




Alexandru Madgearu (Bucharest)

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9686-3016>

THE COMPETITION FOR *CUMANIA* BETWEEN HUNGARY AND BULGARIA (1211–1247)

Abstract. Because the alliance between the Cumans and Bulgaria was a danger both for Hungary and the Latin Empire, it was preferable for Hungary to extend its domination over *Cumania*. The Teutonic knights were settled in south-eastern Transylvania in 1211 to defend it against the Cumans, who, after 1214, became enemies also for Bulgaria. Besides the few fortresses built in the Bârsa land, there is no certain proof for an expansion of the Teutonic Order outside the Carpathians, and by consequence of the Hungarian kingdom, in the period before the Mongol invasion of 1241. After the departure of the Teutonic knights in 1225, *Cumania* became the target of the Dominican mission which was present since around 1221 in *Terra Severin*, a north-Danubian Bulgarian possession. The Cuman bishopric was established in 1227. The subjection of these Cumans made useless the preservation of the Hungarian-Bulgarian alliance closed in 1214, and the consequence was the annexation of *Terra Severin* by Hungary, sometimes between 1228 and 1232, as a Banat. The final act of the Hungarian expansion in *Cumania* was the introduction of the title of King of *Cumania* by Bela IV in 1236. The region where it was established the bishopric of *Cumania* continued to be under the influence of the Church of Târnovo, even after the end of the domination of the Bulgarian state in this north-Danubian territory. In 1241, the Cuman bishopric was destroyed by the Mongol invasion. Because the Golden Horde domination did not extend west of Olt in the first years after 1242, Bela IV tried to regain positions by summoning the Hospitaller Knights in 1247. *Terra Severin* remained a part of the Hungarian kingdom, but the function of Ban was abandoned or suspended. One mission of the Hospitallers was to extend the Hungarian domination in *Cumania*, in the regions which were then conquered by the Mongols. The Mongol domination prevented the emergence of a Cuman kingdom in Moldavia, vassal of Hungary. Only the decline of the Golden Horde made possible a new penetration of the Hungarian kingdom in the former *Cumania*, in 1345. The former *Cumania* entered in the new states created during the 14th century by the Romanians liberated from the Hungarian domination, Wallachia and Moldavia.

Keywords: Bulgaria, Hungary, Wallachia, Moldavia, Cumans, Boril, John Asan II, Andrew II, Bela IV, Teutonic Order, Hospitallers

At the end of the 11th century, the Cumans replaced the Pechenegs and the Uzès as the new nomad masters in the territory stretching from Dniester to Eastern Carpathians and Lower Danube, becoming a mighty force, which

eventually was decisive in the victories of their ally, the Romanian-Bulgarian state (also known as the second Bulgarian empire) founded by the Asan brothers after the rebellion of 1185, against the Byzantine Empire, and next against the Latin Empire of Constantinople¹. This territory (the western part of their steppe empire extended up to Don), where the Cumans ruled over a part of the sedentary Romanian population, had no specific name in the Byzantine sources, but it could be called with the name mentioned in the Latin sources: *Cumania*, *Comania* or even *Black Cumania* (the *terra nigrorum Cumanorum* mentioned anachronically by Simon of Keza and the 14th century Hungarian chronicles in the description of the Hungarian migration to Pannonia could be located in Moldavia)². The Cumans became for the Hungarian kingdom a major danger, because the eastern borderland of Transylvania was vulnerable through several crossing points in the Oriental and Meridional Carpathians. Much more, the alliance of the Cumans with the major enemy of the Latin Empire was giving it a supplementary strength, as it was demonstrated in the battle of Adrianople (14th April 1205), when the Cuman light cavalry was the main responsible for the catastrophic defeat of the Latin army³. It was preferable for Hungary, but also for the Latin Empire, that the Cumans will not continue to be their enemies. In these circumstances began a competition for *Cumania* between Hungary and Bulgaria.

