, or some other Wallachian vassal voyvode whom Schiltberger calls “Voyvode Werter”, and Penzel “Voyvode Martin”, still, the substantial agreement as regards the above circumstances of Xenopol and Schiltberger with Djeveded Pasha who describes the same events as preceding the capitulation of Mircho, leads to the conclusion that this capitulation of 1394 (795 of the Hegira) must have taken place at the time of the battle of Nicopolis, in the camp of Bayazet, and under these conditions it was probable, that it was imposed on Bayazet *as a state necessity*, as is said in the firman itself. Thus Mircho, after his perfidious act towards Tsar Shishman and Ivanku near Silistra, performs a third perfidious act towards Sigismund and his allied Christian armies. Properly speaking, this perfidy is fourth in order, for the alliance made with Sigismund whom he betrays was concluded, in violation of another alliance previous to that concluded with Poland. And Xenopol says: “The Poles, seeing that Mircho abandons the alliance made with them, in order to join the Hungarians, try to depose him, and while he was yet before the walls of Nicopolis, incite his son Vlado to rebel against his father. This Vlado assumes the title of Prince of Wallachia and in 1396 makes a treaty of vassalage with Poland.” (Vol. I, p. 258).

So Mircho during his eight years’ rule commits one fratricide and four acts of perfidy, becomes twice Turkish vassal, places his people in the degraded

condition of Turkish rayas, and provokes his son Vlado to rise against him.

Thus is explained the fact that he lost the confidence of his Turkish, Hungarian, and Polish suzerains, and that Bayazet in his firman reproaches him for "*his crimes*".

The firman serves also as a proof of the following two circumstances: first, before this capitulation Wallachia had been under Turkish rule and subjected to Mohammedan propaganda, for in this sense only can this clause in the firman be explained: "*Those Mussulmans who were formerly Christians and have embraced and professed the holy orthodox Mohammedan faith shall not be prosecuted*". . . And secondly, Mircho never ruled Dobrudja, for after his liberation from the Broussa banishment in 1392, he falls again under Turkish rule in 1393—1394, and capitulates under the terms of the firman, in which "the Wallachian voyvodeship", "the Wallachian province", and the population of that province, are only spoken of, while nothing is said of Silistra and Dobrudja which Schiltberger calls just then, after its subjugation by the Turks, "Third Bulgaria".

Roumanian history makes the battle of Rovina, in which Mircho is said to have won a signal victory and driven the Turks on this side of the Danube, follow immediately after the battle of Nicopolis, or in 1396 (Xenopol, vol. II, p. 258). However, according to a Bulgarian manuscript of the XV century, in the possession of Constantine of Kostenets, and quoted by Mr. Zlatarsky (see *Voenny Izvestia*, N<sup>o</sup> 35, 1917), in this battle also, which occurs not in 1396, but towards the end of 1394, or in the month of October, Mircho is beaten and flees to "Hungarian land", and Bayazet, despite the firman of 795 of the

Hegira, leaves his son Vlado as vassal ruler of Wallachia. Keeping in mind Mircho's conduct towards the Bulgarians, one can understand why in this battle take part on the side of the Turks: Stephan Lazarevitch, Constantine of Kiustendil, and Marco Kralyevitch, and according to the anonymous publisher of Paissi's *Tsarstvenik* (from Gherov's manuscript in 1844), we see Bayazet turning from Nicopolis towards Constantinople with Vulko of Dobrudja and Lazar of Euchaitia.

The battle of Rovina must have been brought about by some trick on the part of the deceitful Mircho, in consequence of Bayazet's treatment of Wallachia as vassal state after the battle of Nicopolis.

In regard to the alleged Wallacho-Turkish battle said to have been waged in 1398 near Kalarash in Teleorman, which according to Zlatarsky might vindicate Mircho's titles to Dobrudja, Roumanian historians have nothing to say. Only in Jorga's *History of the Roumanians* we find the following passage relating to this matter:

“Vlad, the ruler set up by the Turks, was left to fight against Mircho who had only Stobor to help him. Vlad was, however, taken captive and carried away beyond the Carpathians by the voyvode of Ardeal. Wallachia was thus left to Mircho who had to defend it against the Turks and who looked for an opportunity to avenge himself. The Sultan crossed the Danube near Silistra, but he found it impossible to advance in a country where there were no roads and no provisions for an army.

For some years after this, Mircho was obliged to defend his Danube frontier against the Turks who did not cross in great numbers, but in small plundering bands, sent by the Cis-Danubian begs — relations

of Evrenos and Turchan Pasha, established in Vidin, Nicopolis, and Silistra." (Yorga, *History of the Roumanians*, p. 81).

In 1413 Bayazet dies. After his death Mircho continues his deceitful policy with Bayazet's successors, Moussa, Sileyman, and Mohammed, without, however, being able on any occasion to cross to the right bank of the Danube. But with the firm establishment of Mohammed I. to the throne in 1412, Mircho wholly submits to him, sending special envoys to announce his submission. On this occasion Mohammed I. issues a special Hatti-Sherif (Xenopol, vol. II., p. 261).

This is the history of the Wallachian voyvode Mircho, and every one will see, that in it there is absoluteley nothing that accords Roumania any historical rights to Dobrudja.

Dobrudja was conquered by the Turks under Ali Pasha in 1390. Nesri in enumerating the towns which Ali Pasha had captured in Dobrudja, explicitly mentions Silistra, while Zeaedin gives Hirsovo also. It is, therefore, evident that Dobrudja was never ruled by Mircho, and that in regard to this matter, Mircho was only the possessor of high sounding titles which he assumed as an ally to, and participant with, the Turks, in the battles fought near Silistra.

From all that is said above is seen, that independently of the fact that a mere rule of a foreign land, however long it may be, does not of itself constitute, or create any historical rights to that country, there is absolutely no ground for Roumania's claims to Dobrudja.

IX.

**Dobrudja under the Turks — Bulgarian character of Dobrudja in the XIV<sup>th</sup>, XV<sup>th</sup>, and XVI<sup>th</sup> centuries, according to Schiltberger, Drinoff, Lamansky, and Georgitch. — Second devastation of Bulgaria during the XVI<sup>th</sup> century and traces of this devastation in Dobrudja. — Georgitch identifies Bulgaria with Dobrudja and its adjacent provinces, Deliorman and Gherlovo. — Georgitch pleads before Batory for the cause of Dobrudja and makes preparations for its liberation at the beginning of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century.**

21. Dobrudja fell under the Turks before the Bulgarian Kingdom of Tirnovo did. This is proved by the fact that Ali Pasha advances to besiege Tsar Shishman in Nicopolis, after the conquest of Dobrudja, where Shishman was subsequently sent as captive to Tuzla.

But under the Turks, also, Dobrudja remains a Bulgarian land. The Bavarian writer, Johann Schiltberger, who as an adjutant to the noble Leongarti Richartinger is taken captive by Bayazet in the battle of Nicopolis, calls it *Third Bulgaria*.

His adventures and travels as a captive of Bayazet in Europe, Asia, and Africa, from 1394 to 1427, Schiltberger describes in detail after his flight, the last stage of which ends with Kilie-Belgrade-Sulina-Linburg.

In chapter 29 of his book he says:

“Among these lands I visited above all three Bulgarias. The first lies over against Hungaria, as far as the Iron Gates; its capital is called Pudem (Vidin). The second Bulgaria lies opposite to Wallachia; its capital is Tirnovo (Ternau). *The third is near the mouth of the Danube; its capital is Kallacerka (Kaliacra).*”



This testimony is plain and categorical. It is not at all contradictory to the fact that at that time, and after its subjugation by the Turks, Dobrudja constituted the third Danubian Bulgaria.

But even during the Turkish dominion Dobrudja remains as regards its national consciousness a Bulgarian province.

