THE ROMANIAN SOLDIERS IN THE FIRST CRUSADE (1095-1099), ACCORDING TO A PRIMARY MEDIEVAL LITERARY SOURCE

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Abstract: The mention of the possible presence of the Romanians from the North of the Danube in the Knights' Crusade, the second and most important stage of the First Crusade, belongs to the chronicler Fulcher of Chartres, the eye witness of the events. The account of the French scholar attracted my attention when I was working on the full translation into Romanian of the oldest source of the First Crusade, The Anonymous Chronicle (Anonymi Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolymitanorum). The value of this translation, to be published this year, arises from its necessity in research in various scientific fields, from History and Theology to Political Sciences. Reaching the narrative - in the Normand (South-Italian) version of Gesta – of the desert of Pisidia difficult crossing, it was necessary to verify / study thoroughly the information by comparing it with another source. The mention of the 'Dacians' among the crusader troops by the chronicler of Chartres gave rise to an unavoidable interest. Of course, Fulcher's reference requires a careful and broader exegesis than a comparative footnote in a translation of a different historical source. Hence the need to extend, through an exclusive study, the perspective of the research I initially dealt with to verify the hypothesis of a significant Romanian military contingent that accompanied the crusader armies, at least to the siege of Antioch (21 October 1097 – 3 June 1098).

Keywords:Romanians, the First Crusade, Fulcher of Chartres, Tatikios, Dacians.

Introduction

Translating primary sources represents, among other things, one of the litmus tests of our future. The deficiency of translations in the national language of ancient and medieval sources, (many including valuable data about our ancestors from the so-called "white period" of history), registered in Romanian science in general, leads us forcibly to an ambiguous situation. Without falling into the trap of a burlesque conspiracy, we must nonetheless confess that, unlike its Western sisters, which, cherishing translations to their true value, explore, very diligently, absolutely every documentary corner of the past, and even when compared with its surrounding sisters (Hungary, Bulgaria, Greece, Russia), forever restless in "discovering" new "proofs of nobility" (seen and not rarely presented as pretexts of primacy among others), Romanian science gives proof of a precarious argumentation, often lacking in sources, not because these would not exist but, especially, due to the fact that they are not available in the national language.

The mention referring to the possible presence of the Romanians from the North of the Danube in the Knights' Crusade, the second and most important stage of the First Crusade, belongs to the chronicler Fulcher of Chartres, the eye witness of the events and chaplain of the dynamic Baldwin of Boulogne, count of Edessa and the first Latin king of Jerusalem (1100-1118).

The account of the French scholar Fulcher, attracted my attention when, while working on the full translation into Romanian of the oldest source of the First Crusade, The Anonymous Chronicle (*Anonymi Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolymitanorum*) - already published in 1100, I felt the necessity to compare certain information with those provided by other participants in the Eastern campaign. The value of this translation, to be

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published this year, arises from its necessity in research in various scientific fields, from Theology, Philology and History (primary beneficiaries) to International Relations or Political Sciences. Too few sources dating from the time of the crusades **– not a single one from the period of the First Crusade! –** have been available in Romanian, until now. This is why *The Anonymous Chronicle* is not necessary only to specialists. I could easily say that, according to its initial destination, *Gesta* addresses especially to the ordinary reader. The subject of the translation is a fascinating one even now, after the passage of nine centuries since its appearance. *Gesta Francorum* becomes in our eyes a complex, mature work in which we can easily picture ourselves. It confers the reader a wide, sincere perspective, laden with emotion without being blinded by it.

Of course, Fulcher's reference requires a careful and broader exegesis than a comparative footnote in a translation of a different historical source. Hence the need to extend, through an exclusive study, the perspective of the research I initially dealt with to verify the hypothesis of a significant Romanian military contingent that accompanied the crusader armies, at least to the siege of Antioch (21 October 1097 – 3 June 1098).

1. The Historical Source (the Author and the Chronicle)

One of the most important and complete accounts of the First Crusade has been written by Fulcher of Chartres. The mission he undertook in his time distinguishes Fulcher of Chartres more than every other eye witness who has recounted the episodes of the Crusade, reason for which his life is better known.

Born in Chartres around the year 1059, he was educated from his early days for the service of the Church. At the time of the Clermont Council, in 1095, he was serving as priest whether in Chartres or in Orleans. Excited by the general enthusiasm which had spread rapidly throughout France, Fulcher, together with many other fellow countrymen, swore the oath of the Cross and enlisted in the army of count Stephen of Blois, the son-in law of King William the Conqueror. He was convinced that the words of the Saviour were coming true: *"But now, he that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword let him sell his garment, and buy one."* (Luke 22, 36).

