



The Mongol domination and the detachment of the Romanians of Walachia from the domination of the Hungarian Kingdom¹

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Abstract: The expansion of Hungary outside the Carpathians, a process which involved colonization and military presence, was stopped at the middle of the 13th century by the Golden Horde domination over this area. The Mongol domination allowed the development of small Romanian political organizations ruled by *voievodes* or *cnezi*, in the region east of Olt, while west of Olt the Hungarian domination survived in certain forms until 1291, when a new offensive extended along the Danube, up to Serbia, the domination of the Isaccea emirate ruled by Nogai. In northern Oltenia, the *voievode* Litovoi tried in 1278 to liberate his land from the Hungarian vassalage, and to extend it east of Olt. The Golden Horde hegemony provided stability, being a condition for the establishment of the first Romanian state in northern Walachia. The legendary founder Negru Vodă came from the Transylvanian (Făgăraș area) with his military suite in 1290, after the confiscation of their properties. The Hungarian domination over the voievodate of Curtea de Argeș, established around the middle of the 13th century was replaced with the protection of the Golden Horde.

Keywords: Golden Horde; Walachia; Hungary; Transylvania; Bulgaria.

[es] El dominio mongol y la separación de los rumanos de Walachia del dominio del Reino húngaro

Resumen: La expansión de Hungría fuera de los Cárpatos, un proceso que involucró la colonización y la presencia militar, fue detenida a mediados del siglo XIII por el dominio de la Horda de Oro sobre esta área. El dominio mongol permitió el desarrollo de pequeñas organizaciones políticas rumanas gobernadas por *voievodes* o *cnezi*, en la región este de Olt, mientras que al oeste de Olt el dominio húngaro sobrevivió en ciertas formas hasta 1291, cuando una nueva ofensiva a lo largo del Danubio se extendió hasta Serbia, dominio del emirato Isacceo gobernado por Nogai. En el norte de Oltenia, el *voievode* Litovoi intentó en 1278 liberar su territorio del vasallaje húngaro y extenderlo al este de Olt. La hegemonía de la Horda de Oro proporcionó estabilidad, siendo una condición para el establecimiento del primer estado rumano en el norte de Valaquia. El legendario fundador Negru Vodă vino de Transilvania (área de Făgăraș) con su séquito militar en 1290, después de la confiscación de sus propiedades. El dominio húngaro sobre el *voyovodato* de Curtea de Argeș, establecido a mediados del siglo XIII, fue reemplazado por la protección de la Horda de Oro.

Palabras clave: Horda de Oro; Valaquia; Hungría; Transilvania; Bulgaria.

Sumario: 1. The effects of the Mongol Invasion and of the Golden Horde domination. 2. New attempts of Hungarian expansion. 3. The consolidation of the Golden Horde domination. 4. The foundation of the Walachian voievodate. 5. Bibliography.

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of Walachia from the domination of the Hungarian Kingdom”, *De Medio Aevo* 12, 217-236.

The region between the southern range of the Carpathians and the Lower Danube, where the principality of Walachia will later evolve, was a natural target for the expansionist policy of the Hungarian kingdom, in competition with Bulgaria for the control of the Danubian valley. In 1232, after a victorious war, a borderland called Banat of Severin was established by King Andrew II in a region which was previously under the domination of the tsar John Asan II (as a vassal territory or even as a part of that state). The initial area of the Banat of Severin (called so after the fortress built by Bulgaria) included a part west of the Cerna valley (Semenic and Almăj Mountains) and another one to the east, most probable up to the Motru River.³ It is not clear how much efficient was this borderland in a period when Bulgaria continued to be the greatest power in the area. Only two rulers of the Banat are known for the period 1233-1240. As concerns the religious side of the Hungarian expansion, it has to be noted the establishment of a Catholic diocese of Severin in 1238, as a reaction to the turnover of John Asan II to the Greek Orthodoxy in 1235. A part of the population was already converted at the Latin Church since the *Terra Severin* belonged to Bulgaria.⁴ East of the Olt River, the situation was different. In this space interfered the spheres of influences of Bulgaria and Cumania. In Cumania, the expansion of Hungary was aided by the establishment of another Latin bishopric in 1228 (central and southern Moldavia up to Siret and eastern Walachia up to Buzău or Olt). Cumania became in this way another Hungarian borderland, ruled by the Cuman khans⁵.

1. The effects of the Mongol Invasion and of the Golden Horde domination

This political configuration of the regions peopled by Romanians and Cumans east and south of Carpathians was deeply changed after 1241, when the Mongol armies commanded by Kadan, Büri and Böček attacked Transylvania. The supreme chief Batu (nephew of Genghis Khan) started the great offensive in Central Europe on several directions, from Poland to Hungary. The real target was Hungary, because like all the nomad warriors arrived from Asia, they have considered that region as proper to their way of life. King Bela IV, being prevented since 1239 about a possible invasion, ordered some measures to strengthen the frontier. In 1241, Albericus Trium Fontium mentioned that the king *duo castra contra eos firmavit ultra sylvas, et nemora in partibus illia fecit indaginari, id est, in plasseta redigi*. This means that at least two points behind the Eastern Carpathian gorges were fortified. The most important gorge was Oituz, used as a main crossing point over the mountains since the antiquity. In the 12th and 13th centuries, in the region behind it were settled frontier guards of Szekler origin, living together with the

³ V. Achim, *Politica sud-estică a regatului ungar sub ultimii Arpadieni*, București, 2008, p. 76-84; A. Madgearu, *The Asanids. The Political and Military History of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185-1280)*, Leiden, Boston, 2016, p. 206-207.

⁴ *Acta Honorii III (1216-1227) et Gregorii IX (1227-1241). E Registris Vaticanis aliisque fontibus collegit A. L. Tăutu* (Pontificia commissio ad redigendum codicem iuris canonici orientalis. Fontes, series III, volumen III), Vatican, 1950, p. 300-301 (doc. 224, 225); M. Holban, *Din cronica relațiilor româno-ungare în secolele XIII-XIV*, București, 1981, p. 65-66, 69, 72; Ć. Bonev, *L'Église orthodoxe dans les territoires carpato-danubiens et la politique pontificale pendant la première moitié du XIIIe s.*, *Études Balkaniques*, 22, 1986, 4, p. 106-108; Ș. Papacostea, *Români în secolul al XIII-lea între cruciată și imperiul mongol*, București, 1993, p. 70; Ș. Turcuș, *Sfântul Scaun și românii în secolul al XIII-lea*, București, 2001, 298-300; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 84, 100, 102.

⁵ Ș. Papacostea, *Români...*, p. 66-69; Ș. Turcuș, *Sfântul...*, p. 292-296; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 56-63; V. Spinei, *The Romanians and the Turkic Nomads North of the Danube Delta from the Tenth to the Mid-Thirteenth Century*, Leiden, Boston, 2009, p. 154-155; S. Iosipescu, *Carpații sud-estici în evul mediu târziu (1166-1526). O istorie europeană prin pasurile montane*, Brăila, 2013, p. 74-76; R. M. Mihalache, *Hierocratic Aspects Related to the Legation of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom to Cumania (1227)*, *Transylvanian Review*, 23, 2014, 1, p. 118-131. T. Sălăgean, *Transylvania in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century. The Rise of the Congregational System*, Leiden, Boston, 2016, p. 13-14.

extant Romanian population. Some of their cemeteries and settlements were identified at Peteni, Zăbala and Sâncrăieni⁶. Fortifications were built in the rear of the mountain range, on the ways coming from Oituz or from other passes. For instance, that one from Racoșul de Sus-Pădurea Rica (now in the town Baraolt) controlled the valleys of Baraolt and Upper Olt (two ways of penetration from Oituz)⁷, while another one, at Cetatea Bud (Odorheiul Secuiesc) was on the way from the Vlăhița gorge.⁸

After these measures of defence, Bela IV launched a preventive expedition against the Mongols, under the command of a so-called *comes Ultrasilvanus*, who was either the count of the Szeklers whose duty was the defence of the eastern frontier, or, as supposed Tudor Sălăgean, the same with Ladislaus, *comes Ultrasilvanus*, mentioned in another document from 1238. This Ladislaus died in a battle near the Azov Sea (*Contra Tartaros vero misit comitem Ultrasilvanum, qui in quodam angusto transitu paludum Meotidarum (...) in illis partibus perisse (...)*).⁹ The chronicles of Tholomeus de Lucca, Iohannes Longus de Ypre and Marino Sanudo Torsello recorded that in March 1241 the passes of the Carpathians were defended together by the Romanians (*Olaci*) and the Szeklers (*Siculi*). The wooden barrages set at the gorges and on distant places (*indagine*s) were destroyed. The *indagine*s were widely used in the Hungarian kingdom since its foundation to protect the borders. They were linear fortifications made of wood and small stones, constructed in the successive advances of the conquest of the territory¹⁰. One of the