“Among us at home, and especially among the Turks”, says Drinoff, “it is often related that in the eastern provinces of Danubian Bulgaria, the Turkish conquerors met staunch resistance on the part of the Bulgarians there; that great battles were fought followed by bloody and terrible devastations, whence is derived the designation of the province of Tuzluk (ashes)!” Drinoff considers this tradition improbable, because, notwithstanding all cataclysms, this eastern part of Bulgaria preserved its predominant Bulgarian character long after its subjugation by the Turks. The Turkish colonisation in the province availed little. This view he supports by the fact that in 1444, Vladislav, the King of Poland and Hungary, succeeds in one month to traverse Danubian Bulgaria and to occupy south Dobrudja with Varna, Kavarna, Kaliacra, Baltchik, and other towns, with only an army of 20,000 men, which he could not have done, had he operated in the midst of an inimical Turkish population.

“The Turkish rule in Danubian Bulgaria at that time was rather a temporary occupation. And had not the janissaries succeeded in snatching the victory from the hands of Vladislav at Varna, after he had defeated the Turkish cavalry, there is no doubt that that very year Huniyady Yanco would have become King of Bulgaria,

for Vladislav had already made up his mind on that point.” (Drinoff, pp. 526—529).

In the XV<sup>th</sup> century, then, Dobrudja remained Bulgarian, despite the terrible experiences it went through.

22. Such Dobrudja remains during the XVI<sup>th</sup> century also. From a manuscript of 1831, found by Professor Lamansky, in which is described the second devastation of Bulgaria, which, through the intrigue of the Patriarch of Constantinople began in the reign of Sultan Selim I and continued to the time of Selim II (1510—1570), we learn that the task of devastating the Danubian Vilayet, from the sea as far as Vidin, consequently, including Dobrudja, was entrusted to the Tartar Kaimakam Murza, with an army of 46,000 Tartars.

The record of this Bulgarian chronicle is confirmed by other sources also. In 1518—1519 Selim I. ordered all churches made of stone to be turned into mosques, and the Christians to build for themselves frame churches. Moreover, Selim I. considered it a state necessity to compel his rayas to embrace the Mohammedan faith (*Works of Drinoff*, p. 530). This policy towards the Christians induced the Tartars to acknowledge the supreme authority of the Sultan in the time of Mohammed I. and to cross over into Dobrudja in large numbers, pillaging and devastating the country.

In connection with the above events we must say that in Dobrudja traces of only three ancient churches of that period have been found: 1) the ancient church of St. Athanasius, in the village of Nicolitsel, built of stone, which was excavated under a hill. It seems this church was covered up with earth, in order to escape the fate of other churches which were turned into mosques; 2) the ancient half-subterranean church

of Babadag built of wood, on the site on which now stands the present church of St. Demetrius, built in 1836—1840. While laying the foundation of the latter edifice there was found the corner-stone of the ancient church, with the inscription of “Simeon” and the year 1535 on it. This stone, according to the testimony of the last Roumanian priest in Babadag, and based on the information collected by him from Andrey Simeonoff of Zaporoga, was carried away by the Greek bishop who dedicated the newly built church; 3) the church of St. Nicolas at Tchernavoda, which also does not exist now, but which, like that of Babadag, had the privilege of receiving a gift of 25 thalers from the Wallachian voyvode, Alexander Ipsilanty, for the years 1774—1782, a fact which the Roumanians utilise in considering as Roumanian these two ancient Bulgarian churches of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century.

23. The most direct information, however, in regard to the Bulgarian character of Dobrudja during the XVI<sup>th</sup> century is given to us by the Ragusan Paul Georgitch in his memoirs, *Il regno di Bulgaria*, and in a letter, both written in 1595. (The memoirs were found in the archives of Milan and published in Makuscheff’s second volume, while the letter was discovered in the archives of Florence). The memoirs were read to Stephen Batory, prince of Transylvania, with a view to inducing Batory to undertake the liberation of Bulgaria (Works of Drinoff, p. 533).

Georgitch lived nine years in Bulgaria, had a commercial firm in Provadia, and carried on trade with Dobrudja. “Although he knew well”, says Drinoff, “that the Bulgarians inhabit the present principality,

as well as Roumelia, he considered as purely Bulgarian province *Dobrudja* (*Dobruca, Deliorman, and Gorilovo*) (*Gherlovo*.)”

“Il regno di Bulgaria”, says Georgitch, “is divided into three provinces. The first is called *Dobrudja*, extending from the mouth of the Danube to Varna. In this province I have lived a longtime and traded. The littoral of Dobrudja is inhabited by Christians. The following towns are found there: Kiustenje, Mangalia, Baltchik, Varna, Charer, Mulu, Irossea or Iroste, Oriahovitsa, Kavarna, Corbis (Garvan), Eihorna, Franga, Novo-selo, and Galata. In the interior of the Dobrudja are the towns of Tultcha, Babaa (Babadag), Caraso (Tchernavoda), Cassasui (Kassapkiou), Passarghi, and Pravadia. In Cassasui Babasi *the Christians are more numerous than the Turks. The Turks in these places are all from Asia, they are not fit for military service, but the natives are brave, and from them could be recruited a good battalion, though they have no other weapons than swords, bows, and arrows.*”

Then Georgitch describes the districts of Sofia, Tirnovo, and Lovetch, returns again to Dobrudja, Deliorman and Gherlovo, and assures the Transylvanian prince that this part which forms *del si bel regno di Bulgaria* will greet his army with great joy, and besides supplying it with all it needs, it could also collect an army of 25,000 men — *uomini bravi*.

It appears that Georgitch firmly believed in the speedy realization of the work of liberation to be undertaken by Batory, for in his memoirs he gives the latter instructions as to the manner in which his army was to act, which shows that Georgitch knew very well the attitude of the Bulgarians. He advises Batory to instruct

both officers and soldiers to treat the Bulgarians kindly, else unpleasant consequences would follow. "Although the Bulgarians are anxiously awaiting the Christian army and are ready to assist it in every way, if the army, however, begins to ill treat the people, to plunder and do mischief, the Bulgarians then would be sure to turn against them and side with the Turks. In such a case the Bulgarians would occupy the Balkan passes and hold them until a Turkish army arrives."

The Venitian *Lazar Seranzo* who lived towards the end of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century relates that in the north Danubian Bulgarian province of Dobrudja (in Dobruccia bulgara provincia) there lived the so called *acandjis* who enjoyed special privileges, and who, according to Paolo Jovia, had a hereditary chief Mihalooglu (Drinoff, pp. 543—544).

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## X.

**Dobrudja under the Turks. — During the XVI<sup>th</sup> century, also, Dobrudja remains centre of Bulgarian intellectual and economic life. — The Ragusan Gundulitch and Macarius Patriarch of Antiochia about the Bulgarian character of Dobrudja in the XVI<sup>th</sup> century. — People of Dobrudja Ragusan subjects. — Cossacks of Mazeppa in Dobrudja ; period of interminable Russo-Turkish wars. — Horrible times in Dobrudja. — Dobrudja a desert, but still Bulgarian.**

24. During the period of the second Bulgarian Kingdom the centre of our political life is transferred from the Dobrudja to Tirnova and Mysia; the centre of our economic life, however, is Dobrudja, where it developed and flourished, despite the frequent devastations from which it suffered until the middle of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century. This is accounted for by the geographical position and the economic prosperity of the province, which fact also accounts for its subsequent cosmopolitan physiognomy.

Dobrudja in those days carried on extensive trade with the Italian republics, and we know that the Bulgarian Tsar and ruler, Dobrotitch, is the first to win fame by his fleet, and his son Ivanku, in the first days of his reign, concludes special commercial treaties with the Genoese republic. The beginning of these close commercial relations dates back to the reign of Tsar Ivan Assen II, who with a charter granted to Ragusans, allows them: “to buy and sell in Tirnovo and in all Zagoria (North Bulgaria), in *Preslav*, and in the *Karvuna country*” (see Schafarik, *Pamatky*).

The Karvuna country or province is the Dobrudja, so called, before the time of Dobrotitch, from the name of Karvona, or Baltchik of today.

From that time on Dobrudja becomes the commercial centre of Bulgaria, and we see that Georgitch in the XVI<sup>th</sup> century identifies *il regno di Bulgaria* with Dobrudja and its adjacent provinces of Deliorman and Gherlovo, which formed the possessions of Dobrotitch and Ivanku.