Count Stephen of Blois, as lord of Chartres, had remarked Fulcher, for his devotement and also for his erudition, keeping him close to the headquarters of his army. The army had stationed until its reunion with the Normand and Flemish troops. Stephen of Blois and Robert of Normandy were brothers-in-law. Stephen was married to Adele, daughter of William the Conqueror, and Robert was the oldest son of the new king of England. Accompanying them was also count Robert II of Flanders, cousin with Robert the Normand. After duke Robert of Normandy and count Robert of Flanders put their contingents together with that of Stephen of Blois, the army started its march, towards the end of 1096. Fulcher had accompanied it on its way to Constantinople. From there, after swearing the oath of fidelity towards emperor Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118)[1], all the great lords have crossed, together

[1] The Comnenus dynasty had Vlach origins and came from Thrace, probably from the city of Comne. The Emperor Basil II the Macedonian (+1025) gives the right to own land, for exceptional military accomplishments, to the first Comnenus ancestor, Manuel Erotikos, born a peasant, and offers him a great estate in Paphlagonia, where he built a castle named Castra Comnenon (nowadays Kastamuni in the north of Anatolia). The Comneni were military aristocrats and their source of power derived from the fact that they were so skilled in defending the Empire's frontiers. In the conflict between the party of the courtiers and that of the military, aroused on the issue of the succession of the dynasty of the Macedonians, towards the end of the year 1056, the first Comnenus, the son of the Vlach peasant ennobled by Basil II, takes the throne of Byzantium on

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with their armies, the Bosporus, and headed to Nicaea, backed up by several reconnaissance and artillery troops under the command of the Byzantine generals Tatikios and Butumites.

On the 14th of May 1097, Nicaea, metropolis of Asia Minor and capital city of the Seljuk sultan Kilij Arslan[2], was completely surrounded by francs. Although it did not have a joint command, the cruciate army acted as a unitary whole. Godefroy of Bouillon[3] positioned himself in the front of the northern wall, Tancred[4] was already at the eastern wall, Raymond of Saint Gilles[5] and Adhemar of Puy[6] occupied (a little bit later) the southern part, and Bohemond[7], Robert of Flanders and Stephen of Blois closed the iron fist of the encirclement, getting there on the 3rd of June. The decisive move of emperor Alexius of transporting military boats to the Ascania Lake, thus blocking the only mean of supply of the city, deterred the Turkish defenders to surrender to Byzantium on the 19th of June. On the conquest of Nicaea, the thesaurus of the sultan and his family was taken into custody by the Byzantines. The high rank knights and the commanders of the Crusade were called to Pelecanum, where Alexius had its headquarters. The emperor distributed to everyone gold and jewels from the sultan's treasury. Count Stephen of Blois writes to his wife Adele that he is stunned by the "mountain of gold" which he was entitled to[8].

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behalf of the military. We are talking about Isaac, paternal uncle of emperor Alexius I, who reigned between 1056 and 1059. For more information see: Bănescu, 1971, pp. 121-140; Runciman, 2014, pp. 68-73.

[2] The sultan Kilij Arslan I (1079-1107). In the text of the *Gesta* he appears as Soliman (the Young). Emir Soliman, the actual founder of the Rum sultanate, was sultan's Kilij Arslan I father.

[3]Godefroy of Bouillon (+ 1100), duke of Lower Lotharingia (Lorraine). After the conquest of Jerusalem, he becomes the first sovereign of the cruciate states, assuming the title of Protector of the Holy Sepulchre. Although he had actually ruled over the kingdom of Jerusalem, he refused, out of piety, the kingship affirming that nobody should wear a golden crown where Christ has worn a thorn one. He will die in unclear circumstances (the chronicles talk whether about the arrow wound gotten in the siege of Acre, or about a disease, or, finally, about the consumption of some poisoned fruits which Godefroy had supposedly received as a gift from a Muslim noble), in about a year after the conquest of the Holy Kingdom. He will be followed on the throne by his brother Baldwin, who will be less scrupulous about wearing on his forehead the golden crown.

[4] Tancred was the nephew of Bohemond. He was the son of Odo, also known as *"the Good Marquis"*. A perfect soldier, a clever diplomate and a skilful leader, Tancred will succeed to make a name for himself, hard to forget in the Orient. After he had founded a princedom of his own in Galilea, Tancred will cede it to the kingdom of Jerusalem as he preferred to settle down definitively in Antioch, which he will govern, in the name of his uncle, Bohemond, until the end of his life (12th of December 1112). He was married to princess Cecilia of France.