The turning point in the Hungarian policy toward *Cumania* came in 1211, following the important change in the geopolitical situation represented by the alliance of Tsar Boril with the Emperor of Nicaea, Theodore I Laskaris, established in March 1211⁴. In a previous letter addressed to Pope Innocentius III, the Greek emperor threatened that if the Latins would not make peace, he would ally with the *Blachi* (the state of Boril) and the *pagani*. These *pagani* were the Cumans,

¹ For the importance of the alliance with the Cumans, see: F. DALL'AGLIO, *The Interaction between Nomadic and Sedentary Peoples on the Lower Danube: the Cumans and the "Second Bulgarian Empire"*, [in:] *The Steppe Lands and the World beyond them. Studies in Honor of Victor Spinei on his 70th Birthday*, ed. F. CURTA, B.-P. MALEON, Iași 2013, p. 299–313; A. MADGEARU, *The Asanids. The Political and Military History of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185–1280)*, Leiden–Boston 2016 [= ECEEMA, 41], p. 68–72.

² SIMON OF KEZA, *Gesta Hungarorum*, 8, [in:] SSRH, vol. I, ed. E. SZENTPÉTERY, Budapest 1937, p. 148 and in: SIMON OF KEZA, *Gesta Hungarorum / The Deeds of the Hungarians*, ed., trans. L. VESZPREMY, F. SCHAER, with a study of J. SZÜCS, Budapest–New York 1999 [= CEMT, 1], p. 32; *Chronici Hungarici compositio saeculi XIV*, 8, [in:] SSRH, vol. I..., p. 257; V. SPINEI, *Moldova în secolele XI–XIV* [Moldavia in the 11th–14th Centuries], București 1982, p. 33–37; M. LĂZĂRESCU-ZOBIAN, *Cumania as the Name of Thirteenth Century Moldavia and Eastern Wallachia: Some Aspects of Kipchak-Rumanian Relations*, JTuS 8, 1984, p. 265–266; V. ACHIM, *Politica sud-estică a regatului ungar sub ultimii Arpadieni* [The South-eastern Policy of the Hungarian Kingdom during the Last Arpadians], București 2008, p. 58; K. GOLEV, *On the Edge of "Another World": The Balkans and Crimea as Contact Zones between the Cuman-Qipchaqs and the Outside World*, EB 54.1, 2018, p. 92–93.

³ A. MADGEARU, *The Asanids...*, p. 147–148.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 175–176.

and not the Seljuk Turks called *Ismaelitas* in the same text⁵. Michael I Komnenos Dukas from Epirus and Strez from Macedonia joined too this large alliance, whose purpose was to attack Constantinople from west and east. The Latin Emperor Henri I of Hainaut was allied with the Hungarian King Andrew II, but also with the Seljuq Sultan Kaykhusraw I since 1209 or 1210⁶.

The battle for Constantinople was the main front of the clash between these coalitions, but it could be observed that there was also a secondary front, in *Cumania*. The immediate solution of the Pope was to deploy the Teutonic Order in *terra Borza*, a region in south-eastern Transylvania with an area of circa 1200 square km, accessed by the Cumans by the Oituz, Tabla Buții and Bran Passes. The name *Borza* rendered the local name *Bârsa*, used by the Romanian inhabitants for the river which flows through that region. The etymology of *Bârsa* is still disputed (Dacian, Slavic, or perhaps Pecheneg), but the name certainly predates the Saxon colonization occurred at the middle of the 12th century⁷. The charter of Andrew II (7th May 1211) specified that the Teutons will construct wooden fortifications against the Cumans (*ad munimen Regni contra Cumanos castra lignea et urbes ligneas construere eos permisimus*). Later on, in the spring of 1222, the king allowed the construction of stone fortifications (*ad munimen regni contra Cumanos castra et urbes lapideas construere eos permisimus*). The stone fortifications were actually already built without king's permission since the beginning⁸. Șerban Papacostea emphasized the role of this prototype of a Teutonic state in the Papal strategy: the defence of the Latin Empire by fighting against the Cuman allies of Boril⁹, but the real achievements were more modest, being restricted to the improvement

⁵ *Acta Innocentii PP III (1198–1216). E Registris Vaticanis aliisque eruit, introductione auxit, notisque illustravit*, ed. T. HALUŠČYNSKYJ, Vatican 1944 [= PCRCICO.F, series III, 2], p. 346; A. PAPAGIANNI, *The Papacy and the Fourth Crusade in the Correspondence of the Nicaean Emperors with the Popes*, [in:] *La papauté et les croisades. Actes du VIF^e Congrès de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, Avignon, 27–31 août 2008*, ed. M. BALARD, Farnham 2011, p. 158.