From the reports of Matthey Gundulitch, ambassador of Ragusa to the Sublime Porte in 1684, we see that *in the XVII<sup>th</sup> century, also, Dobrudja remains one of the greatest commercial seats of Bulgaria*, and that in almost in all its towns resided Ragusans and subjects of Ragusa. And since the Ragusans were a highly privileged class of people in Turkey, they could buy and sell, without even paying custom dues and imposts. They had the right to build churches, to have their own priests, and hold religious services unmolested, a right of which the *rayas* were deprived. For this reason the Bulgarians in some places began to embrace Roman-Catholicism and to become subjects of Ragusa. Of the six churches the Ragusans had in Bulgaria, three were in Dobrudja, in Silistra, Pravadia, and Baba (Babadag). The priest of Baba also officiated in Issaktcha, Ismael, and Tultcha, and the one in Pravadia, — in Varna, Shumen, and Pazardjik (Drinoff, pp. 111—112).

From the travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antiochia, in Dobrudja during 1689 we learn that at that time Issaktcha and Matchin were purely Bulgarian towns. Leaving Kiustendje, after crossing a low and desert plain, Macarius arrives at a small town inhabited by *Bulgarian Christians*,

called Iglitsa, which was situated in the middle of the Danube. A road connects it with the mainland. It is under Mohammedan rule. "I saw", says Macarius, "crosses in the cemetery of the little town. There is also a church in the town. From here I reached the town of Majina (Matchin) on the Danube, having 420 houses of Bulgarian Christians. It is the most distant town in this Turkish province and is under the pashalik of Silistra. There are Turkish administrative officers and a kadi". (*Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch*. Translated by F. C. Balfour, A. M. Oxon., London, vol. I., p. 42, according to Al. Arbore).

The economic and intellectual life of the Bulgarians, then, in the time of the darkest period of the Turkish dominion, continued to manifest itself in Dobrudja, though at this time it was not possible for the Bulgarians to lead a normal social life, in consequence of which, they had to use shrewdness in order to survive.

25. During the years 1672—1679, as well as during 1683—1699, in the time of the frequent wars of the Turks with Russia and Poland, closing with the peace of Carlovitz 1699, Babadag becomes the centre and base of military operations. Dobrudja is turned into an extensive military camp by the Turks. It had to undergo all the hardships and terrible effects resulting from wars.

In 1709 by virtue of a treaty with the Babadag *serasker* (commander) Jussef Pasha, the Cossack hetman Mazeppa crosses the Danube and settles down in Dobrudja as an autonomous ruler of his people, with the obligation on his part to give in time of war military help to the Turks against Russia. This treaty was in



force until 1828, when the Cossacks broke it in favour of the Russians.

Then follow the wars of 1711, 1717, 1737, and 1739, closing with the treaty of Passarovitz in 1718, and with that of Belgrade in 1739.

The greater part of the hardships and calamities entailed by these wars fell on the Dobrudja, and despite all this, the French consul Peysonel, sent to the Tartar Khan in the Crimea in 1750—1753, testifies of the prosperous condition of Dobrudja. He describes and points out as principal towns in Dobrudja: Silistra, Toulcha, Babadag, and Timazov (?); and as large sea-port towns: *Mangalia*, *Kiustendje*, and *Karaharman*.

In 1768 the Turks declare war against the Russians, and from that time begin the most terrible times for Dobrudja, ending with the war of 1828. From these wars Dobrudja emerges completely devastated. Turkish fanaticism, on the one hand, plunder and devastation by the Russians, on the other, tended to destroy every vestige of culture in the Province. Dobrudja is turned into a deserted and ruined plain, into a desert. From Tchernavoda, Hirsovo, and Matchin — as far as the sea, and from Issaktcha to Dobritch, nothing was left but burned down houses and denuded plains.

Marshall Moltke describes Dobrudja as follows: "A veritable desert which excites the amazement of everybody that such a desert should be found in the middle of Europe. The density of population in the towns does not surpass three inhabitants to the square mile. Nowhere, not even in the villages, are to be seen trees or shrubs. If a hostile column were obliged to traverse the Province by its central roads, it would have to struggle against the greatest privations

for a distance of 50 miles. The villages are nothing but heaps of ruins. Kiustendje numbers only 40 inhabitants, Hirsova only 30 houses, a third part of the villages marked on the map are altogether wanting. The destructiveness of war has left indelible traces on Dobrudja. The whole country of about 200 square leagues forms an extensive waste which, I do not believe, has more than 20,000 inhabitants. Man, the enemy and persecutor of man, has driven people away in, order to secure the sway of beasts or birds of prey. Nowhere else have I met such huge and fierce vultures, some of which I could touch with my whip.”

These results, however, were not brought about only by the war of 1828, but also by the wars dating from 1768. Since that time Dobrudja becomes a victim of repeated atrocities and unparalleled devastations described only in a general way by Marshall Moltke. The first of these wars lasted 6 years, from 1768—1774; the second 8 years, from 1784—1792; the third 7 years, from 1806—1812, and the fourth, a year and a half, from 1828—1829.

For all these vicissitudes caused by an avenging fate, as it were, the Dobrudja Bulgarian had to pay with his life and property. However, despite the war of 1854, the spirit of the Bulgarian rose up anew to prepare the way for the subsequent wars of liberation.

Of the Bulgarian character of Dobrudja during the period of the first two wars the quotations given from Gundulitch and Macarius speak eloquently. This is all the more remarkable as this period embraces the reign of Selim III, famous in history. Of the merciless

persecutions and massacres of the Bulgarians and of the roving bands of *Kirjalis* and *Daalis*, of the period of the third and fourth wars — those of 1806—1812 and 1828—1829, we shall speak in the next chapter, giving quotations from Roumanian sources.

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XI.

**Dobrudja under the Turks in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. — Devastations in Dobrudja during the wars of 1806 and 1829. — Proclamation of Bagration to the Bulgarians in the Dobrudja in 1809, and the Bulgarian character of Dobrudja during the period of these two wars. — End of the terrible times for the Dobrudja and its regeneration. — Part played by Bulgarians and that of other nationalities, especially of the Roumanians, in this regeneration.**

26. Its final desolation the Dobrudja owes to the war of 1806—1812. Since then she has acquired the reputation, she has long had, of being a desert, arid, unfertile, bare, marshy and poor country.

M. D. Jonescu sets forth the desolation of the Dobrudja, according to the memoirs of Langeron, as follows:

“On August 2, 1809, the column of Bulatoff reaches the place opposite Issaktcha and begins preparations for the shelling of the latter town, but learning from some Bulgarians of Issaktcha that the Turks had evacuated the town, he takes it without any opposition. In the town he finds 7 cannons, much ammunition, and a rich booty consisting of military supplies. The fortress was in a good state of preservation and was surrounded by a high wall and an old but solid tower of stone.”

“In the monastery of Kokosh, then of unknown fame, were found concealed some *1200 Bulgarians* hidden there for fear of the murderous Turks. The Russians set them free and sent them to Bessarabia.”

“From Issaktcha Bulatoff advanced to Toultscha; he found in the evacuated and deserted town 18 cannons and great quantities of ammunition and supplies. On the way to Babadag he came across 1500 Bulgarian refugees with their herds, fleeing from the bashibozouks. Instead of driving away the bashibozouks and setting the Bulgarians free, he took them prisoners and sent them together with their flocks to Bessarabia.

“On August 9, the same year, General Prozorevsky on the way from Vakareny to Toultscha died in the village of *Protok*” (present Gigila).

“After the capture of Matchin on August 18, Bagration liberated the population and issued a *proclamation to all the Bulgarian population*, in which he guaranteed them the security of person and property, and exhorted the people to calm themselves and not to abandon their dwelling places. A few days afterwards, however, after the capture of Tchernavoda by Platoff, *the Cossacks and Muscovites scattered about in strong detachments along the Danube, towards Hirsovo and Matchin, devastated and destroyed the whole of western Dobrudja*. Many rich villages were totally destroyed. These villages could have fed the Russian army for months. The Russians took as plunder 50,000 heads of cattle which the higher officers divided among themselves and sent to Russia as their personal property.”

From this quotation it follows, that *until this war the population of the whole of western Dobrudja was Bulgarian*.