[5]Also known under the name of Raymond of Toulouse. He was the richest and most respected leader of the Crusade. He will establish a new state in the Orient, called the Tripoli County. On his death, on 28th February 1105, the rich city of Tripoli, led by a dynasty of Muslim judges, was completely surrounded. The Christian armies will succeed to take back the fortress only in 1109, under the command of Raymond's son, count Bertrand.

[6]The papal legate Adhemar of Puy was the brightest presence of the Crusade. A gentle and honest man, courageous and wise, respected even by the most intransigent ones, a mediator between the emperor and the cruciate princes, between the catholic and the orthodox clergy, the French bishop worked untired, with much diligence, for the unity in action of the Christians. The bishop, Adhemar, was killed by typhoid fever on the 1st of August 1098, little after the defeat of the armies of the Mosul, led by the Atabeg Kerbogha.

[7]Bohemond of Hauteville, count of Taranto and prince of Antioch, the son of the Normand duke Robert Guiscard. His name was actually Mark, but he will take the surname his father gave him: Bohemond (the Giant). Although an enemy of the Byzantium just likes his father, Bohemond will be forced to become, eventually, a vassal of the emperor Alexius, signing the Devol Treaty, in 1106. He will die in 1111 in Italy. His warrior prestige remained unequalled during his entire life. Bohemond's military ability reaped the admiration of all those who had known him either from their position of allies, or from that of enemies. A very well contoured description of the hero is portrayed by Princess Anna Comnena, who knew him personally (Ana Comnena, vol. II, 1977, pp. 236-238). *"There isn't in all The Alexiad, except for the emperor Alexius, a man to whom Anna Comnena made the honor of a more perfect and more flattering portrait"* (Diehl, vol. II, 1969, p. 85).

[8] Runciman, 2014, p. 205.

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Apparently after the victory in Nicaea, Fulcher became the chaplain of count Baldwin of Boulougne[9], brother of duke Godefroy of Bouillon. From this moment on, until Baldwin's death, in 1118, Fulcher faithfully fulfilled this mission, being closely associated with the skilful army commander.

Continuing its journey towards south, on the old military Byzantine road, the great army separated into two groups. The first group was led by Bohemond, Robert the Normand and by Tancred. To these, from Nicaea, the army led by general Tatikios fell alongside. Baldwin of Boulogne was part of the second group. Bohemond and Tatikios had exited first from the pass near Dorylaeum. In the Dorylaeum valley, nonetheless, sultan Kilij Arslan was awaiting with immense forces (there were also the emir of Cappadocia and the armies of his uncle Malik Ghazi, the son of emir Danishmend) to get his revenge for the loss of his capital city. Believing that all of the cruciate army had exited the pass, the Turks started a blitzkrieg from the heights on the knights in the first group, surrounding them. The Turks' way of fighting was based on mobility and on the launching of a series of successive curtains of arrows. The crusaders hardly handled the furious offensive of the Turks. But the Seljuk sultan did not know that a second cruciate army was rapidly coming to help Bohemond. The Provencals and the Lorrains, in the group of which there was also Fulcher, threw themselves into the battle, stirring turmoil in the rows of the Muslim army. Bishop Adhemar of Puy positioned himself with his troops behind the enemy, closing any possibility of escape for the Turks. The liberating apparition of Adhemar of Puy and his knights behind the Turks, on the heights from where they themselves initially launched their attack, panicked the Seljuk in such a manner that they broke the fighting formation and abandoned their camp (where the sultan's thesaurus was) in the hands of the brave Christians[10]. Heading towards south-east, through the north of the Taurus Mountains, the entire cruciate army, having as avant-garde the light cavalry of Tatikios, took possession of Polybotos, Antioch of Pisidia and Philomelium. Chasing the enemies, the crusaders adventured through the desert of Pisidia, where the thirst and other kind of shortages destroyed them[11]. The anonymous chronicler writes on this occasion: *"Therefore, we chased them through the deserts, and through barren and uninhabited land, from where we hardly got out alive. The hunger and the thirst restricted us everywhere, and there was absolutely nothing for us to eat, than, randomly picking and rubbing the wheatears, with that such wretched food we survived. There, most part of our horses died, thus many of our knights became pedestrians and because of the lack of horses our oxen took the place of the horses[12] and because of the great need, our burdens were carried by our goats and our sheep, even by our dogs"*[13].