⁶ C. Preda, *Săpăturile arheologice de la Sâncrăieni (r. Ciuc, Regiunea Autonomă Maghiară)*, Materiale și cercetări arheologice, 6, 1959, p. 845-853; Z. Székely, *Sud-estul Transilvaniei în secolele VI-XIII*, Aluta, 6-7, 1974-1975, p. 61; L. Georgescu, *Unele considerații antropologice privind populația sec. XII din sud-estul Transilvaniei, zona Covasna*, Muzeul Național, 5, 1981, p. 141-146; Z. Székely, *Analiza paleo-demografică a necropolei din feudalismul timpuriu de la Peteni (jud. Covasna)*, Aluta, 17-18, 1985-1986, p. 211-221; Idem, *Necropola medievală de la Peteni (com. Zăbala, jud. Covasna)*, Studii și cercetări de istorie veche și arheologie, 41, 1990, 1, p. 87-110; Z. Székely, *A Zabolai (Zăbala, România) kora középkori temető*, A Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei, 19-20, 1993-1994, p. 277-305; E. Benkő, *Mittelalterliche archäologische Funde in Szeklerland*, in H. Roth (hrsg.), *Die Szekler in Siebenbürgen. Von der privilegierten Sondergemeinschaft zur ethnischen Gruppe*, Köln, Wien, 2009, p. 22-25; A. Ioniță, *Grupuri de colonizări reflectate arheologic în Transilvania secolului al XII-lea*, in *Între stepă și imperiu. Studii în onoarea lui Radu Harhoiu*. *Archäologische Studien für Radu Harhoiu zum 65. Geburtstag*. Volum îngrijit de A. Măgureanu, E. Gáll, București, 2010, p. 392-397.

⁷ Z. Székely, *Contribuții la problema fortificațiilor și formelor de locuire din sud-estul Transilvaniei*, Aluta, 8-9, 1976-1977, p. 64; P. Binder, *Antecedente și consecințe sud-transilvănene ale formării voievodatului Munteniei (sec. XIII-XIV)* (I), Acta 1995 (Aluta, 19, Acta Harghientia, 2), Sf. Gheorghe, 1996, p. 265-266; Zs. Bordi, *Fortificații din secolele XIII-XVIII în Trei Scaune*, Acta Terrae Fogarasiensis, 2, 2003, p. 83-85; I. M. Țiplic, *Organizarea defensivă a Transilvaniei în evul mediu (secolele X-XIV)*, București, 2006, p. 176; Zs. Bordi, *Fortificațiile medievale timpurii din Pădurea Rica*, Acta Siculica, Sfântu Gheorghe, 4, 2007, p. 287-300.

⁸ G. Ferenczi, I. Ferenczi, *Cetatea dacică de la Odorheiul Secuiesc*, Crisia, 2, 1972, 59-63; G. Ferenczi, I. Ferenczi, *Săpături arheologice la Mugeni. Studiu preliminar (Partea a III-a)*, Acta Musei Napocensis, 14, 1977, p. 301-302.

⁹ Albericus Trium Fontium, *Chronicon*, ed. G. Pertz, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores in folio*, XXIII, Hannovera, 1874, p. 946; V. Spinei, *Cronicari italieni despre repercusiunile marii invazii mongole din 1241-1242 asupra românilor*, Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie, 19, 2001, p. 193; V. Spinei, *Mongolii și românii în sinteza de istorie ecleziastică a lui Tholomeu din Lucca*, Iași, 2012, p. 39. T. Sălăgean, *Transylvania.....*, p. 15-16, 21-22. The rare word *plassetta* or *placeta* is considered a synonyme for *sepes* ("fence"), being explained as *virgulae simul implexae* (intertwined pillars). See Ch. Du Cange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis (...)*. Editio nova, vol. VI, Niort, 1886, col. 341 b.

¹⁰ K. Taganyi, *Alte Grenzschutz-Vorrichtungen und Grenz-Ödland: gyepü und gyepüelve*, Ungarische Jahrbücher, Berlin, Leipzig, 1, 1921, 2, p. 105-112; K. Horedt, *Contribuții la istoria Transilvaniei în secolele IV-XIII*, București, 1958, p. 110-115; H. Göckenjan, *Hilfsvölker und Grenzwachter im mittelalterlichen Ungarn*, Wiesbaden, 1972, p. 6-11; N. Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and 'Pagans' in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000-c.1300*, Cambridge, 2001, p. 24-29; A. A. Rusu, *Castelarea carpatică. Fortificații și cetăți din Transilvania și teritoriile învecinate (sec. XIII-XIV)*, Cluj-Napoca, 2005, p. 296-299; T. Sălăgean, *Țara lui Gelou. Contribuții la istoria Transilvaniei de nord în secolele IX-*

offensive route followed by the Mongols was the Oituz gorge, directed toward Bârsa Land, the south-eastern corner of Transylvania, where the *voievode* Pousa was defeated in a battle at 31st March 1241. His army came too late to help the local frontier forces. Then followed the attacks of Sibiu (Hermannstadt) and Alba. Another way of penetration was the Rodna gorge (the town was ravaged). From there, the invaders advanced to Cluj, and next to Oradea. After crossing Tizsa, this army joined with that of Batu, who came by the Verecke pass of the Beskid Mountains, the easiest way to enter Hungary. The Hungarian army was annihilated in the battle of Muhi, near the Sajó River (11 April 1241)¹¹.

For the entire Central and Eastern Europe, the Mongol invasion of 1241 was a crossroad moment¹². It largely affected the military capability of Hungary. The danger of the Golden Horde attacks continued for a century, but with no such great devastation like in 1241. Transylvania was affected by only one more invasion, in 1285, started in fact at the instigation of the Cumans who were expelled from Hungary by King Ladislaus IV. In 1285, the invaders entered by the gorges of Rodna, Oituz and Buzău, ravaged most of the Transylvanian towns, but suffered from lack of food, being also confronted with the resistance of the local people, Romanians, Szeklers and Saxons. The Tatars retreated, being defeated on their return to the *indagines* near the gorges¹³. As wrote Benedict, canon of Esztergom: *Siculi, Olachi et Saxones omnes vias ipsorum [Tartarorum] cum indagibus stipaverunt sive giraverunt*. The *indagines* were restored just after the invasion of 1241¹⁴.

Hungary made no attempt to recover the territory east of Carpathians until 1345, when began the decline of the Golden Horde, being interested only in fighting with Bulgaria for the control of the Danube. Bulgaria, in decline after the death of the powerful tsar John Asan II in 1241, became in 1242 a tributary state of the Golden Horde when Kadan's armies invaded it, coming from Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia.¹⁵

XI, Cluj-Napoca, 2006, p. 106-107, 115; I. M. Țiplic, *Organizarea...*, p. 112-121; P. Niedermaier, *Habitatul medieval în Transilvania*, București 2012, p. 38-44.

¹¹ Annales Frisacenses, ed. L. Weiland (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores in folio*, XXIV), Hannovera, 1879, p. 65; Iohannes Longus de Ypre, *Chronica monasterii Sancti Bertini, 590-1294*, in E. Martène, U. Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, vol. III, Paris, 1717, col. 717 (XLVII, 3); Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Secreta fidelium Crucis*, in J. Bongars, *Gesta Dei per Francos sive orientalium expeditionum et regni Francorum Hierosolimitani historia* (...), II, Hanoviae, 1611, p. 214 (III, 11); A. Sacerdoțeanu, *Marea invazie tătară și sud-estul european*, București, 1933, p. 29-58; A. Decei, *Relații româno-orientale. Culegere de studii*, redactor M. D. Popa, București, 1978, p. 194-195, 201-206; Ș. Papacostea, *Români...*, p. 94-97; V. Spinei, *Cronicari...*, p. 171-182, 201; V. Spinei, *The Great Migrations in the East and South East of Europe from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Century, II. Cumans and Mongols*, Amsterdam, 2006, p. 627-630, 634-642; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 95-102; A. Gonța, *Români și Hoarda de Aur, 1241-1502*, Iași, 2010, p. 43-76; V. Spinei, *Mongolii și români...*, p. 26-27; S. Iosipescu, *Carpații...*, p. 85-90; I. Zimonyi, *The Mongol Campaigns against Eastern Europe*, in Idem, *Medieval Nomads in Eastern Europe. Collected Studies*. Ed. by V. Spinei, București, Brăila, 2014, p. 342-345. T. Sălăgean, *Transilvania...*, p. 25-48.

¹² V. Spinei, *The Great Migrations...*, p. 619-648; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 104-111; V. Spinei, *The Romanians...*, p. 169-175; A. Gonța, *Români...*, p. 43-82.