“After the occupation of Matchin, General Markoff traversed all Dobrudja and reached the sea north of Kiustendje, everywhere pillaging and devastating the

country. *He sent 3,000 Bulgarians and Lipovans* (Russian sectaries) as prisoners to Galatz, and the rest he drove away; he confiscated their property for the benefit of the Imperial treasury, and as manager of this property he appointed a certain Greek, Kamely, a state councillor and public functionary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This man appropriated everything for himself, including food supplies, obtained from the fields gathered by reapers brought over from Wallachia. Thus, what the bandit Tcholak-Pehlivan and the bashibozuk had spared, “the Russians destroyed.”

“During the winter the Russian army was exposed to horrible privations and epidemic diseases. Then Bagration saw the great mistake he had made in letting his army devastate Dobrudja, *for all the remaining population fled to Bulgaria with all its property and cattle.* The bad condition of the troops obliged Bagration to retire first to Hirsovo and then to cross the Danube.” (Jonescu, *Dobrogea in pragul veacului XX—lea*, pp. 567—588).

Thus closes the third devastating war for Dobrudja. The fourth war, that of 1828—1829, we sketched briefly in the preceding chapter in which was quoted the description given by Marshall Moltke.

Dobrudja had hardly been able to recover from the wounds of the seven years war, when that of 1828 began, and Moltke in speaking of it after this war, finds it deserted and devastated (*ibid*, p. 593).

27. Moltke visited Dobrudja in 1836 and in 1839, and testifies that it did not then have as many as 20,000 inhabitants.

However, all the present Bulgarian settlements in the Dobrudja date, some from 1810—1812, others from 1830—1835.

What was then the population of 20,000 people that Moltke finds in 1837—1839, and where was that native Roumanian population, whose patrimony, according to Roumanian writers, “the Bulgarian immigrants” had occupied, every one can easily understand.

But the Roumanians constantly keep repeating that the Bulgarians of Dobrudja came from Bulgaria and Bessarabia. Where did they come from, when Dobrudja was depopulated after the wars of 1806—1828, and when, according to the testimony of Roumanian writers, all who had not perished or left their bones in their native land, either fled, or were deported to Bessarabia and Bulgaria?

The objections of Roumanian writers, however, go much farther. These writers really mean this: “The Bulgarians that came to Dobrudja are not the same as those who were killed, driven away, or who had to flee the country; they are altogether different”. This objection is trivial, as is, indeed, all this controversy in regard to the official national character of this unfortunate Bulgarian land. The truth is, the children of Dobrudja had set themselves to work with an inexhaustible energy and unswerving determination for the upbuilding of their country.

That is why we cannot agree with what the Roumanian writers, J. Jonescu in 1850, and M. D. Jonescu in 1903, say of the population of Dobrudja:

“Almost all the population of this fine province is composed of vagabonds, of people deprived of the means of getting a livelihood. All the people, who

have settled in the Dobrudja have only one object in view — to make money. They left their country in order to colonise a depopulated land". (Dobrogea in pragul veacului, XX. p. 323).

Could a serious man believe, that this land of blood and tears, of constant conflagrations, this desolated and desert land, "in which wild beasts had taken the place of human beings, and for miles no tree or bush is to be seen, or water, or fenced spot to be found, a depopulated, arid, marshy and sandy land" — this kingdom of pestilence and death, would recall back others than the sons, fathers, and brothers of those whose spirit, traditions, ancient homes, were always dear to them? Adventurers would have never been attracted to such a poor and uninviting country.

It is true that the present population of Dobrudja is composed of various nationalities; it is also true that some of these people were drawn by the hope of bettering their condition. But all this follows after Dobrudja is restored and the economic welfare of the native population developed. All these nationalities, however, were and remain alien to the cultural, social, and political life of Dobrudja and its predominant national character, which begin to be manifested immediately after the war, to grow and flourish in the period between 1850 and 1865, and to reach full political maturity in 1875—1878.

28. With the close of the war of 1828—1829 the terrible times of the Dobrudja come to an end, and as far back as 1832 begins the intensive intellectual and social national life of the Bulgarians. In 1832, the village of Kassapkiyoy opens again its school, and about the same time the Bulgarians rebuild the de-



stroyed town of Toulcha, a few kilometres south-east of its former site. Everywhere over the ruins of towns and villages are established new settlements. New life begins, and the indefatigable Bulgarians hasten to rebuild their villages, their churches, and their schools, and thus put the impress of their national character.

Where were the Roumanians and those Roumanian settlements in those days of suffering, sacrifice, and superhuman effort for the resuscitation of a desolated Fatherland?

During the years from 1850 to 1865, when the Bulgarian national life was already in full bloom, when the Bulgarians imposed their sway and hegemony even on the Turkish population, when Toulcha takes the place of the Turkish centre of Babadag and becomes the capital of the entire Sandjak, and the restored Dobrudja acquires its former vitality as a Bulgarian land, Dr. Adler in 1856 writes: "The Roumanians inhabit only the Danubian coast — *the Roumanians hide their nationality and call themselves Bulgarians*". Karl Peters in 1865 estimates the population of the Roumanian settlements about 12,000 out of 160,000 for the whole Dobrudja.

The statement of Dr. Adler is confirmed by the Roumanian geographer and ethnologist, Danescu, who says: "In order to defend themselves against the Turks who had no confidence in them, the Roumanians called themselves Bulgarians".

An ethnical conglomeration numerically insignificant and alien to our land, which gets lost in the Bulgarian masses and appears as an inert class of people lacking any personality — that is the part played by the Roumanian element in Dobrudja, not only down to its occupation by Roumania, but even during the long years of that occupation.

## XII.

**Dobrudja on the eve of the war of Liberation from the Turks. — The part played by the town of Toulcha in the regeneration of Bulgaria. — Ikonomoff, Levsky, Stephan Karadja, and father Hariton, as Dobrudjan pioneers and revolutionaries — Dobrudja and the Firman creating the Exarchate, and the Reform project of the Constantinople Conference designed to give autonomous régime to Bulgaria.**

29. Notwithstanding the war of 1854—1856, the new life in Bulgaria does not stop, and the last Russo-Turkish war of 1877—1878 finds Dobrudja with a consolidated national physiognomy, fully prepared for the political liberty of Bulgaria, in the name of which this war was declared and waged.

Since 1685 Babadag becomes the seat of the Silistra pashalik. This town develops as a strong Turkish centre, and as the capital of the Province it increases its population to 60,000 inhabitants. The new national revival, however, of the Bulgarians in Dobrudja, after the war of 1829, not only restores Toulcha, but makes it a new centre of social, economic, cultural, and political activity in all Dobrudja. It becomes its capital and Dobrudja is thence called “the Toulcha Sandjak”.

Toulcha henceforward begins to play the part of a metropolis and to give Bulgarian impress on the life of the whole Province. In vain Midhat Pasha tries in 1870—71 to usurp the Bulgarian schools and annihilate the cultural life of Dobrudja. The character and national self-consciousness of the Bulgarians proved stronger than the will of this energetic Turkish politi-

cian, and every attempt to stifle the spirit of the people found a decided resistance on the part of a strong social organisation which already counted a number of diplomats, such as the Brothers Theodoroff — Stefanaki and Dimitraki beg, and public and literary men, such as Todor Iconomoff, Bishop Clement, Dr. Yankouloff, Sava Dobroplodny, Anton Franghia, Krustu Mirsky, Izvorsky, and others. Its numerous and well-established church and school committees are duly represented in the Turkish *medjlis* (council) in Roustchuck, which even maintain relations with the representatives of the foreign Powers in Toulcha. A compact body of merchants, tradesmen, farmers, insurgents, and conspirators was concentrated in the same national ideal which cemented, so to say, all this diversified social life into one indissoluble whole.

This is the result of that revival which began in 1832—1850 and which filled Dobrudja with churches and schools and literary societies, all of them eloquent manifestations of a national energy.