Fulcher of Chartres remembers with emotion that, despite the disastrous situation the great army was in, the state of mind of the troops was though very good and the brotherhood among the crusaders of different nationalities was an obvious proof of the divine grace[14]. In August the crusaders managed to reach Iconium[15] which they found abandoned by the Turkish garrison. The rich stores of food and drinkable water of the city had revived for several days the tired army. Stacked with provisions, the knights of the Cross continued their road to Heraclea, where they faced the armies of emir Hasan of Cappadocia, which they put to rout. The next stop was Tyana, where Baldwin of Boulougne and Tancred get separated

[9] Baldwin of Boulogne, the brother of Godefroy of Bouillon, count of Edessa and king of Jerusalem (1100-1118).
[10] Runciman, 2014, pp. 210-211.
[11] Krey, 1921,p. 120.
[12]The meaning is that some knights had come to use the cattle for riding.
[13]*Gesta* III, 10.
[14] Fulcher de Chartres, 1913, p. 203.
[15]Nowadays Konya, the most important city of the Central Anatolia.

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from the great army and went through the Cilician Gates to the prosperous valley of Tars. The enmities between Tancred and Baldwin led to their separation. Tancred, after conquering several cities and Cilician castles, will attach himself to the main body of the crusaders in Maras (Germanicea), thus continuing the siege on Antioch. Baldwin, however, will continue his own expedition, associating himself with several Armenian despots in the fight against the Turks. He will go forth until over the Euphrates, in the prosperous land dominated by the great city of Edessa. The first cruciate state will therefore be established, in 1098, under the name of county of Edessa. Fulcher followed his master in the Armenian adventure.

Thus, he was not present neither to the siege on Antioch or to the one on Jerusalem as he was at that time in Edessa, which he left at the end of the year 1099, when he undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, together with Baldwin and Bohemund. When Baldwin was summoned to take over the reign of the kingdom of Jerusalem, after Godefroy's - his brother – death, Fulcher followed him to Jerusalem, where he remained until the time of his death, in 1127. His work, *Historia Hierosolymitana,* was written on his friend's request. It appeared in stages, the first part being diffused even since 1101. Another part of the work was given to the public towards the end of 1105, and the last fragment, written between 1124 and 1127, takes the shape of an analytical account about the Kingdom of Jerusalem, for the beginning of which it represents the most important information source. It is possible that he may have revised the first two parts of his account. The book ends suddenly, with the account of a mice invasion in the year 1127[16], fact that leads us to the conclusion that Fulcher of Chartres did not had the chance to finish his work. Thus, we can assume that 1127 is the year of his death[17].Unlike other accounts of the participants on the First Crusade, including the *Gesta Francorum*,the book of the scholar Fulcher is neither bias nor discriminatory. His perspective is an objective, favourable one and in the same time correct, including about the eastern Christians, fact which grants him, up until today, a priority in what the accuracy of the information is concerned.

The work is authentic, valuable through the richness of pertinent information regarding the world at the end of the 11th century. After *Gesta,* it is the second one as for its spreading and utilisation by the writers that subsequently wrote about the First Crusade.

2. The Danubian Mercenaries of the Empire

In the army of Alexius I Comnenus there were more contingents of mercenaries recruited from the Danube region. The groups of Petchenegs, generically mentioned by the chroniclers of the First Crusade, raise a certain identification problem. We know that in the 11th century their presence in the mercenary troops of the Byzantium is frequently mentioned. Nevertheless through the battle of Levounion, in 1091, the Petcheneg people, which had invaded the Byzantine provinces in the Balkans, is almost completely massacred by the reunited armies of the Byzantines and Cumans, led by Alexius I Comnenus. According to several authors, the Petchenegs talked approximately the same language as the Uzi and the Cumans. In the case of the Petchenegs who greeted the leaders of the First Crusade and escorted their armies to Constantinople, we can easily believe that we are talking about soldiers from different Turkish tribes which invaded the north-Danubian space and mingled with the Romanians and the Slavs in the 10th-11th centuries, becoming Christians and being finally assimilated by these. We cannot exclude the fact that in the legions of mercenaries

[16] Runciman, 2015, p. 358.
[17] Krey, 1921,p. 10.

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generically called by the Latins *pinzinacis* and by the Greek *patzinakes* (Petchenegs) might have been a great number of Romanians from the North of the Danube[18].

We are being drawn to this conclusion by the name the Byzantine chroniclers give the migrators who temporarily occupied the territories from the north of the Danube (Moldova, Transilvania and Wallachia/Țara Românească). Thus, Princess Anna Comnena, in her chronicle *The Alexiad,* dedicated to the life and deeds of her father Alexius I Comnenus, calls the Hungarians *Dacians*, the Petchenegs *Scythians*, the Cumans *Sarmatians*, and the Uzi *Gets*.