¹³ P. Iambor, *Atacurile cumano-tătare asupra Transilvaniei în a doua jumătate a veacului al XIII-lea*, Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie, Cluj-Napoca, 17, 1974, p. 213-219; S. Iosipescu, *Români din Carpații Meridionali la Dunărea de Jos de la invazia mongolă (1241-1243) până la consolidarea domniei a toată Țara Românească. Războiul victorios purtat la 1330 împotriva cotozirii ungare*, in *Constituirea statelor feudale românești*, București, 1980, p. 57; Ș. Papacostea, *Români...*, p. 168; P. Binder, *Antecedente și consecințe sud-transilvănene ale formării voievodatului Munteniei (sec. XIII-XIV)* (II), Acta 1996, Sfântu Gheorghe, 1997, p. 35-36; V. Spinei, *The Great Migrations...*, p. 466; A. Gonța, *Români...*, p. 103-107; S. Iosipescu, *Carpații...*, p. 106-107; T. Sălăgean, *Transilvania...*, p. 135-138.

¹⁴ *Monumenta ecclesiae Strigoniensis*, ed. N. Knauz, vol. II (1273-1321), Strigonii, 1882, p. 419; P. Iambor, *Atacurile...*, p. 215-219; Ș. Papacostea, *Români...*, p. 123-124; P. Binder, *Antecedente... (II)*, p. 35-36; V. Spinei, *Cronicari...*, p. 198; V. Spinei, *Mongolii și români...*, p. 32.

¹⁵ A. Sacerdoțeanu, *Marea invazie...*, p. 60-65; A. Decei, *Relații...*, p. 206; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 104; I. Zimonyi, *The Mongol Campaigns...*, p. 344-346.

It is not clear if the Banat created in 1232 really survived after 1242, with what forces and on what territory (The Ban of Severin Stephen Csák mentioned in 1243¹⁶ had his residence somewhere backwards, for instance at Orșova¹⁷). The region was on the way of the Mongol attacks, and there are no reasons to doubt the trustfulness of the tradition speaking about a battle of Romanians and Hungarians against the Tatars, fought at the Grădeț fortress, destroyed on that occasion¹⁸. Grădeț (Izvoru Bârzii commune, Mehedinți department), is a polygonal fortification with the precinct thick of 2-2,5 m, provided with an inner circular tower, located 25 km north-west of Turnu-Severin, commanding the Cerna valley, a road going to Transylvania¹⁹. It is nevertheless true that the Golden Horde domination did not extend west of Olt in the first years after 1242, and in such conditions the Hungarian King Bela IV tried to regain positions by summoning the Hospitaller Knights in *Terra Severin*. The charter given to them on 2 June 1247 (known only in the transcript of 20 July 1250) allowed them to settle and to obtain revenues from *terra Zeurin*, extended up to Olt, a region which included the Romanian knezates of Ioan and Farcaș. It was excepted a so called *terra Lytua* which belonged to the Romanian *voievode Lytuoy*, who was made vassal of the knights. The king has also given them Cumania, but this land was in fact conquered by the Tatars. In Cumania, the *terra* of Seneslau, another Romanian *voievode*, was left in his possession²⁰.

Silviu Dragomir tried to demonstrate that the donation act was a forgery, made by a Hungarian Jesuit after the Peace Treaty of Karlowitz (1699), with the purpose to legitimate further Austrian conquests by this belonging of Oltenia to Hungary, but Sorin Șipoș and Ioan Aurel Pop rejected this interpretation²¹. There is in fact a testimony for the participation of the Hospitallers to the defence of Hungary, a letter of Bela IV addressed to Pope Innocentius IV on 11 November 1247. The King begged for a mobilization of the Christians to save Hungary from future Tatar attacks, writing that only the Hospitallers made something in this sense:

¹⁶ *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor, culese de E. de Hurmuzaki, Volumul I, Partea 1: Documente privitoare la istoria românilor, 1199-1345, culese și însoțite de note și variante de N. Densușianu, București, 1887, p. 214 (doc. CLXV); M. Holban, Din cronica..., p. 73; V. Achim, Politica..., p. 106, 121.*

¹⁷ M. Măneanu, *Banatul de Severin înainte de Posada*, in *Posada - 685. Războiul din 1330: Posada - 685. Războiul din 1330 dintre Carol Robert de Anjou și Basarab Vodă. Culegere de studii*, coordonatori D. Ciobotea, E. Petrescu, R. Șt. Vergatti, Craiova, 2015, p. 95.

¹⁸ V. Dimitrescu, *Note asupra monumentelor, ruinelor și locurilor istorice din județul Mehedinți*, *Revista pentru Istorie, Arheologie și Filologie*, I, 1882, p. 168.

¹⁹ M. Davidescu, *Cetatea Grădețului*, *Drobeta*, 3, 1978, p. 114-123; Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Cetăți medievale din Țara Românească în secolele XIII-XVI*, București, 2001, p. 132-137; A. Ioniță, *Spațiul dintre Carpații Meridionali și Dunărea Inferioară în secolele XI-XIII*, București, 2005, p. 50-51, 133; A. A. Rusu, *Castelarea...*, p. 479.

²⁰ *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, seria D, *Relații între Țările Române*, vol. I (1222-1456), Volum întocmit de Șt. Pascu, C. Cihodaru, K. Gündisch, D. Mioc, V. Pervain, București, 1977, p. 21-27 (doc. 10); D. Onciul, *Scrieri istorice*. Ediție critică îngrijită de A. Sacerdoțeanu, București, 1968, I, p. 344-348, 418-419, 627-631; N. Iorga, *Istoria românilor*, vol. III. *Cititorii*, ed. V. Spinei, București, 1993, p. 104-105; I. Donat, *The Romanians south of the Carpathians and the Migratory Peoples in the Tenth-Thirteenth Centuries*, in *Relations between the Autochthonous Population and the Migratory Populations on the Territory of Romania*, București, 1975, p. 281-282, 285-286; S. Iosipescu, *Românii...*, p. 41-43; M. Holban, *Din cronica...*, p. 74-85; M. Diaconescu, *The Political Relations between Wallachia and the Hungarian Kingdom during the Reign of the Anjou Kings*, *Mediaevalia Transilvanica*, Satu Mare, 2, 1998, 1, p. 9, 11-12; Ș. Turcuș, *Sfântul Scaun și românii în secolul al XIII-lea*, București, 2001, p. 240-242; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 131-135; I. A. Pop, S. Șipoș, *Silviu Dragomir și dosarul Diplomei cavalerilor ioaniți*, Cluj-Napoca, 2009, p. 79-81, 146-154; M. O. Cătoi, *Ofensivă catolică și rezistență schismatică la Dunărea de Jos în prima jumătate a secolului al XIII-lea*, in *Istorie bisericească, misiune creștină și viață culturală. II. Creștinismul românesc și organizarea bisericească în secolele XIII-XIV. Știri și interpretări noi*, Arhiepiscopia Dunării de Jos, Galați, 2010, p. 197-203; S. Iosipescu, *Carpații...*, p. 92-93; I. A. Pop, "Din mâinile valahilor schismatici...". *Românii și puterea în Regatul Ungariei medievale (secolele XIII-XIV)*, ediția a II-a, Cluj-Napoca, 2017, p. 329-330.

²¹ I. A. Pop, S. Șipoș, *Silviu Dragomir...*, p. 101-209.

*a domo Hospitalis Hierosolimitani, cuius fratres ad requisicionem nostram nuper arma sumpserunt contra Paganos et Scismaticos ad defensionem regni nostri et fidei christiane, quos iam partim collocavimus in loco magis suspecto, videlicet in confinio Cumanorum ultra Danubium et Bulgarorum, per quem etiam locum tempore invasionis regni nostri ad nos aditum habuit exercitus Thartharorum, de quo etiam loco intendimus, et speramus, quodsi factum nostrum et dictorum fratrum deus prosperaverit, et sedes apostolica eisdem favorem suum dignata fuerit impertiri, quod propagines Catholice fidei, sicut protenditur Danubius usque ad mare Constantinopolitanum, per ipsos poterimus propagare, et sic Romanie imperio et etiam terre sancte poterunt impendere subsidia oportuna. Partim vero eosdem in medio regni nostri collocavimus ad defensionem castrorum, que circa Danubium edificari facimus, cum gens nostra ad hoc extiterit insueta, quia in hoc resedit examinatum quampluries nostrorum consilium, quod esset salubrius nobis et toti Europe, ut Danubius fortaliciis muniretur.*²²

This desperate appeal shows that the king did not left behind the expansionist policy directed to the Danubian region, not even after the appearance of the Golden Horde. In the confrontation with Bulgaria, the Hospitallers were seen as the most efficient instrument of this offensive. *Terra Severin* (*Severin* was not mentioned in this appeal, but it is obvious that the region was the same with that mentioned in the privilege) was the gateway to the Danubian valley and to the Black Sea. The following events made more necessary this offensive policy. In August 1247, Bulgaria and the Nicaean Empire conquered parts of the Latin Empire of Constantinople.²³ The appearance of an Orthodox coalition which menaced to eliminate the Latin Empire required an offensive Hungarian policy against Bulgaria, with the support of the Hospitallers. The knights participated at the attack alluded in the letter of 11th November 1247: *Bulgarorum et Boznensium hereticorum a parte meridiei, contra quos etiam ad presens per nostrum exercitum dimicamus*²⁴. All these are showing that the Hospitallers were summoned to sustain the political and military interests of the Hungarian Crown, and more specifically the expansion toward the Lower Danube. They were vassals (the document specifies the usual formula)²⁵.