⁶ B. HENDRICKX, *Régestes des empereurs latins de Constantinople, 1204–1261/1272*, Buč 14, 1988, p. 85–86; F. VAN TRICHT, *The Latin Renovatio of Byzantium. The Empire of Constantinople (1204–1228)*, Leiden–Boston 2011 [= Mme, 90], p. 373–375.

⁷ N. DRĂGANU, *Românii în veacurile IX–XIV pe baza toponimiei și a onomasticeii* [The Romanians in the 9th–14th Centuries According to Toponymy and Onomastics], București 1933, p. 544–551; I. PĂTRUȚ, *Vechi toponime românești în Transilvania* [Old Romanian Toponyms from Transylvania], CLin 17.2, 1972, p. 287–288; V. CIOCÎLTAN, *Vestigii turanice în Țara Bârsei* [Turanic Relics in Țara Bârsei], SUC 3–4, 2006–2007, p. 49–57, 52–55; O. FELECAN, N. FELECAN, *Toponymic Homonymies and Metonymies: Names of Rivers vs Names of Settlements*, On 5, 2019, p. 95–97. There are also other toponyms *Bârsa* or compounded with this name in all the regions of Romania.

⁸ *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, vol. I, 1191 bis 1342. Nummer 1 bis 582, ed. F. ZIMMERMANN, C. WERNER, Hermannstadt 1892, p. 11–12, 19 (nr. 19, 31); H. ZIMMERMANN, *Der deutsche Orden in Siebenbürgen. Eine diplomatische Untersuchung*, Köln–Weimar–Wien 2011, p. 162–163, 170 (nr. I, VI).

⁹ Ș. PAPACOSTEA, *Between the Crusade and the Mongol Empire. The Romanians in the 13th Century*, Cluj-Napoca 1998, p. 23–46; IDEM, “Terra Borza et ultra montes nivium”. Ein gescheiterter Kirchenstaat

of the defence of a small part of the eastern frontier of the *Christianitas*, the remote south-eastern Transylvania.

The involvement in the fights against the Cumans came short time before a radical change in the international relations. Defeated by Henri I at the end of 1213, Boril was compelled to accept the alliance with Hungary. This led to a common position of Hungary and Bulgaria against the Cumans, who supported the rebellion against Boril occurred in Vidin in the same year 1214. Helping his new ally, Andrew II sent there an army composed of Saxons, Szeklers, Romanians (*Olaci*) and Pechenegs, under the command of Joachim, the Count of Hermannstadt (Sibiu). This action would not have been possible when Boril was still fighting with Henri I, and by this reason it must be dated after the marriage of the emperor with the stepdaughter of his former enemy, occurred at the end of 1213 or beginning of 1214¹⁰. Boril broke the three decades alliance with the Cumans, as a consequence of his new foreign policy direction. After that, the Cumans became foes of the Asanid state, and they even launched an attack through its territory into the Latin Empire in late 1222 or 1223¹¹.

The donation charter from 7th May 1211 as well as other documents specified that *terra Borza* was *deserta et inhabitata*. This was understood in different ways, either as meaning an uncultivated land¹², either as reflecting the devastations caused by the Cumans¹³. Şerban Turcuş sustained that the word *deserta* concerned

und sein Nachlass, [in:] *Generalprobe Burzenland. Neue Forschungen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens in Siebenbürgen und im Banat*, ed. K. GÜNDISCH, Köln–Weimar–Wien 2013 [= SiAr, 42], p. 30–34. See also T. SĂLĂGEAN, *Honorius III, Transylvania and the Papacy's Eastern Policy*, TrRev 7.4, 1998, p. 79–80.