Of course, we can invoke the habit of archaization, much appreciated by the medieval chroniclers, but it had nonetheless a historic, ethnic, geographic, social, political and religious substratum. This substratum presents itself as follows:

I.The migrators were not more numerous than the local population. They composed the dominant class but they were the ones who got the archaic name of the subdued population.

II. Although they had taken charge of the general political leadership, based in the case of the migrators of the 10th-12th centuries (inclusively in the case of the Hungarians led by the Arpad dynasty), on the recruiting of new military forces among the autochthones, on trade and on collecting taxes, the migrating populations had entered in a Christening and integration process in the pre-established order of the Byzantium and – in the north of the Danube – in that of the Romanian and the Slav-Romanian peasant communities. This fact is being proved by the appearance of a numerous socio-ethnic "transitional category", referred to by the Byzantine chroniclers under the name of *mixo-barbarians* towards which a great part of the invaders have naturally "navigated", until their total assimilation[19]. To these mixo-barbarians, from whom all the Danubian garrisons of the Empire were composed of, we cannot assign an exclusive identity, but, rather a mixed one. Reputable scientists such as Wilhelm Tomaschek or Nicolae Bănescu recognize in the mixo-barbarians from the Danubian cities, the Romanians and the Bulgarians, and in those mentioned as being a part of the imperial troops a mixture among Petchenegs, Uzi, Romanians and Bulgarians[20].

III. Taking into consideration the geographic position they occupied at the moment of their invoking, a little before the battle of Levounion, we can conclude that the Hungarians were the dominant class in Transilvania, the Uzi in Moldova, the Cumans in the southern part of Wallachia/Țara Românească, and the Petchenegs in Dobrogea and in the northern part of Bulgaria[21].

IV. If under the name of Gets, Dacians, Sarmatians, Scythians there were the Uzi, the Hungarians, the Cumans and the Petchenegs, it is also probable that under the name itself of Uzi, Hungarians, Cumans or Petchenegs there were, based on a logic reciprocity principle, a numerous contingent of *"Gets-Dacians-Sarmatians-Scythians"* from across the Danube: Romanians and mixo-barbarians (Slav-Romanians, Petcheneg-Romanians, Uzi-Romanians, *etc.*). Thus, whether under their own antic denominations, or under the "tag" taken over from the ruling class temporarily consisting of the Turk originated migrators, the Romanians were massive enrolled in the forces of the Byzantine army in the X-XII centuries[22].

3. The Group of "Dacians", led by General Tatikios

[18] Bănescu, 1946, p.101.
[19] Ana Comnena, vol. I, 1977, pp. 289-291.
[20] Bănescu, 1938, p.22.
[21] Ana Comnena, vol. I, 1977, pp. 134-135, 261.
[22] Barnea, Ștefănescu, 1971, p. 132.

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When leaving Nicaea, the crusaders received from the emperor an expeditionary battalion to lead them safely on the roads of Asia Minor. The group of soldiers was put under the command of the experimented Tatikios, Alexius' right-hand man.

The relations with Tatikios were good until the siege of Antioch. The crusaders gave the emperor all the cities according to the oath of fidelity and the small expeditionary group lead by Tatikios (composed of Greek, Armenian and Danubian mercenaries, lightly armed) was useful to them through its mobility, through the knowing of the land and through the good relations with the local Christian population. Even to the Turk enemies, at that time, the emperor's banner still stirred respect[23]. All the reports on the evolution of the crusade, sent by Tatikios to the emperor, until the moment of the separation of the Byzantine general from the crusaders (in February 1098), are favourable to the westerners.

The reason for which the Byzantine general left remains a mystery up until today. There are several opinions about Tatikios' withdrawal. His side of the story, presented by Anna Comnena, is that Bohemond would have informed him that the rest of the lords had decided to assassinate him in order to appease the need of revenge of the hungry soldiers who were surrounded by the enemy[24]. Steven Runciman tends to believe the Byzantine story[25].

No matter how we would put it, nevertheless emperor Alexius, who was behind Tatikios, broke his oath of defending his vassals from the deathly danger they were in. The diplomatic motivation of Byzantium was that the information received from the deserters, as well as those coming from the Muslims, made the emperor come to the conclusion that the expedition of the crusaders had already finished through the sure defeat they were going to experience from the Atabeg of Mosul and that there was no point in investing in an already failed project. To all these added up the rumour that Ismail, son of sultan of Khorasan, was on his way to Antioch, with an army, trying to block a possible Byzantine initiative of helping the knights. It's the proof that the emperor of Byzantium never perceived the soldiers of the Cross as brothers and fighting companions, but more like mercenaries conjecturally under his command, whom he could discard[26]. These things will never be forgotten, or forgiven by the Latins.