The charter of 2nd June 1247 remembers the existence of four lands, in different relations with the Hungarian kingdom. *Terra Severin* was and remained a part of the kingdom, even it was bestowed to the Hospitallers for defence. It has to be observed that no Ban of Severin is mentioned among the dignitaries enumerated as witnesses, in that document, which means the function was abandoned or suspended. Inside this *terra* subsisted some Romanian autonomies (the knezates of Ioan and Farcaș). Another land was that ruled by the *voievode* Lytuoy, located both sides of the Carpathians, in northern Oltenia and in the Hațeg valley. In the space peopled by Romanians, the name *Lytuoy* or *Litovoi* is mostly attested in Hațeg²⁶. Lytuoy was a Romanian chief, vassal of the Hungarian king. A similar situation had Seneslau, who ruled east of Olt, most probable at Curtea de Argeș. Finally, Cumania was the fourth territory remembered in the document. For Cumania, Bela

²² *Documente privitoare...*, p. 261 (doc. CXCIX); M. Holban, *Din cronica...*, p. 76-78, 82-84; Ș. Turcuș, *Sfântul...*, p. 238-242; Zs. Hunyadi, *Hospitallers in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary, c.1150-1387. A Dissertation Submitted to the Central European University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in The Department of Medieval Studies*, Budapest, 2004, p. 42-43; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 88, 128-130, 136-137; I. A. Pop, S. Șipoș, *Silviu Dragomir...*, p. 117; S. Iosipescu, *Carpații...*, p. 95-96; M. Măneanu, *Banatul...*, p. 97-98; T. Sălăgean, *Transylvania...*, p. 60-61. The right date was indicated by Viorel Achim.

²³ A. Madgearu, *The Asanids...*, p. 237-238.

²⁴ *Documente privitoare...*, p. 260 (doc. CXCIX).

²⁵ C. Șerban, *Contracte vasalice de model occidental european în istoria românilor din secolul al XIII-lea*, Argeșis. Studii și comunicări. Seria istorie, Pitești, 9, 2000, p. 102-104; I. A. Pop, S. Șipoș, *Silviu Dragomir...*, p. 91-93.

²⁶ I. Conea, *Basarabii din Argeș. Despre originea lor teritorială și etnică*, București, 1935, p. 19; R. Popa, *La începuturile Evului Mediu românesc. Țara Hațegului*, București, 1988, p. 85, 87, 92, 96, 97; I. A. Pop, *"Din mâinile..."*, p. 333.

IV could have only pretensions. The mission of the Hospitallers was to extend the Hungarian domination in Cumania, in the regions which were then conquered by the Mongols (the Walachian plain). The lands of Lytuoy and Seneslau were located near the mountains, in regions which enabled the free development of the Romanian knezates. Instead, *Terra Severin* was in the plain area of Oltenia. The villages Fărcaș, Fărcașești and Fărcașele from the present departments of Dolj, Gorj and Olt transmitted the name of knez Farcaș. It is remarkable that all the villages from the regions south and east of the Carpathians with names derived *Farcaș* are concentrated in a small part of Oltenia, around Craiova, with the exception of a village from Iași department in Moldavia)²⁷. By this reason it should be rejected the location of Farcaș in Vâlcea, following the etymology of the name of that *județ* (it was considered that *Vâlcea* comes from the Slavic *vlk* (“wolf”), and *farkas* means “wolf” in Hungarian)²⁸. Vâlcea belonged to the land of Litovoi, which covered the northern Oltenia. The Hungarian origin of the name of this Romanian chief could reflect the translation of the Romanian name *Lupu*, done when he made allegiance to the Ban of Severin. In the same time, the toponyms derived from Farcaș are proving the existence of that person remembered in 1247.

Lytuoy and Seneslau had the duty to help the Hospitallers with their armed forces (*cum apparatu suo bellico*), according to the obligations of *auxilium* specific for the vassalage relations. This means that the knezes and *voievodes* disposed of a kind of permanent military force, provided by those *maiores terrae*, owners of villages. The expression *apparatus bellicus* mentioned in the charter means exactly a professional army. A social stratification in that region is confirmed by the accumulation of coin hoards like that of Balș (Olt department), composed of 1763 Byzantine and Bulgarian bronze coins, issued between 1185 and 1254²⁹. The treasure belonged to a local chief, Romanian or Cuman, and indicates an accumulation for at least three generations. The place where this hoard was found belongs to an area of concentration of the toponyms of Pecheneg and Cuman origin³⁰. It is possible that Lytuoy obtained his wealth from the salt mines of Vâlcea, and the supposition that he has the residence at Râmnicu-Vâlcea³¹ is worth of consideration. It was on a position on the road used to transport the salted fish from the Danube to Transylvania. The two-way traffic of salt and fish could provide important incomes.

The Romanian territories where Hungary wished to extent before 1241 (known today as Moldavia and Walachia) entered under the dominations of the Golden Horde, but this domination was exerted by means of local chiefs who gathered the tribute, according to the usual manner in which were established the relations between nomad warriors and the sedentary people who provided their food. The

²⁷ See also I. Donat, *The Romanians...*, p. 282. There are also other toponyms and hydronyms of Hungarian origin in Oltenia, dating since the period of the domination of this kingdom after 1232: Chischilău (in the village Zăval), Tencănau, Otăsău (I. Donat, *Județul de Baltă și Banatul Severinului*, Arhivele Olteniei, 13, 1934, 71-73, p. 17); Vădastra, from *vadásztér* “hunting place”, in relation with the royal hunting places (D. Moldovanu, *Toponime de origine română în Transilvania și în sud-vestul Moldovei*, Anuar de lingvistică și istorie literară, 49-50, 2009-2010, p. 23); Almaj, Amaradia, Arpadia, Boroșești, Orlea, Tâmașu ș.a. (L. Mikecs, *Ursprung und Schicksal der Tschango-Ungarn*, Ungarische Jahrbücher, 23, 1943, p. 254-256).

²⁸ N. Iorga, *Istoria...*, p. 105; Ș. Papacostea, *Români...*, p. 139; D. Căprăroiu, *Brief considerations concerning the beginnings of the town of Râmnic*, Annales d'Université “Valahia” Târgoviște, Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire, 11, 2009, 1, p. 125.

²⁹ E. Oberländer-Târnoveanu, *Some Remarks on the Chronology and the Composition of the Byzantine Coin Hoards from the 13th and the 14th Centuries at the Lower Danube and Adjacent Areas*, Études byzantines et post-byzantines, 3, București, 1997, p. 140-144; E. Oberländer-Târnoveanu, *Monedă și societate pe teritoriile de la sud și est de Carpați (secolele VI-XIV)*, Cluj-Napoca, 2003, p. 99, 102, 104, 106, 107, 111, 112.

³⁰ I. Conea, I. Donat, *Contribution à l'étude de la toponymie péchténègue-comane de la Plaine Roumaine du Bas-Danube*, in *Contributions onomastiques publiées à l'occasion du VIe Congrès international des Sciences Onomastiques à Munich du 24 au 28 Août 1958*, Bucarest, 1958, p. 155.

³¹ G. D. Florescu, D. Pleșia, *Temeliile străvechi ale Țării Românești*, Magazin Istoric, 5, 1971, 11 (56), p. 3-4.

situation came to be advantageous for Romanian *voievodes* like Seneslau, who, free of the Hungarian or Bulgarian domination, had no other chance than to enter under the protection of the Golden Horde. The first effect of the extension of the Tatar domination over the Walachian plain was the displacement of the voievodal center from Cetățeni to Curtea de Argeș, that is out of the way to Transylvania (by the Rucăr-Bran gorge). The position of Curtea de Argeș is also eccentric to the Olt valley. At Cetățeni, on the spot of the hermitage located on the peak "Cetățuia lui Negru Vodă" was discovered a fortification which reused the wall of a Dacian fort. It was repaired with mortar. Down the hill was discovered a settlement dated in the 13th-14th centuries, which included a church, decorated with mural paintings, similar to the churches of Târnovo. The church was constructed by the end of the 12th century or the beginning of the 13th century³². The fortification and the church are showing that at Cetățeni existed a Romanian voievodal residence, established around 1200, when the Asanid tsarate possessed a territory north of the Danube. The voievods from Cetățeni, living in a region between this state, Hungary and Cumania, looked for the protection of the tsar.