In 1849 Toulcha erects a new Bulgarian church — the best in Bulgaria then — and in 1859 it takes the lead in the struggle for our ecclesiastical independence. Later on it is the Brothers Theodoroff who through their agent donate the site for the newly-created Exarchate in Ortakioy — on the Bosphorus. It was the church community of Toulcha which supplied the Exarchate with the sum of 200 Turkish liras — about 5000 francs — necessary for its maintenance. In 1860 Toulcha erects a special building for its secondary school (progymnasium) which it names “Svetla Bulgaria” (Bright Bulgaria) in honour of its national and political revival; in 1866 S. Dobroplodny writes and publishes

a Bulgarian chrestomathy in which his name proudly figures as "Teacher in the Toulcha High School". The subject of the first Bulgarian novel, "Lost Stanca", by Bluskoff is taken from the rural life of Dobrudja. His most useful activity as teacher and publicist Todor Iconomoff manifests in Toulcha, and there is no paper, periodical or book of that period of our literary regeneration in which not only Toulcha, but scores of Dobrudjan villages do not take part as subscribers and patrons. One of the seats of the great revolutionary leader Deacon Levsky is the village of Yenikioy in the Toulcha district, where at the same time he teaches school and runs a tavern for the accomodation of secret insurgents and revolutionaries. Under such conditions was born near Toulcha the famous revolutionary chief, Stephan Karadja. The villages of Pasha-Kushla, Beydaout, Kongas, Frecapey, and the whole vicinity of Babadag were the centre of the revolutionary activity of Father Hariton.

Manifold were the manifestations of cultural and social life in Dobrudja and long is the list of names of the first builders of present Bulgaria, who bring out in bold relief the part Dobrudja played in the intellectual and political regeneration of Bulgaria. We do not purpose to fully discuss this subject here, but what we must say and emphasise here is, that the war of Liberation of 1877—1878 found Dobrudja in a flourishing condition intellectually, economically, and politically, with a population of 160,000 inhabitants, in the midst of which the foreign element played absolutely no social part whatever. Dobrudja at that period boasted of having about 90 village schools and as many autonomous churches under the Bulgarian Exarchate, ten literary societies, a gymnasium of four classes, a Bulgarian

Bishopric, a Bulgarian Commercial Company for Import Export and Bank Operations, a Steam-Navigation Company, a Women's Benevolent Society, and — best of all, of containing a Bulgarian civil population fully ripe for political freedom. The Bulgarian people of Dobrudja for some time before this war took an active, almost predominant part, in the intellectual and political regeneration of Bulgaria, in the Ecclesiastical Struggle, in our revolutionary movement and organisations, and in the insurrections. At that time nobody ever thought or spoke of Roumanian historical or ethnical claims on Dobrudja, for the Roumanian population in it was composed of a few Transylvanian shepherds who came temporarily there to pasture their flocks, and of Roumanian peasants who had fled from their country on account of the intolerable serfdom to which they were subjected. The Roumanian shepherds were really guests in the land. They were called *Kojani* — men clad in furs, a group of miserable "refugees" who, lacking every national idea, national sentiment, and national consciousness, came to this new country solely for the purpose of making a living and enjoying greater freedom. Traces of their social life in Dobrudja are not in evidence, nor have the Roumanian writers, so zealous in their nationalist, historical, and statistical zeal and inventiveness, been able to point out to any.

30. Such was the state of affairs in which the great and fateful events of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century found Dobrudja. Its ethnic character has been defined in a plain, categorical, and unambiguous manner in two well-known official acts of international significance, to wit, the Firman of the Sultan, issued in February 1870, ordaining the autonomy of the Bulgarian Church,

and including Dobrudja in the territorial limits of the Bulgarian Exarchate, and the Protocols of the Constantinople Conference of 1876, together with the reform projects prepared by the Powers for the reorganisation of Turkey.

These projects were six in number, the third of which is the project for the Organic Statute of Bulgaria, having the following form:

“Bulgaria — Project for an Organic Statute.”

“31. Out of the territories designated below there will be formed conformably to the annexed map two Vilayets (provinces) which will be administered in the forms set forth in detail below.”

“The Eastern Vilayet, which will have Tirnovo for capital, will be composed of the sanjaks of Rustchuck, Tirnovo, Toulcha, Varna, Sliven, Philippopolis (except Sultan Yeri and Achi-Tcheleby), and of the kazas of Kirk-Kilissa, Mustapha Pasha and Kizil-Agatch.”

“The Western Vilayet, with Sofia for capital, will be composed of the sanjaks of Sofia, Vidin, Uskiub, Nish, Bitolia (except two kazas of the south), the three northern kazas of the Seres sandjak, and the kazas of Strumitsa, Tikvesh, Veles and Castoria.”

The project embraces ten long articles regulating the organisation and administration of Bulgaria.

In the first session of the Constantinople Conference — from 11—23 of December, 1876, attended by the representatives of the seven Powers: Turkey, Germany, Austria, France, England, Italy, and Russia, after the opening speech of the President, Savfet Pasha, the Turkish minister of Foreign Affairs, and the speeches of Salisbury, Count Ignatieff, and Count Zichi, the

extraordinary envoy of France, Count Chaudordy, presented the projects of the foreign representatives with an explanatory speech, of which we take the following passages:

“ . . . The Conference aims to prevent great and important complications and will strive to give to the consolidation of peace *a practical and equitable solution*. In order to facilitate the purpose of our governments, we have set forth in these projects all the measures fit to secure the success of our work.”

“Charged by my colleagues to deliver in your hands this production, you will not fail to appreciate the feelings that have guided us in its composition; our task was to ascertain with the greatest impartiality what under the present circumstances may be deemed as best corresponding to the lawful aspirations of Europe and the most important interests of the Turkish Empire. I appeal to your sentiments and your wisdom, *and ask you to unite with us*, with all Europe, that the Turkish Empire may thus be preserved, to which Empire we wish happiness and prosperity.”

To the question of Edhem Pasha regarding the motives for these projects, Lord Salisbury answers, “*The projects were elaborated on the basis presented by England.*”

Count Chaudordy answers, “*In the drawing up of these documents, previous documents on the subject were consulted and also notes exchanged among the Powers.*”

The Austrian representative Count Zichy says, “*Most of the motives will be found in the Austrian note (of Count Andrassy) of December 30, 1875, which all the Powers received*”.

The Italian plenipotentiary Count Corti said, "The principal motive is to be sought in the present grave situation."

It is then evident that the stipulations of this project are not an arbitrary and accidental act, but the result of a careful study of all the measures which the ethnical peculiarities and the historical rights of the peoples, then embraced within the Turkish Empire, imposed as the imperative conditions for the international equality before the law and the peace in the East.

One of these conditions, explicitly stated in the above project, is the union of Dobrudja with Bulgaria under the new autonomous régime projected for that country, which régime the events of 1876 had imposed.

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### XIII.

**Dobrudja on the eve of the war of 1877 and the bearing of the Reform Project of the Constantinople Conference on our national rights. — Difference between the occasion and the aims of the War of Liberation. — Dobrudja before and during the war. — Bulgarian character of Dobrudja, and Bulgarian administration during the Russian occupation. — Peace of San-Stefano and Ignatieff's letter to the Bulgarians in Dobrudja.**

31. The action of the Constantinople Conference after Turkey's refusal to accept the London protocol of March 13, 1877, and to introduce the proposed reforms of the Conference, closed with the Russo-Turkish war of 1877. The results of this war, however, despite its causes and its solemnly avowed aims, were far from solving those problems which the peace in the Balkans had required and which the Constantinople Conference had felicitously solved.

The reason for this is found in the fact that in the accomplishment of this design Russia cared more for her personal interests and those of her aggrandising policy than for the peace and harmony of the Balkans.

Thus is explained the fact, that to-day, after 40 years, the problem of the future peace which the present war imposes in relation to Bulgaria, finds its outline in the decisions of the Constantinople Conference, which the Berlin Congress ignored on account of Russia's conduct and the fear of the sinister Russian designs.

The bearing of the action of the Powers in the Constantinople Conference on the Bulgarian question which

for the above reasons still remains unsolved finds its full and legal expression in the following preface of Todor Iconomoff, written in 1885, with which he commends to every “educated Bulgarian” the Protocols of the Constantinople Conference with their supplements as a political and legal ground for Bulgaria’s incontestable rights.

“The Constantinople Conference”, he says, “with its decisions accepted by the Turkish government, is one of the principal and sure steps towards the liberation of the Bulgarian people”.