¹⁰ *Documenta Romaniae Historica. D. Relații între Țările Române*, vol. I, (1222–1456), ed. Șt. PASCU, C. CIHO DARU, K. GÜNDISCH, D. МИОС, V. PERVAİN, București 1977, p. 28–29 (nr. 11); Ș. PAPACOSTEA, *Between...*, p. 47–48; I. VÁSÁRY, *Cumans and Tatars. Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185–1365*, Cambridge 2005, p. 58–61; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 41; A. BÁRÁNY, *The Relations of King Emeric and Andrew II of Hungary with the Balkan States*, [in:] *Стефан Првовенчани и његово доба*, ed. И. КОМАТИНА, Belgrade 2020 [= ИИБ.ЗР, 42], p. 222–228. For the real year of the campaign, 1214, see A. MADGEARU, *The Asanids...*, p. 187–192.

¹¹ A. MADGEARU, *The Asanids...*, p. 196.

¹² G. POPA-LISSEANU, *Originea secuilor și secuizarea românilor* [The Origin of the Szeklers and the Szeklerization of the Romanians], ed. I. LĂCĂTUȘU, V. LECHINȚAN, București 2003, p. 58–59; Șt. PASCU, *Voievodatul Transilvaniei* [The Voievodate of Transylvania], vol. I, Cluj 1971, p. 126–128; F. SALVAN, *Viața satelor din Țara Bârsei în evul mediu (secolele XIII–XVII)* [The Life of the Villages in the Bârsa Land in the Middle Ages (13th–17th Centuries)], București 1996, p. 19–21, 66; S. BREZEANU, *Identități și solidarități medievale. Controverse istorice* [Medieval Identities and Solidarities. Historical Controversies], București 2002, p. 222–227; I.A. POP, “Din mâinile valahilor schismatici...”. *Românii și puterea în Regatul Ungariei medievale (secolele XIII–XIV)* [“From the Hands of the Schismatic Walachians”. The Romanians and the Power in the Hungarian Medieval Kingdom (13th–14th Centuries)], ²Cluj-Napoca 2017, p. 127.

¹³ G. BAKÓ, *Cavalerii teutoni în Țara Bârsei* [The Teutonic Knights in Țara Bârsei], SRI 10.1, 1957, p. 148; T. NÄGLER, *Zum Gebrauch des Ausdrucks “terra deserta” in einigen Urkunden des 12.–13. Jahrhunderts*, StC.AI 18, 1974, p. 56–60.

the fields without owner, and that the donation purpose was to extend the kingdom in this region¹⁴. The expression could be put in relation with another information from the letter of Honorius III addressed to Rainold, the bishop of Transylvania (12th December 1223): the region remained deserted because the attacks of the heathens, but the Teutons were successful in restoring its wellness:

Quod dilecti filii Magister et fratres domus sancte Marie Theotonicorum terram Boze, et ultra montes nivium propter paganorum insultus vastam usque ad proxima tempora et desertam noviter inhabitare ceperunt, ipsorum paganorum impetus non sine multo discrimine refrenato, eis ad meritum, nobis ad gaudium, et toti populo christiano provenit ad profectum.

The pillages of the heathens (*impetus paganorum*) were also mentioned in a document from 12th January 1223¹⁵. In another letter from 30th April 1224, Honorius III wrote that the land is large, but deprived of workers, and that it was easy to be peopled again¹⁶. It is true that the presence of the Teutons attracted workers for constructions and maintenance, who founded villages in the Bârsa land, but the Saxon colonists were already settled there since the middle of the 12th century.

The interpretation of Turcuș is not possible, because now it is certain that the Bârsa land was included in the Hungarian kingdom before the coming of the Teutons. There are enough archaeological discoveries proving that its domination extended up to the eastern Carpathians during the reign of Geza II (1141–1161). Several settlements and the cemetery of Feldioara belonging to the Saxon colonists are dated in the second half of the 12th century¹⁷. Other colonists who came

¹⁴ Ș. TURCUȘ, *Sfântul Scaun și românii în secolul al XIII-lea* [The Holy See and the Romanians in the 13th Century], București 2001, p. 225–226. Similar opinions at M.E. ȚIPLIC-CRÎNGACI, *Expansiunea regatului ungar, Terra Deserta, așezarea oaspeților și instalarea cavalerilor teutoni* [The Expansion of the Hungarian Kingdom, Terra Deserta, the Settlements of the Hospites and of the Teutonic Knights], SUC 7, 2010, p. 109–111; M. SAFTA, *Regatul Ungariei Medievale și Ordinul Cavalerilor Monahi Teutoni: Studiu asupra formelor de proprietate în dreptul medieval: exemțiunea* [The Kingdom of the Medieval Hungary and the Order of the Teutonic Monastic Knights. Study about the Ownership Forms in the Medieval Law: the Exemption], RHip, serie nouă 1, 2014, p. 74.