Fig. 1. Map of the Mongol Golden Horde domination

At Curtea de Argeș, the archaeological researches put into evidence the remains of a princely court and of a church that existed before the standing one (which is dedicated to Saint Nicholas), a church called by the researchers Curtea de Argeș I³³. The chronology proposed by Nicolae Constantinescu for the court and the church (around 1150 and 1180) could not be accepted, because the coin which provides a certain *terminus post quem* for the construction of the church is that from the Hungarian King Ladislaus IV (1272-1290), found in the altar, while the Bulgarian coin issued between 1210 and 1225 (a type C stamena imitation) was discovered on a level outside the church, which means that could belong to the unfortified settlement existing there³⁴. By these reasons it is more prudent to

³² L. Chițescu, A. Sion, S. Cristoccea, *Cercetările arheologice efectuate la complexul de monumente feudale de la Cetățeni, jud. Argeș*, Cercetări Arheologice. Muzeul Național de Istorie, 6, 1983, p. 51-77; L. Chițescu, *Elemente definitorii ale centrului voievodal de la Cetățeni puse în lumină de cercetarea arheologică a anilor din urmă*, ibidem, 9, 1992, p. 85-90; P. Chihaia, *Artă medievală*, București, 1998, I, p. 260-277; Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Cetăți medievale din Țara Românească în secolele XIII-XVI*, București, 2001, p. 156-161, 167-175; M. O. Cătoi, *Ofensivă...*, p. 180, 186.

³³ N. Constantinescu, *Curtea de Argeș (1200-1400). Asupra începuturilor Țării Românești*, București, 1984, p. 84-106, 144-145.

³⁴ P. Chihaia, *Artă medievală*, București, 1998, vol. I, p. 41-42. The chronology of N. Constantinescu was accepted by Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Cetăți...*, p. 211-217. The coin

consider that the church I from Curtea de Argeş was built around 1270-1280, and that the first precinct of the court was constructed only few decades before that. It is true that on the area of the present city Curtea de Argeş are known some archaeological and numismatic findings dated in the 11th-12th centuries³⁵, but they do not belong to close complexes able to prove the existence of a feudal residence. It is probable that the establishment of this voievodal residence (“curte”) was made by the movement of that of Cetățeni, short time after the Mongol invasion of 1241. The worsening of the situation determined a retreat toward the mountains, in the area of the same polity located south of Făgăraş Mountains. The movement to the north was probably made before 1247 by Seneslau, the vassal of the Hungarian king.

2. New attempts of Hungarian expansion

Hungary resumed the expansion along the Danube in 1254, when conquered again the region Belgrade - Braničevo (it was put under the rule of the duke of Mačva Rostislav Mihailovič, a Russian nobleman who took refuge in Hungary). This new borderland province became too a basis for expansion towards Bulgaria. The duke conquered Vidin in 1257 and was even involved in the internal affairs of Bulgaria (his daughter Anna married with the tsar Michael II Asan). As a reaction to the increasing trend of Hungarian domination and in cooperation with the Tatars, the following tsar Constantine Asan attacked in 1260 the duchy of Rostislav Mihailovič and the Banat of Severin, the latter being then without defence. Hungary established again the authority over the Banat of Severin in 1261, after the action of *magister* Laurentius, who was rewarded with the title of Ban. The new series of the Bans of Severin begins with him. In that period, the Banat of Severin functioned together with other such Banats along the Danube, created in 1272 (Mačva, Braničevo, Kučevo). The Banat of Severin survived as border area of Hungary until 1291, when it was conquered by the Tatars, during a large offensive along the Danube. The title of Ban of Severin will be reestablished in 1330, with the occasion of the ephemeral conquest of the fortress (possessed then by the Romanian prince Basarab)³⁶.

A *voievode* called Litovoi, probably the son of that living in 1247, found the occasion to rebel against the Hungarian vassalage. The data come from two documents of 1285 and 1288, concerning his fights with *magister* Georgius Baksa, a great nobleman from Transylvania. The rebellion occurred in 1264, during the civil war between the King Stephen V and his father Bela IV. In this war interfered in 1265 another Russian nobleman, who has entered in the service of Bulgaria in 1261, becoming the brother-in-law of the tsar Constantine Asan: Jacob Svetoslav. In that moment he mastered Vidin as an almost independent ruler. From there he attacked the Banat of Severin. It is possible that Litovoi acted in coordination with the ruler of Vidin. Litovoi was most probable the owner of the one of the coat of arms ascribed to a *roi de Blaque* in the *Wijnbergen* armorial (the other one belonged to Constantine Asan). Fifteen years after the rebellion and soon after the death of Jacob Svetoslav in 1277, in the winter of 1278-1279, Litovoi was defeated and killed in a battle by the army of George Baksa, which entered from the Banat of Severin. This action was fulfilled in relation with that against the Saxons who rebelled in Transylvania. The brother of Litovoi, Bărbat, was took hostage. The fight took place either in Hațeg, either in the northern Oltenia. The Hungarian king

discovered outside the church was wrongly ascribed to Alexios III Angelos (1195-1203). The right identification was later established by E. Oberländer-Târnoveanu, *Monedă...*, p. 101.

³⁵ I. Bica, *Mărturiile ale influenței civilizației bizantine în regiunea Argeș-Muscel (secolele X-XIV)*, Argeșis. Studii și comunicări. Seria istorie, Pitești, 9, 2000, p. 141-148.

³⁶ *Documente privitoare...*, p. 317 (doc. CCXXVIII); S. Iosipescu, *Românii...*, p. 52; M. Holban, *Din cronica...*, p. 85, 88, 126-127; M. Diaconescu, *The Political...* p. 12, 17; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 138-149, 191- 201; T. Sălăgean, *Transylvania...*, p. 70-71; A. Madgearu, *The Asanids...*, p. 239-240, 247-249.

received back his revenues, which means that the *voievode* Bărbat remained the vassal of Ladislaus IV. The territory mastered by him in Hațeg was included in the county of the same name, attested since 1276. After the conflict was built the castle Hațeg, the residence of the count³⁷.

The sources are telling that Litovoi has occupied a territory beyond the Carpathians that belonged to the king, and that he refused to pay the tribute for this (*per suum infidelitatem aliquam partem de regno nostro, ultra alpes existentem, pro se occuparet et proventus illius partis nobis provenientes nullis amonitionibus reddere curabat*). It was observed that the quarrel between the king and Litovoi did not concern the occupation of that land, but only the question of the tribute, the vassal obligation. By this reason, it is not true that Litovoi extended his land in the Banat of Severin, in order to unify Oltenia³⁸. If Litovoi would have been conquer some territories included in the Hungarian kingdom, his defeat would led to their retrocession. But Bărbat has lost only the land of Hațeg, not also those territories occupied by Litovoi. On the other hand, the integral or partial occupation of the Banat of Severin would have been mentioned in the documents. It is more probable that Litovoi has conquered a region east of Olt, not possessed by Hungary: the voievodate of Curtea de Argeș, a vassal of the Hungarian kingdom³⁹. It could not be excluded that Litovoi was the builder of the church I from Curtea de Argeș, taking into account the chronology presented above, established according to a coin of Ladislau IV). Curtea de Argeș was the end of a road going from Severin along the mountains through Râmnicu-Vâlcea⁴⁰.

The action of Litovoi put the foundation of a Romanian state, extended on both sides of the Olt River, located between Hungary, Golden Horde and Bulgaria. A consequence of his defeat was the consolidation of the Hungarian domination east of Olt, but not for a long time, because the intensification of the Golden Horde domination after 1285 had a contrary effect: the detachment of the *voievode* of Curtea de Argeș (whoever he was in that moment) from the Hungarian vassalage.

3. The consolidation of the Golden Horde domination

In these circumstances, when even Bulgaria became a Golden Horde vassal, the entire area up to Severin entered under the domination of the Tatar center of Isaccea, the residence of the emir Nogai. It was supposed that the future state of

³⁷ *Documente privitoare...*, p. 454-459, 483-484 (doc. CCCLXVI, CCCLXVII, CCCLXXXIX); *Documenta Romaniae Historica, seria D...*, p. 30-35 (doc. 13-14); D. Onciul, *Scrieri...*, I, p. 354-355, 630-634; N. Iorga, *Istoria...*, p. 113, 115, 118; Gh. I. Brătianu, *În jurul întemeierii statelor românești (I)*, Revista istorică, serie nouă, 4, 1993, 1-2, p. 152, 153, 155; A. Sacerdoțeanu, *Comentarii la diploma din 1285 privind pe magistrul Gheorghe*, Analele Universității "C. I. Parhon" București, Seria științe sociale. Istorie, 4, 1957, 9, p. 27-43; S. Iosipescu, *Români...*, p. 48-51; Gh. Anghel, *Fortificații medievale de piatră din secolele XIII-XVI*, Cluj-Napoca, 1986, p. 173-176; R. Popa, *La începuturile...*, p. 249-256, 276-278; M. Andreescu, *Considerații în legătură cu încercarea de independență a lui Litovoi și întemeierea Țării Românești*, Studii și Articole de Istorie, 59, 1991, p. 14-20; Ș. Papacostea, *Români...*, p. 140-142; M. Diaconescu, *The Political...*, p. 13-14; T. Sălăgean, *Magister Georgius Baksa's Expedition against Voivode Litovoi (I-II)*, Transylvanian Review, 12, 2003, 2, p. 96-104; 3, p. 52-62; A. A. Rusu, *Castelarea...*, p. 245, 309, 390, 534-535; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 165-168, 208-212; I. A. Pop, *Disputa pentru Țara Hațegului dintre voievozii români și regii ungari în secolul al XIII-lea*, in *Studia varia in honorem Professoris Ștefan Ștefănescu Octogenarii*, ed. C. Luca, I. Căndea, București, Brăila, 2009, p. 105-110; T. Sălăgean, *Note asupra relațiilor dintre voievodatul lui Litovoi și Țara Hațegului*, ibidem, p. 117-119; I. A. Pop, *Din mâinile...*, p. 243-246; S. Iosipescu, *Carpații...*, p. 99-104; A. Madgearu, *The Asanids...*, p. 255-259; A. Ioniță, B. Kelemen, A. Simon, *AL WA, Prințul Negru al Vlahiei și vremurile sale*, Cluj-Napoca, 2017, p. 435-436.