“In the programmes and regulations of this Conference *were recognised by Europe not only the rights of the Bulgarians to a life of freedom and an autonomous rule, but also the right for their country to be called by its own proper name.*”

“Though in a very inexact and limited extent the frontiers of present Bulgaria for the first time received their appropriate definition and went beyond that narrow circle within which the united Greek and Turkish barbarism aimed to keep the Bulgarian people. *From these first officially accepted frontiers of Bulgaria to the true frontiers of the Bulgarian nation there remains only one step.*”

“The library of the educated Bulgarian will never be complete, if in it are not found the Protocols of the said Conference. In that library will be wanting not only one of the important monuments of our modern national history, *but also a very good weapon against our enemies, and a standard for the diplomatic equity of some unduly esteemed statesmen of Europe.*”

“These are the motives that induced me to translate and publish in Bulgarian the Protocols of the Constan-

tinople Conference and to add also the famous London Protocol which gave Russia a free hand and enabled her to declare war in 1877, in order to secure the liberation of Bulgaria within the limits defined in the San-Stefano treaty.”

And in effect, what stronger legal grounds, what more incontestable, and in view of their impartiality, unassailable proofs, what more convincing and overwhelming arguments against the enemies of Bulgaria, and in defence of the rights of the Bulgarian people, than this Project of the Constantinople Conference, which includes within the limits of Bulgaria Macedonia, the Morava valley, and all Dobrudja?

This project was not drawn up by Serbian and Roumanian authors of the type of Tsviitch and their followers and imitators, but neither was it written by Bulgarians, by our chauvinist diplomats, such as we do not possess. Authors and guarantees of its impartiality are the authorised representatives of all the European Powers of the hostile constellations to-day. They are: Baron Werther, Count Zichy, Baron Kalitch, Count Bourgoyne, Count Chaudordy, Marquis of Salisbury, Count Corti, Count Ignatieff, Münster, Beust, D. Harcourt, Derby, Manebrea, and Shuvaloff. Are these Bulgarian chauvinists, or men bribed by Bulgaria? Are they our agens aiming at the conquest of Serbian and Roumanian lands, of which design unscrupulous and ignorant people are now accusing us?

Was it possible in that period of dumb slavery in which we were bound, as it were, in chains, and in which the name of Bulgaria was not even known, for all the representatives of Europe to come together and trace the very frontiers of Bulgaria, for which we have in

this war shed rivers of blood, if these limits did not really and incontestably embrace all Bulgarian lands?

Against all these green-room intrigues launched for the purpose of undermining our historical, ethnical, and political rights won to-day with the blood of the Bulgarian people, there stand the Protocols and Projects of the Constantinople Conference as “a good weapon against our enemies, and *as a standard for the diplomatic equity of some unduly esteemed statesmen of Europe*”.

32. After the refusal of Turkey to admit the interference of the Powers with the internal affairs of her Empire, the London Protocol dwelling again on the solidarity of the Powers in regard to the imperative need of introducing the projected reforms, laid stress upon the fact, that *the Porte agrees to put them into execution “alone”*.

“The Powers think they are justified in hoping that the Porte will energetically carry into effect the measures tending to bring about that amelioration which was unanimously admitted as indispensable for the tranquillity of Europe.”

“They (the Powers) intend to watch carefully how these promises of the Turkish government will be performed.”

“If they find they are again disappointed in their expectations, and if the situation does not improve in a manner *to prevent the return of complications compromising the peace, they declare that such a state of affairs is incompatible with their interests and with those of all Europe in general. In such a case they reserve the right to consider the best means of ameliorating the*

*condition of the Christians and of securing the interests of general peace”.*

The Protocol was signed by Count Shouvaloff with the reserve on the part of Russia: Turkey to sign the Protocol, to conclude peace with Montenegro, to demobilise, to secure the Christians *against all violence, and to introduce the reforms proposed by the Conference”.*

From the above statements it is evident that all Europe then considered as one of the first and essential conditions of the peace in the East the creation of an autonomous Bulgaria *within the limits traced by the European Powers in a real constitutional project.*

In April 12, 1877, Turkey replies with a formal refusal, and on the 24 of April war is declared.

In the manifesto of the Russian Tsar of the same date it is explicitly said: “The Porte refused to cede to the unanimous demands of Europe; *she did not accept the decisions of the Protocol”.* In the order of the Grand Duke Nicholas to the Russian armies of the same date it is said: “We do not undertake this war to conquer other lands, but to help our afflicted and oppressed brothers”. And for this reason this war was called the War of Liberation.

Only England met with distrust this extraordinary sacrifice on the part of the Russian diplomats in favour of European peace. The part, however, Russia had assumed to play as the executor of the decisions of the Constantinople Conference won the sympathies of the world, and kept England from counteracting Russia.

The war began with great enthusiasm, and after the Russian armies had crossed the river Pruth and entered Roumania, the first shots were fired on May 4, 1877, between Braila and Getchet.

The Roumanian writers and professors, Alessi and Popu, describe the military operations in the Dobrudja as follows:

“On June 23 General Zimmermann landed with an infantry regiment in Matchin already evacuated by the Turks.”

“On June 23 the Turks evacuated Issaktcha, Toulcha, and Hirsovo. Soon after this the Russian armies began crossing the Danube at Galatz, Braila, and Hirsovo.”

“On June 28 General Siamsieff, commander of the first Cossack division, reaches Babadag, from where he sends a regiment southward in the footsteps of the Circassian bands.”

“On June 30 not a single Russian soldier was left in Dobrudja, all withdrew south of the line Tchernavoda-Kiustendje. *Even the Turkish population began leaving Dobrudja on account of the maltreatment it suffered from the Bulgarians who were filled with joy at being freed from the Turkish yoke.*”

“Immediately after the first Russian detachment had crossed over to Dobrudja, Tsar Alexander issued the following proclamation *addressed to the Bulgarian people*:

“*Bugarians*, my army has crossed the Danube and entered *your country*, where it has repeatedly fought for the amelioration of the sad condition of the Christians in the Balkan peninsula. . . .”

“To you, Mussulmans *of Bulgaria*, I address the following words of salutary warning. . . . etc.”

“*Christians of Bulgaria*, you are passing through memorable days. The time has come for your liberation from the grievous yoke of the Mussulmans. In giving your assistance, such as is at your disposal, to the

Russian success, *you will be furthering your own cause which is the regeneration of the Bulgarian kingdom.*“

“With the advance of our armies, the Turkish authorities will be replaced by a new administration. *In this administration will be called to take active part the native citizens, and the young Bulgarian legions will serve as a basis for a Bulgarian military force appointed to keep order and security. Serve your country with zeal and honour, and in doing your duty with self-abnegation and loyalty, you will show the world that is watching you that you fully deserve the liberty Russia is preparing for you.*” *Rasboiul Oriental Illustrat*, of Alessi Popu, (pp. 408—410).

Before the proclamation of the Russian Tsar and the invasion of Dobrudja by the Russian armies, the Bulgarians had formed in all towns and villages “provisional councils of three members each, which the Russians found duly constituted and authorised to manage the local administrative affairs.

Besides all this, as assistant to Belotchercovitch, the Russian governor of Dobrudja, was appointed a Bulgarian, *Dascaloff*, later on Bulgarian Commercial Agent in Adrianople. To the latter was entrusted the management of local affairs. At the same time Bulgarian courts of justice were organised in Toulcha and Babadag, called “District Juridical Councils.”

Thus throughout the period of occupation the administrative and judicial authorities were Bulgarian and such Roumania found them when she occupied Dobrudja. Among the preserved documents of that period there were found some protocols for the formation of the local “provisional administrations” in Dobrudja, as well as judicial registers of the Babadag Judicial Council.

In one of these registers are recorded all judicial decisions issued during this period, 80 in number, duly written and signed by the president and the two members of the Judicial Council (Nicolaeff, Papantcheff, the third signature illegible).