Tatikios will not return, and the support he promised will never get to the crusaders. *Gesta* mentions with gravity: *"Meanwhile, the enemy, Tetigus[27] hearing that the army of the Turks assaulted us, he said he was afraid[28] and, believing that all of us will perish and will fall in the hands of the enemies, inventing all kind of fabrications, which he could skillfully spread, said: "lords and much wise men, you see that we are here in great need, and that there is no help coming from anywhere. So, allow me to return to my country, Romania[29], and I, without doubt, will make possible for many ships to come here, on the sea, full of wheat, wine, orzo, meat, flour and cheese and all the necessary goods. I will make it possible to bring you horses to sell, and establish here, on land, a market, under the emperor's protection. Here, all of these I faithfully promise you and will take care of it. Yet my servants and my tent are in the camp, thus you can strongly believe that I shall return as soon as*

[23] Ana Comnena, vol. II, 1977, pp. 121-122.
[24] Ana Comnena, vol. II, 1977, pp. 129-130.
[25] Runciman, 2014, pp. 249-250.
[26] Ana Comnena, vol. II, 1977, pp. 133-139.
[27] General Tatikios, the imperial legate who accompanied the crusader army.
[28] *"Tatikios, then seeing that the hunger was great (because the head of an ox was being sold for three golden coins) and losing any hope of conquering Antioch, he left; he embarked on the ships of the romans which were anchored in the Soudi Port and headed to Cyprus…"(*Ana Comnena, vol. II, 1977, p. 130).
[29] The name does not referr anymore to Asia Minor but to the way in which the Byzantines called their own empire at that time. For the establishing of a series of connections between the kingdom of Romania and the name of our country, Romania, see: Pricop, 2013, pp. 59-69.

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possible". In this way he ended his speech. That enemy left and he left everything he owned in the camp, and he is and will remain under the breaking of his vow"[30].

Regarding the ethnicity of the soldiers put under the Byzantine general, he himself a mixo-barbarian, there is only one signaling, that of chronicler Fulcher of Chartres, expressed on the occasion of the difficult crossing of the Pisidia desert, in July-August 1097.

In the Pisidia desert[31], Fulcher of Charters, count Baldwin of Boulogne's chaplain, remembers that, despite the shortages, the state of mind of the troops was though very good and the brotherhood among the crusaders of different nations was an obvious proof of the divine grace: "*Sed quis unquam audivit tot tribus linguae in uno exercitu, cum ibi adessent Franci, Flandri, Frisi, Galli, Allobroges, Lotharingi, Alemanni, Baioarii, Normanni, Angli, Scoti, Aquitani, Itali, Daci, Apuli, Iberi, Britones, Graeci, Armeni?... sed qui linguis diversi eramus, tamquam fratres sub dilectione Dei et proximi unanimes esse videbamur*" *("But who has ever heard of such a mixture of languages in a single army? There were Francs, Flanders, Frisians, Gaels, Allobrogian, Lothringian, Alemanni, Bavarians, Normand, English, Scottish, Aquitanians, Italians, Dacians, Apulians, Iberians, Bretons, Greeks and Armenians… But although we talked different languages, we were nonetheless brothers in the love for God and seemed to be closely related")*[32].

Of course, Fulcher, he himself a crusader, did not want to enumerate here all the Christian nations participating to the liberation of the Orient but to emphasize that, despite the blood, the language and the habit differences, the soldiers (at least the common ones) had worked together exceptionally even under the worst conditions.

About the *Dacians*[33], mentioned by Fulcher only once, in the context of the crossing of the Anatolian desert, as participants to the first crusade, their identification would be possible in four variants:

a) By assimilating them with the Scandinavians. It is true that in two 11'th century chronicles – *Historia Normannorum* (finalized around 1015), by Dudo of Saint Quentin and continuing the events described by him, *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* (finalized around 1070) by Guillaume of Jumieges, the Kingdom of Denmark (Dania) is called Dacia, but this substitution of names – favoured by the real association between the Goths and the Dacians in the time of the great migrations (4th-8th centuries) – had no real impact on the society nor on the historical contemporary literature of the two chroniclers.