³⁸ As considered N. Constantinescu, *Primele formațiuni statale românești la sud de Carpați*, in *Craiova, trecut, prezent și viitor*, Craiova, 1979, 67; M. Andreescu, *Considerații...*, p. 18-19; M. Diaconescu, *The Political...*, p. 14.

³⁹ D. Onciul, *Scrieri...*, I, 355; A. Sacerdoțeanu, *Comentarii...*, p. 32; G. D. Florescu, D. Pleșia, *Temeliile...*, p. 7; R. Popa, *La începuturile...*, p. 277; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 211-212.

⁴⁰ See the description of this road at M. Măneanu, *Banatul...*, p. 107-109.

Walachia was a part of this emirate, as a tributary state equivalent with a *tümen* of 10.000 warriors (the big unit of the Tatar army)⁴¹. This is possible, but still to prove. Anyway, the military cooperation between Romanians and Tatars was possible in the framework of such a tributary state. The very well organized administration introduced by the Mongols was partially inherited by the Romanian states developed in Walachia and Moldavia. Words such as *tarcan* (exemption) and *damga* (*tamga*, the stamp with clan symbols) are related to the tax perceptions made by the Tatars. *Olacul* (the customs) remembers the Tatar customs points. The toponymy transmitted even the name *baskak* (local Tatar governor, who exerted the military command and organized the census): *Bascacauți*, *Băscăceni* (medieval villages from the counties of Dorohoi and Hotin). The Romanian princes whose power will replace the Tatar center of Isaccea will become the benefactors of the tax collecting and customs system created by the Tatar administration⁴². For Hungary, the new ascension of the Golden Horde required the conservation of the border on the Carpathians, with the control of all the gorges. In this new situation a new expansion south and east of the mountains had no sense.

4. The foundation of the Walachian *voievodate*

In the same time with this intensification of the Golden Horde domination over the Romanians living east and south of Carpathians, some of their brothers from Transylvania lost their possessions: the small landowners from Făgăraș land. In 1288, when Ladislaus IV was still reigning, the archbishop Lodomer of Esztergom asked to the Transylvanian noblemen, as well to the Saxons, Szeklers and Romanians from the Sibiu and Bârsa counties, to do not support the king (Ladislaus IV was excommunicated because he cooperated with the heathen Cumans and Tatars). It was observed that the omission of the Romanians from Făgăraș indicates that they have already rebelled⁴³. They were most probable allied with Ladislaus IV, because it is well known that this king was favorable to the Orthodox people, and much more, as some supposed, that he secretly converted to the Orthodoxy (Pope Nicholas IV asked to be made an inquiry on this problem)⁴⁴. The legend about the brothers Roman and Vlahata inserted in the so-called “Moldo-Russian Chronicle” remembers that Ladislaus IV (called Vladislav) became secretly Orthodox and by this reason he supported the Romanians from Maramureș, allowing them to preserve “the Greek Christian religion and giving land (domains) for living”. The legend was created after a prototype conventionally named “Letopisețul Unguresc” (“The Hungarian Annals”), written in Maramureș in the period 1359-1363⁴⁵. The tradition concerns the Tatar attack of 1285, when the Romanians were too involved in the defence of Transylvania. It is likewise possible that the Romanians from the Făgăraș Land received a privileged status in the last years of the reign of Ladislaus IV, when he was allied with the Cumans. The land of Făgăraș is placed between two major crossing points through the Carpathians, Bran-Rucăr and the gorge of the Olt River near Sibiu.

The reason of the rebellion of the Romanians from Făgăraș is revealed by a later document. In March 1291, the Diet summoned by King Andrew III (1290-1301) gave back to *magister* Ugrinus the domains Făgăraș and Sâmbăta, which were previously recovered from the Romanians sometimes before 1291. Ugrinus was

⁴¹ A. Ioniță, *Spațiul...*, p. 114.

⁴² H. H. Stahl, *Studii de sociologie istorică*, București, 1972, p. 59-62; A. Gonța, *Românii...*, p. 89; A. Busuioceanu, *Imunitatea feudală din Țara Românească în timpul lui Mircea cel Mare*, in *Marele Mircea Voievod*, coordonator I. Pătroiu, București, 1987, p. 141-142.

⁴³ P. Iambor, *Atacurile...*, p. 219; Ș. Papacostea, *Întemeiere și descălecat în tradiția istorică a constituirii Țării Românești*, Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie, 19, 2001, p. 62-63; T. Sălăgean, *Transylvania...*, p. 148-151.

⁴⁴ Ș. Papacostea, *Românii...*, p. 133-134, 164-165.

⁴⁵ O. Pecican, *Troia, Veneția, Roma. Studii de istoria civilizației europene*, Cluj-Napoca, 1998, p. 103-252; Idem, *Letopisețul unguresc. O scriere istorică din Ungaria angevină*, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, p. 25-65.

voievode of Transylvania in 1275-1276. It is highly probable that the domains were given to the Romanians by Ladislaus IV, when he was fighting with his rivals. Those domains were firstly occupied by the ancestors of Ugrinus sometimes in the second half of the 12th century, when the region entered under the authority of the Hungarian kingdom⁴⁶. The change of policy towards the Romanian small noblemen introduced by the new king Andrew III might be the cause for the displacement of some of them south of Carpathians, in the area of the same voievodate of Făgăraș⁴⁷. In these circumstances occurred the so-called “descălecat” (land-taking) from Făgăraș. The “descălecat” does not mean the colonization of a desert territory. It was the taking into possession and the organization of that territory by a military elite, an action fulfilled during a longer period, or in several moments⁴⁸.

The external context was favorable, because in 1291 a major Tatar invasion affected for a long period the Hungarian positions in the Danubian region. In that moment was lost the Banat of Severin, entered under the direct domination of the Golden Horde, as well as the entire Walachia. Commanded by the emir Nogai who was ruling at Isaccea, the Tatars marched beyond the Iron Gates up to Mačva, extending their domination over the Serbian kingdom of Stephen Dragutin⁴⁹. The climax of the Tatar power in the Danubian region was contemporary with the troubles in Transylvania. By this reason, it could be supposed that the movement of those rebelled Romanians was in some relation with the Tatars, who were too interested to take a permanent control over the gorges giving access to Transylvania. The new large Tatar offensive made impossible for several decades any new Hungarian attempt to keep her control over the regions outside the mountains. Therefore, the circumstances were favorable for the detachment of the Romanian noblemen from the Hungarian vassalage, with the help of the Tatars. I cannot agree the interpretation of Paul Binder, who saw in this departure to the south the creation of a new Banat, against the Tatars⁵⁰, or that supported by Tudor Sălăgean and Ioan Marian Țiplic, who regard the “descălecat” as the creation of a “border military district”, whose ruler replaced the voievode of Curtea de Argeș⁵¹.

⁴⁶ *Documente privitoare...*, p. 510-511 (doc. CCCCXII); N. Iorga, *Istoria...*, p. 127-128; Gh. I. Brătianu, *În jurul...*, p. 155-156; Th. Năgler, *Așezarea sașilor în Transilvania*, București, 1992, p. 125-126; Ș. Papacostea, *Români...*, p. 170-171; A. Lukács, *Țara Făgărașului în evul mediu: secolele XIII-XVI*, București, 1999, p. 67, 70, 161-162, 165-167; D. N. Busuioc-von Hasselbach, *Țara Făgărașului în secolul al XIII-lea. Mănăstirea cisterciană Cârța, I-II*, Cluj-Napoca, 2001, II, p. 76-77; D. Căprăroiu, *Asupra începuturilor orașului Câmpulung*, *Historia Urbana*, 16, 2008, 1-2, p. 51-52; T. Sălăgean, *Transilvania...*, p. 153-156, 195-196; A. Ioniță, B. Kelemen, A. Simon, *AL WA...*, p. 441-443. Ș. Papacostea, *Români...*, p. 165 supposed instead the the estates were took by Ugrinus's family during the war against Bulgaria in 1232 and that they entered back into the Romanians' hands during the troubles occasioned by the Mongol invasion of 1241.