From all that has been said above everyone will see how strongly the Bulgarian character of Dobrudja was manifested at the time of the liberation of Bulgaria. No one until then ever thought or suspected that the fate of Dobrudja would be different from that of Bulgaria. And when the conditions of the San-Stefano Treaty were published, Count Ignatieff sent to the Dobrudja Bulgarians a secret letter which Belotchercovitch read to the Toulcha notables and delegates of the Province at a secret meeting held in the hall of the literaray society. In this letter Ignatieff says:

“The cession of Dobrudja to Roumania is dictated by state necessity and in order to justify the annexation of Bessarabia to Russia. It need not, however, scare or alarm the Dobrudja Bulgarians, as it is provisional, and Dobrudja in the near future will again be united with free Bulgaria.”

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## XIV.

**Dobrudja and Bulgaria geographically one and indivisible. — Dobrudja at the San-Stefano Peace. — Its unnatural division and the creation of a Dobrudja question in the general Balkan problem. — Causes and aims of this division, the sum and substance of Dobrudja question and the reverse results from the decision of the Berlin Treaty sanctioning its division.**

33. Prior to Berlin Congress, and during the whole period of the Turkish domination, Dobrudja had always formed an undivided part of Bulgaria. In the beginning Dobrudja formed the centre of the Cis-Danubian Bulgarian Kingdom, and because of the district of Deliorman, the first natural boundary with the Byzantine Empire, the whole of Mysia, west of Deliorman, became known in the history of our first conflicts with Byzantium as the "Zagorie". Later, after the consolidation of our dominion in the Balkans, Dobrudja was included in Mysia or Mysinia, and in Gheroff's manuscript of Paissy's history (Tsarstvenik), which divides Bulgaria into four parts: Mysinia (Mysia), Thrace, Macedonia, and Dardania, we see placed within the limits of Mysinia (Mysia) the following Dobrudjan towns: Silistra, Matchin, Preslava, Baba (Babadag), Toulcha, Kavarna, and Varna.

In the course of our second Kingdom Dobrudja bore the name of "Province of Karvuna", at which time in the south it included only Baltchik, without Silistra; and in the time of Dobrotich it extended its limits to the west, including Silistra, and to the south, Mesem-

vria, and along the sea-coast, as far as Midia which Cantacuzenus was barely able to save.

After the Turkish conquest and the forcible conversion to Mohammedanism of a large part of the Christian population, when the districts of Gherlovo, Tuzluk, and Deliorman were more strictly defined, all the country north and north-east of these districts was embraced in Dobrudja. And finally, when Toulcha became the first city and centre of the social life of Dobrudja, the Tulcha sandjak only was called Dobrudja, the southern limits of which coincided with the limits of the Kiustendjeh and Medjidieh kazas included in the Toulcha sandjak. "The Dobrudja," says L. A. Nazarettean, "under Turkish rule constituted only a separate district, called the Sandjak or Mutessarifik of Toulcha, which formed a part of the Danubian vilayet in which was embraced all northern Bulgaria with Dobrudja. It was governed by a mutessarif who had his residence in Toulcha, and extended from the mouth of the Danube, as far as Tchernavoda and the sea coast, from Vulcovo, to the other side of Kiustendjeh.

Dobrudja was subdivided into seven kazas, viz., Toulcha, Sulina, Kiustenjeh, Matchin, Hirsovo, Babadag, and Medjidieh, and four mudurliks: Kilia, Issakcha, Mahmudieh, and Tchernavoda.

34. It was within these limits that the War of Liberation found Dobrudja, and when, according to the Treaty of San-Stefano, Russia decided to exchange Dobrudja for Bessarabia and thus get back from Europe what she lost in 1856.

This action of Russia justified the distrust of England which from a Protector of Bulgaria became at the Berlin Congress the principal cause of her political

mutilation. In order to make Dobrudja a strong buffer against Russian aspirations in the East it was made to extend in the west as far as Silistra, and in the east, as far as Mangalia, including this sea-port town, these districts being torn away from the Routschuck and Varna sanjaks.

There was no doubt then, as there is none now, that by so despoiling Bulgaria Europe did not aim to secure the peace in the East, as it tried to secure it at the Constantinople Conference, otherwise it wouldn't have allowed the cession of Bulgarian Dobrudja to Roumania. It was evident that the decision of the Berlin Congress in regard to Dobrudja was dictated by the new international conditions created in the Balkans, by the necessity to check Russia's predominating influence in the East, which was her chief aim in the war of 1877, though she proclaimed it to be the carrying out of the decisions of the Constantinople Conference.

The work of the Berlin Congress and that of the Constantinople Conference were diametrically opposed; their object was altogether different. The object of the Constantinople Conference was to pacify the Balkans by introducing equality before the law and to secure harmony among the Balkan peoples by satisfying their just aspirations to national freedom. While the object of the Berlin Congress was to frustrate at any price the menacing Russian hegemony in the Balkans, against which Europe waged war with Russia in 1854, and thus restore the situation created by the Treaty of Paris in 1856, which Russia wished to abrogate.

So the Eastern Question which the Constantinople Conference attempted to solve impartially the Berlin Treaty reverted back to the *statu quo ante*, which greatly

complicated the Bulgarian question. The parts torn asunder from Bulgaria were given — some to Turkey, some to Serbia, and some to Roumania, to the detriment of the peace in the Balkans.

35. The work of the Berlin Congress justly merited universal condemnation, for the diplomats taking part in it instead of securing justice, equity, and peace in the Balkans, sowed the germ of future political storms and conflicts.

In view of the official violation on the part of Russia of the peace decisions of the Constantinople Conference, the representatives of the European Powers in the Berlin Congress should not bear all the blame for the negative results that followed the stipulations of the Berlin Treaty.

The sad fact however remains that the decisions of the said Congress only postponed the just solution of the Bulgarian problem for a later day.

This problem with all its new phases includes the Dobrudja question also, the foundation of which was laid by the San-Stefano Treaty. The Berlin Treaty only rendered things worse and added a new link to the already complicated Eastern question.

In this connection I wish to give the view of one of the most impartial writers in regard to the injustice done to Dobrudja by the decisions of the Berlin Congress:

“From a political point of view”, says Louis Léger in *La grande Encyclopédie*, “under the name of Bulgaria is meant: 1) The Principality of Bulgaria created by the Berlin Treaty between the Danube and the Balkans, with Sofia for capital; 2) The group formed by this principality and the autonomous province of East Rumelia, united in consequence of the successful Philippopolis

revolution in September 1885. Of this group we shall treat here; but it is well to remark that it does not embrace all the Bulgarians. It leaves out of its limits: the Bulgarians in Macedonia and western Thrace, destined in all probability to unite some day with their free brethren; *those of Dobrudja, left by the Berlin Treaty under Roumania*: and those of the districts of Pirot, Nish and Vrania, which the Berlin Treaty gave to Serbia”.

This is the Dobrudja question in its simple form: *a Bulgarian province is at the Berlin Treaty left to the mercy of Roumania*, not for any other reason than that it might serve as a buffer against Russian aspirations in the East and a guarantee for the free navigation of the Danube. What however do we witness to-day! After oppressing Dobrudja for 38 years by the introduction of exceptional laws and a denationalising regime which was contrary to all notions of right and justice, and in direct violation of the provisions explicitly prescribed by the Berlin Treaty, Roumania herself in the present war made Dobrudja a corridor for the Russian armies in their advance to Constantinople, and let the mouth of the Danube open to the Russians ironclads.

Thus one wrong gave birth to another with catastrophic consequences, which once more verifies the old adage, that there is no wisdom in injustice.

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## XV.

Dobrudja treated as a medium of exchange and its market price. — Roumania does not wish Dobrudja which she declared to be an alien country, Bulgarian land. — Memorandum of the Roumanian government and its refusal to accept Dobrudja. — Dobrudja under Roumanian rule; Roumania in the rôle of “executioner and plunderer”. — Roumanian dictatorship in Dobrudja. — Dobrudja remains until now unannexed to Roumania.

36. It is very important that history should have in view the clauses and conditions by virtue of which Dobrudja passed under Roumanian rule.