The first important utilisation was that of the papal administration, which, only starting with 1192, in its papers, defines Scandinavia as Dacia. From 1196, in the majority of the topographic documents the word *Daneis* is replaced with *Dacus*. During 1220-1230, the Dominican and Mendicant Franciscan catholic orders established monastic centres in Denmark, witch was called in their documents *regio Dacia,* as well as in the entire Scandinavia, called the *Dacia province*[34]. So it is not likely that the Scandinavians were

[30] *Gesta* V, 16.
[31] *Gesta* III, 10.
[32] Fulcher de Chartres, 1913, p. 203.
[33] The antic people of the Dacians had an Indo-European – Thracian origin. The Kingdom of Dacia (which included in the 1st century the actual territory of Romania as well as important parts from around its borders) was conquered by the Roman emperor Trajan after two bloody military campaigns, in the years 101-102 and 105-106. The historical capital of the Dacians, Sarmizegetusa, situated in the Hateg region in Romania, in the Carpathian Mountains, was conquered with great difficulty and its last king, Decebal, killed himself, so as to not be captured by the invaders, in the year 106. The Roman Empire organized the territories occupied by the Dacians in a new province, which was ruled until 271-274, when Emperor Aurelian, for fear of Goths, decides to withdraw the administration and the army south of the Danube, where he established a new province called *Dacia aureliana.*
[34] Field, 1977, p. 32.

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called Dacians at the moment of the finalisation of Fulcher of Chartres' chronicle, written in several stages: 1101, 1106 and during 1124-1127.

b) By assimilating them with one of the migrating peoples settled in the Carpathian area (the Hungarians, the Bulgarians, the Petchenegs, the Cumans or the Uzi) from which the Byzantine emperor recruited his mercenaries. In the troops of these mercenaries there were also Romanians, the true descenders of the Dacians[35]. Nevertheless, as an exception from the medieval rule of the archaization of names, we notice that the western writers, contemporary with the author of the *Gesta,* do not apply this rule to the peoples in the Eastern Europe. They mention the peoples which they met in their way or which were part of the Byzantine army, directly, without archaizing their names. On the other hand, Fulcher himself calls the Petchenegs mercenaries, the Greeks and the Armenians, the Hungarians and the Bulgarians with their real names, without any fragment of his work in which he attributes any archaizing denomination.

An early plagiarist of Fulcher's work, Bartolf of Nangis, deceased in Syria around the year 1109, mentions the ethnic groups which formed the population of Constantinople at the time of the crusaders' arrival, living peacefully in the metropolis of the world. He enumerates, under their real denominations, the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Alani, the Cumans, the Petchenegs, the Italics, the Venetians, the Romans, the Dacians[36], the English, the Amalfitans, the Turks, the Jews, the Cretans and the Arabians, as well as the converted ones from several peoples[37].

Another one of his contemporaries, Raymond of Aguilers, companion of count Raymond of Toulouse and of bishop Adhemar of Puy, in his work *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Jerusalem* (1099), writes down: *"We reached Durazzo. We believed we were on our land, thinking that the emperor and his servants were our brothers and our companions…Because in front as well as behind us, by our right and by our left, the Turks, the Cumans, the Uzi,* ***the Tanacs*** *(tanaces), the Petcheneg and the Bulgarians were preparing an ambush against us"*[38]. The Tanacs remain "unidentified" until today by the historians of the first crusade. The military tagma of the *"immortals" (athanatoi)*, with which the *Tanacs* could be superimposed, is no longer mentioned after the war between the Byzantines and the Normands (1081-1085) in no literary or administrative document, fact which demonstrates that it had already been abolished at the time of the crusaders' arrival[39].

c) The identification of the names offered by Fulcher and Raymond – Dacians, and Tanacs – with the south-danubian Romanians (the Vlachs) enrolled in the Byzantine army, seems to be worthy to be taken into account as an option[40]. Anna Comnena mentions Vlach

[35] The Roman clerks and the imperial soldiers were easily moved by Emperor Aurelian south of the Danube, in the years 271-274, but most of the old inhabitants of Dacia (the ethnic synthesis of whom, equally Roman and Dacian, had already finished in the 3rd century, with the apparition of the first migrators) preferred to continue their life on their land. Their Romanian descendants survived in a semi-independent regime, led, politically and military, by their own local chiefs, called **judecatori (judges)** (lat. *duumviri jure dicundo*) / **juzi** (lat. *judices*) and **cnezi** (the romanian and slavic word **cneaz** is derivedwhether from theLatin word *cuneus*, or from the Celtic-Germanic word *künig*/*König*), **voivozi** (word of Slavic origin, equivalent of the latin *duces*), having similar attributions. Entrenched in Latinity and in Christianity, they chose the variant of a difficult cohabitation with the invading barbarians, paying them taxes and enrolling as mercenaries whether in their armies, or in those of the Roman, respectively Byzantine imperial ones.