⁴⁷ The idea was put forward by L. Chițescu, *O formațiune politică românească la nord și la sud de Munții Făgăraș în secolul al XIII-lea*, *Revista de Istorie*, 28, 1975, 7, p. 1062-1064.

⁴⁸ Șt. S. Gorovei, *Întemeierea Moldovei: Probleme controversate*. Ediția a doua, adăugită, Iași, 2014, p. 51-74. See also Gh. I. Brătianu, *În jurul...*, p. 159; P. Ș. Năsturel, “Descălecat”-mărturia unui cuvânt despre începuturile Țărilor Române, *Buletinul Bibliotecii Române din Freiburg*, 8 (12), 1980-1981, p. 221-236; Idem, *Din nou despre “descălecat”*, ibidem, 9 (13), 1982, p. 343-348.

⁴⁹ Ș. Papacostea, *Români...*, p. 168; V. Achim, *Politica...*, p. 244-245; D. Căprăroiu, *Asupra începuturilor...*, p. 60; A. Uzelac, *Tatars and Serbs at the End of the Thirteenth Century*, *Revista de Istorie Militară*, 2011, 5-6 (127-128), p. 13-14; V. Ciocîltan, *The Mongols and the Black Sea Trade in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, Leiden, Boston, 2012, p. 256-257; D. Căprăroiu, *Notes on the Hungarian expansion East of Carpathians in the mid XIVth century*, *Annales d'Université “Valahia” Târgoviște, Section d'Archéologie et d'Histoire*, 15, 2013, 2, p. 51; T. Gemil, *Cumano-tătarii și începuturile statelor medievale românești*, in *Istoria ca datorie. Omagiu academicianului Ioan-Aurel Pop la împlinirea vârstei de 60 de ani*. Coordonatori: I. Bolovan, O. Ghitta, Cluj-Napoca, 2015, p. 358-360.

⁵⁰ P. Binder, *Antecedente...(II)*, p. 37-39.

⁵¹ I. M. Țiplic, *Organizarea...*, p. 173; T. Sălăgean, *Transilvania...*, p. 201. Similar ideas at O. Pecican, *Realități imaginate și ficțiuni adevărate în Evul Mediu românesc. Studii despre imaginăria medievală*, Cluj-Napoca, 2002, p. 68-70; I. Batalli, *Radu Negru - personaj istoric real venit din legendă*, *Revista de Istorie a Muscelului. Studii și comunicări, Muzeul Municipal Câmpulung Muscel*, 7, 2003, p. 17-24.



Fig. 2. Negru Vodă (Portrait of Pierre Bellet). Image from Wikipedia
https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Negru_Vod%C4%83#/media/File:Negru.Voda.pictura.jpg
 (Access: 28/07/2018)

The displacement south of the Carpathians of a group of colonists of Romanian and German origin was remembered in the legend of Negru Vodă, as it was mentioned in the chronicles composed in the 17th-18th centuries: “When the year from Adam was 6798 (1290), in the Hungarian country was living a *voievode* called Radul Negrul, great duke over Amlaș and Făgăraș. He departed from there with all his family and with many people: Romanians, Catholic Saxons and other. Going down on the Dâmbovița River, they began to establish a new country. Firstly, they made the town called Câmpulung. In that place made a big, beautiful and tall church. From there they departed (“dăscălecat”) at Argeș, where they made a big town and established the reigning place, making a court and houses with stone, and a large and beautiful church. Some of the population which came down with him went after along the hills up to the Siret River and to Brăila; other went down, allover the place, making towns and villages up the Danube and the Olt. Then, the family of Băsărâb with the boyars beyond the Olt came all of them to Radul vodă, accepting to be under his order, and that his rule will be over all of them. From then appeared the name Țara Rumânească”⁵². It is remarkable the preservation of the date 1290, which is agreement with the results of the historical researches concerning the conflict between Ugrinus and the Romanian landowners from Făgăraș. The real date of the events was most probable 1291-1292, because it

⁵² *Istoria Țării Românești. 1290-1690. Letopisețul Cantacuzinesc*, ed. de C. Grecescu, D. Simonescu, București, 1960, p. 2. With some variations, the legend was also recorded by Radu Popescu, *Istoriile domnilor Țării Românești*, ed. C. Grecescu, București, 1963, p. 3.

is more suitable that the departure of Negru Vodă occurred after the Diet of March 1291. On the other hand, in 1292 the Romanians were no more mentioned as participants at the Diet, they being replaced by the Cumans. This means that the rebellion of the Romanians already happened⁵³. The moment was favorable for the detachment from Hungary (because the Tatar offensive), and the events described in "Letopisețul Cantacuzinesc" fit with the situation from Transylvania and with what we know about the origins of the town Câmpulung-Muscel.

At Câmpulung-Muscel, the monuments are indicating a Saxon colonization from Brașov, started after the middle of the 13th century (the Catholic church Saint Jacob the Great with the funeral stone of *comes Laurentius de Longocampo*, the ruler of the German community). For a long time it was maintained the date of 1300 for this inscription, but recently it was demonstrated that the stone was put sometimes between 1310 and 1349⁵⁴. The German colonization occurred by the end of the 13th century was one of the elements of the tradition about Negru Vodă. It is not so important for the problem of the expansion of the Hungarian domination south of the Carpathians if the town of Câmpulung was founded by the Saxons as considers Alexandru Ciocîltan⁵⁵, or if existed there a previous Romanian settlement⁵⁶. On the other hand, various legends about the same Negru Vodă were recorded south of the Carpathians, in the regions of Muscel, Argeș, Vâlcea, and north of the mountains in Făgăraș. The traditions about Negru Vodă are fixed to some points like the fortress of Breaza, the monuments from Cetățeni, or the town of Câmpulung. They are telling that Negru Vodă had a property quarrel with a Hungarian nobleman, against whom took defence in the fortresses Făgăraș and Breaza, and that he finally went south of the mountains. Other traditions are speaking about the battles of Negru Vodă against the Tatars⁵⁷. The stone fortress of Făgăraș was built in 1310, but before that existed another one, with earthen wall, a fortification included in the defensive system of the Hungarian kingdom⁵⁸. At Breaza (Lisa commune, Brașov county) exists a stone fortress of oval form with two circular inner towers. Its dating in the 13th century of this residence castle is uncertain, the plan being similar to those dated later in the 14th century. One possibility is that the fortress was made by the Cistercians from Cârța, as a watching point⁵⁹.

⁵³ Gh. I. Brătianu, *Tradiția istorică despre întemeierea statelor românești*, București, 1980, p. 107-108; Idem, *În jurul...*, p. 158-159; S. Iosipescu, *Românii...*, p. 59; D. Căprăroiu, *Asupra începuturilor...*, p. 41-42.

⁵⁴ E. Lăzărescu, *Despre piatra de mormânt a comitelui Laurențiu și câteva probleme arheologice și istorice în legătură cu ea*, Studii și cercetări de istoria artei, 4, 1957, 1-2, p. 109-127; G. D. Florescu, D. Pleșia, *Negru Vodă - personaj istoric real*, Magazin Istoric, 4, 1970, 8, (41), p. 42; P. Binder, *Antecedente...(II)*, 37-39; Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Cetăți...*, p. 217-221; Idem, *Unele considerații privind începuturile orașului Câmpulung și ale Curții Domnești*, Historia Urbana, 16, 2008, 1-2, p. 30-32; D. Căprăroiu, *Asupra începuturilor...*, p. 39-40, 52-54; I. Albu, *Lespedea funerară a comitelui Laurențiu din Câmpulung*, in *Studia varia...*, p. 123-176; A. Ciocîltan, *Comunitățile germane la sud de Carpați în Evul Mediu (secolele XIII-XVII)*, Brăila, 2015, p. 95, 168-171.

⁵⁵ A. Ciocîltan, *Comunitățile...*, p. 67-72, 104.

⁵⁶ Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Unele considerații...*, p. 30-35; D. Căprăroiu, *Asupra începuturilor...*, p. 57-63.

⁵⁷ I. Conea, *Basarabii...*, p. 5; G. D. Florescu, D. Pleșia, *Negru Vodă...*, p. 38-40; Gh. I. Brătianu, *În jurul...*, p. 141, 144; D. Căprăroiu, *Asupra începuturilor...*, p. 58-59; R. Cărciumaru, *Negru-Vodă și Dragoș. Legendă și adevăr istoric la începuturile statalității românești*, Revista de Istorie Militară, 1-2 (123-124), 2011, p. 16.