According to articles 6 and 7 of the San-Stefano Treaty the northern frontier of Bulgaria begins from the Black sea near Mangalia, reaches Rassofo on the Danube, which river also constitutes its northern frontier as far as Raduevats. Dobrudja is ceded to Russia in exchange for Bessarabia, on the conditions stipulated in art. 19 of the same Treaty, which reads:

“The war indemnity will amount to 1,410,000,000 rubles, which Turkey will pay: 1) with Dobrudja, which Russia accepts not for herself but as an exchange for Roumanian Bessarabia annexed to Roumania in 1856 by virtue of the Treaty of Paris; 2) with Armenia.”

“These two provinces *are estimated at 1,100,000,000 roubles, and the rest of 310 millions roubles will be paid later.*”

Evidently, these stipulations have the character of an ordinary commercial exchange, the object of which is to treat Dobrudja in like manner though, of course, with a political object in view.

History rarely speaks of such a commercial barter about the political destiny of a province. It reminds us of

the trade with human beings, and from a political and legal viewpoint it does not constitute a title of ownership. Dominating a territory does not mean that that territory should be dealt of as an article of speculative and commercial transaction.

Such, however, was the transaction which made Roumania master of Dobrudja in 1878, despite the protests and warnings of Roumanian statesmen, like Carp, Sturza, and others. \*)

That was the general opinion in Roumania. It was also the opinion of the Roumanian government which later decided to occupy Dobrudja, with all the political risks which such an act involved.

Roumania admitted, felt, and saw the injustice of it.

“Roumania”, says “Timpul”, in its issue of January 26, 1878, is situated on the left bank of the Danube; but by the proposed territorial exchange we must follow along this bank as far as Gallatz, and there cross over to the right bank, in order to get possession of *a piece of land from Bulgaria, which will ever remain an object of envy and regret for the new state (Bulgaria), and later on be probably taken back by her; for whatever is unnatural, cannot be lasting. Of all that is offered to us, it is in our interest to get only what naturally belongs to us, what was always ours, and which is neither Bulgaria nor Dobrudja*”.

A month after this, in February 24, 1878, the Roumanian government handed a memorandum to the Powers, in which it is said:

The exchange proposed is *disastrous to Roumania*. The loss of Bessarabia will make very hard and painful

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\*) See the pamphlet: *The Political Lot of Dobrudja*.

to the Roumanian government the possession of Dobrudja, separated as it is from Roumanian territory by a large and wide river. Thus the exchange of Bessarabia for Dobrudja, *not taking into account considerations of historical character and of legal and political nature, but only the material, economic, and administrative interests of the state, will have for Roumania dangerous results, for the acquisition of Dobrudja without Bessarabia only constitutes a complication, a heavy burden, and may be, a constant peril.*

“The taking possession of the mouth of the Danube and the responsibility for its keeping, without the Bessarabian bank, would show on the part of the Roumanian government a lack of foresight, for without it Dobrudja cannot be ruled”.

That is why all Roumania was opposed to the act and declared that there exists no motive or ground whatever for Roumanian occupation of Dobrudja<sup>\*)</sup>.

In this sense was prepared a motion to be introduced in the Chamber, signed by 48 deputies, the debate on which was postponed after the secret sittings at which the clauses of the Berlin Treaty were to be considered.

“This was”, says Lacusteanu, “a protest against the robbery of Bassarabia and *a refusal* on our part to become party to the disgraceful transaction of exchanging Roumanian land *for another inhabited by a people of foreign origin, and against becoming accomplices with those who arrange the substitution of one foreign rule with another in a country which belongs only to itself; and all this—in violation of the inalienable rights of peoples and the principles of eternal justice, for in*

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\*) See the same Pamphlet, and *Timput*, No. 155, of July 14, 1878.



*this way we are made to play the double part of victims and executioners, of people robbed and robbers, a part we are not willing to play”.*

Previous to the above declaration, in its sittings of January 26, 1878, when this question had become known from the preliminary negotiations preparatory to the San-Stefano Peace, the Roumanian Chamber had unanimously passed a similar declaration, in which it was said. “The Chamber does not accept any expropriation of its land under any designation and territorial compensation whatever”.

At this juncture the Dobrujan dispute was very well elucidated and attested by the Roumanian themselves. Both the government and the people of Roumania publicly declared to have no claims whatever on Dobrudja.

37. For fear, however, of exposing itself to future accusations of treason and especially of losing Bessarabia without any compensation, the Roumanian government disregarding the protests of the nation and the Parliament, as well as all political ethics, accepted Dobrudja. Roumania however, has no legitimate right to it, and in taking possession of it, she assumes the rôle of “plunderer and executioner” for the population inhabiting it, as the Roumanian deputy Lacusteanu has aptly put it.

This rôle explains and characterises the regime that was to be introduced in Dobrudja by Roumania, which lasted during the whole period of her domination, and which we sketched in the first seven chapters of the pamphlet, *The Political Lot of Dobrudja*. It is briefly described in the Appeal given in the first number of *Dobrudja* as follows:

“Pillage, oppression, depriving Bulgaria of all right and justice; resolute and stubborn denial of the right

of citizenship to the native population; a general terror; deprivation of cultural and ecclesiastical freedom of thought, of the right to own property, and that of exercising the liberal professions; compulsory emigration, forcible Roumanisation, state usurpation of private property and social institutions; colonisation of the Province by bringing over an alien people into it; incessant prosecution of Bulgarians accused of imaginary and invented plots, rebellions, and espionage; systematic corruption.

All this is an asset of the Roumanian rule in Dobrudja, and to crown it all, the Roumanian Gouvernement, finally, under the false pretext of espionage, resorted to deportation, to abduction as hostages of more than 15,000 Dobrudja Bulgarians — old men, women, and children, whose sons and brothers Roumania had turned into musket targets, instead of soldiers called to defend their country. Besides all this, during the retreat of the Roumanian army from Dobrudja, by order of the commanders, the Bulgarians were ruthlessly slain, their villages burned, and the women dishonoured. The Roumanian atrocities in Dobritch, Baladja, the Tutrakan trenches, the villages of Karalez, Kokarja, Rahovo, Babovo, Slivopole, will ever remain as ugly monuments in the relations between the Bulgarians and Roumanians.

The gulf created between the two peoples is entirely the doing of the Roumanian Governements which never ceased to cultivate in the Roumanian people an implacable malice toward Bulgaria and the Bulgarian people, firmly believing such a conduct to be the only means of keeping Dobrudja safe from all Bulgarian aspirations which ever haunted the minds of Roumanian statesmen.

Lacking legal rights and titles to Dobrudja, Roumania attempted to create such by the following strange methods:

1) by falsifying history and statistics in regard to the ethnical physiognomy of the province;

2) by artificial economic enterprises: uniting Dobrudja with Roumania by the port of Kustenje, about which she created the legend that it constituted the lungs of Roumania; compulsory emigration of the native Bulgarian population, and the colonisation of Dobrudja by Roumanians from Bessarabia, Transylvania, and even Roumania;

3) by compulsory assimilation of the native population which was subjected to the administrative terror already described.

And while, on the one hand, Roumania was inventing historical and statistical legends, in regard both to the economic situation and the character of her regime in Dobrudja, which legends were spread all over the world in order to give it a false idea as to the situation in it and the difficulty in ruling this province, on the other hand, with her drastic administration introduced in it Roumania had it actually occupied tho not completely annexed. Since 1880, and until the year 1909, Dobrudja had no political rights and was governed by a special organic statute as an occupied province. In 1909 under the moral pressure of the Turkish *huriet* in Macedonia and the annexation by Austria of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Roumania gave the Dobrudjans partial political rights only in name, for the organic statute remained still in force, as well as the administrative dictatorship under which this statute placed Dobrudja. There is no legislative Roumanian act

which unites Dobrudja with Roumania and gives the Dobrudjan people the same constitutional rights the Roumanians enjoy. And down to the very time when the Roumanian armies and authorities were driven from Dobrudja, the Dobrudjan was not “a full-fledged Roumanian” citizen, but merely a “Dobrudjan citizen” without any rights, so that as far as Roumania was concerned, and by virtue of the Roumanian Law, the Dobrudjan remained a foreigner to the last.

The Turkish rayah enjoys far greater freedom and privileges than were accorded the Dobrudjan people.

Such was the state of things in Dobrudja when the new turn of events put an end to the Roumanian rule there.

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