[36]The Romanian presence in Constantinople is signaled even by the latter Byzantine chroniclers. See: Ducas, 1958, pp. 250-251.

[37] Hagenmeyer, 1913, pp. 176-177, note 1.

[38] Krey, 1921, pp. 65-66.

[39] Birkenmeyer, 2002, p. 8, note 8.

[40] Birkenmeyer, *The Development of the Komnenian Army*, pp. 30, 76-77, 124.

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recruits in her father's army[41]. In the eve of the Levounion battle (Tuesday, 29th of April 1091) 5000 Vlachs "daring and ready to attack" joined Alexius in the battle against the Petchenegs[42]. This hypothesis is though unlikely, because nowhere in the medieval history the Romanians from the South of the Danube are named Dacians. They are exclusively referred to as Blachi, Blaki, Blasi, Vlach (vlahi). This is not the case for the Romanians from the North of the Danube, which, although remembered as Vlachs or Wallachians[43], are generally called in the chronicles, even in the late period, after their ancestors' name, as Dacians[44]. It is posible that the name *Tanaces* Raymond of Aguilers refered to is linked to this unique group of oriental Latins, separated (by Slavs) from all contact with the western Latin nations, who served as heavy infantry in the byzantine army.

d) By assimilating the terms offered by Fulcher and Bartolf – Dacians – with the Romanians on the left shore of the Danube. Firstly by the geographical position, then through their Latinity, through their specific weapons and clothes and not lastly through the Christian faith, the Romanians from the North of the Danube have always represented an outpost of civilization in the midst of the migrators, without ever being confused with those. Once entered in the army of the Byzantine emperor, always searching for new forces, the Romanians formed groups of armies, whether in association with other groups of Balkan mercenaries, or by themselves, as it results from the accounts of the afore-mentioned chroniclers. Also noticeable is Fulcher's Dacians' position between the Italians in the north (*Itali*) and the ones in the south (*Apuli*), emphasizing, perhaps, as well as other chroniclers, the linguistic contiguity between them[45].

To support this hypothesis, which I embrace, we have the competent point of view of the scholar Heinrich Hagenmeyer, who gives the term "Dacians" used by Fulcher, the meaning of **inhabitants of the territory between the Danube, Tisa and Prut**, which probably belonged to the troops Alexius had sent with Tatikios[46]. Taking into consideration that the majoritarian population of this region has always been the Romanian one, it is easy to understand that the reference was made exclusively to its members. Of course, the Greeks and the Armenians are also remembered with the same occasion as accompanying general Tatikios.

Conclusions

Until the beginning of the 14th century, when they managed to establish the medieval princedoms of Moldavia and Țara Românească, the Romanians, the unique result of the christened Dacian-Roman synthesis, are very rarely mentioned in the documents, being substituted or confused with the peoples that settled in their territories. This is the reason for which, the discovery of a literary mention about them in the 11th century becomes valuable through the new fields of research it offers.

The cruciate legacy of the great Romanian leaders Mircea the Elder (Mircea cel Bătrân), Stephen the Great (Ștefan cel Mare), Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul), worn with honour on the clothes, the flags and the voivode seals, does not come only from those "late crusades" in which our armies participated (Nikopol, 1396 and Varna, 1444).

[41] Ana Comnena, vol. II, 1977, pp. 12, 16, 71.
[42] Ana Comnena, vol. II, 1977, pp. 16-17. See: Cojoc, 1990, pp. 53-67.
[43] Ducas, 1958, pp. 86-87, 176-177, 252-255.
[44] Laonic Chalcocondil, 1958, pp. 40, 63-64, 93, 114, 155, 171, 184, 189, 190, 193.
[45] Laonic Chalcocondil, 1958, pp. 63-64.
[46] Hagenmeyer, 1913, pp. 176-177, note 1.

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Proofs of the Romanian presence in the great campaigns in the Orient begin from the very First Crusade. The participation of the Romanians from the North of the Danube in the 1st Crusade can appear as an unknown historic field, but of great value, as it proves the historic continuity of the most vigorous characteristic of the Romanian people: that of defender of the European civilization and of Christianity. *"The Romanian armies have continuously maintained in the East the Cross bearing flags of Constantine"*[47].

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[47] Iorga, 1972, p. 165.

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