⁵⁸ A. Marin, *Cetatea Făgărașului*, in *Făgăraș 700. Volum editat cu prilejul a 700 de ani de atestare (1291-1991)*, București, 1991, p. 42; Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Cercetări arheologice la Făgăraș*, Cercetări Arheologice, 10, 1997, p. 241-243; A. Lukács, *Țara Făgărașului...*, p. 67, 140; D. N. Busuioc-von Hasselbach, *Țara Făgărașului...*, I, p. 200; II, p. 49-50.

⁵⁹ Th. Năgler, *Cercetările din cetatea de la Breaza (Făgăraș)*, Studii și comunicări, Arheologie-istorie, Sibiu, 14, 1969, p. 89-121; L. Chițescu, *O formațiune...*, p. 1057-1058; Th. Năgler, *Așezarea...*, p. 126; A. Lukács, *Țara Făgărașului...*, p. 144-146, 169-170; D. N. Busuioc-von Hasselbach, *Țara Făgărașului...*, II, p. 74-75; Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Cetăți...*, p. 242; Th. Năgler, P. Munteanu Beșliu, *Repertoriul fortificațiilor medievale din piatră aflate în partea central sudică a Transilvaniei (secolele XIII-XVI)*, in *In memoriam Radu Popa. Temeiuri ale*

The oldest documentary mention of Negru Vodă as founder of the state is from 1549⁶⁰. The reliability of the legends about Negru Vodă is still an open question which this study cannot treat in detail. It was demonstrated the influence of the Moldavian chronicles about the Moldavian “descălecat” from Maramureș over the Walachian chronicles written in the 16th century. The idea of the “descălecat” of the country was taken from the Annals composed at the court of Stephen the Great (1457-1504), being inserted in a chronicle written in Walachia in 1525⁶¹. However, it is possible that this influence was added to a local legend about a man coming from Făgăraș. The development of the traditions about Negru Vodă around the fortress of Breaza from the Făgăraș Land could not be explained by the assimilation of a literary tradition from Walachia, spread among the boyars who knew to read⁶². The legends from Făgăraș Land appeared there. In the traditions, the character Negru Vodă is a kind of mythical hero, because any foundation act is seen in the popular mythology as a the deed of exemplar heroes, whose real features blur and change during time. In the same way evolved the image of Emperor Trajan in the popular Romanian and South-Slavic mythology, from reality to myth (the emperor became a founding hero who defeated the giants, being sometimes mingled with Negru Vodă)⁶³.

The name *Negru Vodă* is unlikely for a real prince. It is possible that this ruler descended from Făgăraș was called Radu (which explains the later confusion with prince Radu I, who was master of the Făgăraș domain vassal to the Hungarian king). It is probable that the real name was forgotten and replaced with a mythical name, based on the symbolic meaning of the color black (at the nomad populations black meant dependency⁶⁴). The problem is still unresolved, because we do not know how, whence and why the symbol of the black color was assumed in the Romanian tradition spread in medieval Walachia. A good explanation could be that of Pavel Chihaia: the legend appeared on the basis of the raven included in the coat of arms of Walachia⁶⁵. Another possibility is the identification of the legendary Negru Vodă with Thocomer, the father of prince Basarab. The discussions around this subject, including the alleged Cuman origin of Thocomer and Basarab, are outside the matter of this study.⁶⁶

civilizației românești în context european (ed. D. Marcu Istrate, A. Istrate, C. Gaiu), Cluj-Napoca, 2003, p. 389-390; A. A. Rusu, *Castelarea...*, p. 431-432, 487-489, 507; I. M. Țiplic, *Organizarea...*, p. 171.

⁶⁰ N. Stoicescu, *Descălecat sau întemeiere ? O veche preocupare a istoriografiei românești. Legendă și adevăr istoric*, in *Constituirea...*, p. 146.

⁶¹ P. Chihaia, *Artă...*, I, p. 278-286; II, p. 129-290.

⁶² Gh. I. Brătianu, *În jurul...*, p. 145.

⁶³ A. Madgearu, *L'immagine di Traiano nel folklore sud-est europeo*, Quaderni della Casa Romana di Venezia, 2, 2002 (2003), p. 33.

⁶⁴ D. Onciul, *Scrieri...*, I, p. 383-387; Gh. I. Brătianu, *Tradiția...*, p. 110-111; Idem, *În jurul...*, p. 155-159; O. Pritsak, *Qara. Studie zur Türkischen Rechtssymbolik*, in *Zeki Velidi Togan'a Armağan*, İstanbul, 1955, p. 239-263 (Idem, *Studies in Medieval Eurasian History*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1981, XIV); G. D. Florescu, D. Pleșia, *Negru Vodă...*, p. 41; S. Iosipescu, *Românii...*, p. 61; V. Ciocîltan, *Componenta românească a țaratului Asăneștilor în oglinda izvoarelor orientale*, Revista Istorică, serie nouă, 3, 1992, 11-12, p. 1114. A different opinion at T. Gemil, *Cumano-tătarii...*, p. 361: the black colour was associated with the North.

⁶⁵ P. Chihaia, *Artă...*, II, p. 234-265. The raven appeared by the transformation of the eagle, which occurred during the reign of Prince Neagoe Basarab (1512-1521). See D. Cernovodeanu, *Știința și arta heraldică în România*, București, 1977, p. 44.

⁶⁶ N. Djuvara, *Thocomerius-Negru Vodă. Un voivod de origine cumană la începuturile Țării Românești. Cum a purces întemeierea primului stat medieval românesc dinaintea de “descăleacătoare” și până la așezarea Mitropoliei Ungrovlahiei la Argeș. Noi interpretări*, ed. a III-a, București, 2011; Idem, *Răspuns criticilor mei și neprietenilor lui Negru Vodă*, București, 2011; D. Căprăroiu, *Asupra începuturilor...*, p. 57-61; R. Cărciumaru, *Negru-Vodă...*, p. 7-11; M. Cazacu, D. I. Mureșan, *Ioan Basarab, un domn român la începuturile Țării Românești*, Chișinău, 2013; L. Rădvan, *Negru Vodă și formarea orașelor din Țara Românească*, in *Lumea orașului. Cercetări de istorie urbană*. Coordonator S. Călția, București, 2013, p. 37-62; S. Iosipescu, “Cumanitatea” românilor. *Adnotări pe marginea unei discuții, in Retrospecții medievale. In honorem Professoris emeriti Ioan Caproșu*. Ed. V. Spinei, L. Rădvan, A. Bodale, Iași, 2014, p. 331-350; A. Ciocîltan, *Comunitățile...*, p. 73-78; T. Gemil, *Cumano-tătarii...*, p. 360-361.

The departure of Negru Vodă with a group of Romanian noblemen from Făgăraș to the north of the Argeș county is supported by the internal tradition of Walachia and by the context of the events in Transylvania around the year 1290. The significance of this movement for the genesis of the state of Walachia should not be overemphasized, because the territory was already evolving in this direction, resulted from the demographic and economic increase, and from the stability provided by the Golden Horde domination. The voievodal center of Curtea de Argeș was certainly founded before this displacement, which is otherwise linked with the development of foundation of the new center of Câmpulung. The dilemma internal / external factors in the state genesis of Walachia is a false problem, because it was the result of a combination of both. "It appeared, or it accelerated, on the one hand by the suppression of the Romanian political autonomies inside the Carpathian range as the consequence of the policy of the Hungarian kingship, and on the other hand, from the contemporary consolidation of those outside the mountains, up to the establishment of the independent state"⁶⁷. In the tradition transmitted in the Walachian chronicles, the "descălecat" from Făgăraș received the main place in the narrative about the origin of the state, because the Moldavian influence and because it was easier to explain the birth of the state through the action of a conquering hero. The memory of the *voievodes* from Oltenia and Walachia who lived in the 13th century (Litovoi, Seneslau) was not preserved in the popular and literary tradition. The same happened with Basarab, the founder of Walachia.

The establishment of the voievodate of Curtea de Argeș was the following form of detachment of Romanians from the domination of the Hungarian kingdom, after the rebellion of Litovoi. In both cases, they were possible because they had external support: Bulgaria for Litovoi, the Golden Horde for the voievodate from Argeș subjected to Nogai (Thocomer and next Basarab). The role of the Tatars in the genesis of the state was hidden in the Walachian chronicles, but results with clarity from the analysis of the international situation of the last decade of the 13th century. The plans of expansion to the south and east of the Carpathians promoted by the Hungarian kingdom during the 13th century ended with a failure. The expansion of the Golden Horde domination stopped them on the natural border of the mountains, allowing thus the development of the Romanian proto-states in Walachia and Oltenia. Hungary continued to keep the control over the passes in the Southern and Eastern Carpathians, but lost the Banat of Severin and other regions south of Carpathians where existed the Romanian voievodates subjected to the Golden Horde.

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⁶⁷ Ș. Papacostea, *Întemeiere...*, p. 65.

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