¹⁵ *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 24, 25 (nr. 35, 36); *Documenta...*, p. 7–8 (nr. 3); H. ZIMMERMANN, *Der deutsche Orden...*, p. 175–176 (nr. IX); A. IONIȚĂ, *Spațiul dintre Carpații Meridionali și Dunărea Inferioară în secolele XI–XIII* [The Space between Southern Carpathians and Lower Danube in the 11th–13th Centuries], București 2005, p. 31; V. SPINEI, *The Great Migrations in the East and South East of Europe from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Century*, vol. II, *Cumans and Mongols*, Amsterdam 2006, p. 430.

¹⁶ *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 31 (nr. 41); *Documenta...*, p. 8–9 (nr. 4); H. ZIMMERMANN, *Der deutsche Orden...*, p. 178–179 (nr. XI).

¹⁷ G. NUSSBÄCHER, *Din cronici și hrisoave. Contribuții la istoria Transilvaniei* [From Chronicles and Documents. Contributions to the History of Transylvania], București 1987, p. 20–26; A. IONIȚĂ, D. CĂPĂȚĂNĂ, N. BOROFFKA, R. BOROFFKA, A. POPESCU, *Feldioara-Marienburg. Contribuții arheologice la istoria Țării Bârsei* [Feldioara-Marienburg. Archaeological Contributions to the History of the Bârsa Land], București 2004, p. 29–58; I.M. ȚIPLIC, *Organizarea defensivă a Transilvaniei în evul*

during the same period, but in an area placed to the north of the Bârsa land, were the Szeklers, attested by the cemeteries from Peteni and Zăbala, and by the settlements of frontier guardsmen (of various ethnic origin) from Sâncrăieni, Angheluș, Cernat, Cristuru Secuiesc, Sfântu Gheorghe. These settlements were destroyed by the Cuman attacks¹⁸. The guardsmen used fortresses built in the 12th century like those from Racoșul de Sus, Malnaș and Odorheiul Secuiesc, placed on different ways directing to the Oituz Pass¹⁹. On the other side of the mountains was discovered an outpost, at Bâtca Doamnei (a fortress dated in the 12th century which controlled the Bicaz gorge)²⁰. Even in the Bârsa land, at Ungra, existed before the Teutonic stone fortress another earthen fortification, built in the second half of the 12th century²¹. Hălmeag (*Castrum Almagen*) was too an existing fortification taken by the Teutonic knights²².

In conclusion, the most probable solution is that the Bârsa land was *deserta et inhabitata* in 1211 because the repeated invasions of the Cumans caused great

mediu (secolele X–XIV) [The Defensive Organization of Transylvania in the Middle Ages, 10th–14th Centuries], București 2006, p. 113; A. IONIȚĂ, *Die Besiedlung des Burzenlandes im 12.–13. Jahrhundert im Lichte der Archäologie*, [in:] *Generalprobe...*, p. 107–124.

¹⁸ I.M. ȚIPLIC, *Organizarea...*, p. 78; E. BENKÓ, *Mittelalterliche archäologische Funde in Szeklerland*, [in:] *Die Szekler in Siebenbürgen. Von der privilegierten Sondergemeinschaft zur ethnischen Gruppe*, ed. H. ROTH, Köln–Wien 2009 [= SiAr, 40], p. 22–25; A. IONIȚĂ, *Grupuri de colonizări reflectate arheologic în Transilvania secolului al XII-lea* [Colonization Groups Archaeologically reflected in the 12th Century Transylvania], [in:] *Între stepă și imperiu. Studii în onoarea lui Radu Harhoiu. Archäologische Studien für Radu Harhoiu zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. A. MĂGUREANU, E. GÁLL, București 2010, p. 392–397.

¹⁹ Z. SZÉKELY, *Contribuții la problema fortificațiilor și formelor de locuire din sud-estul Transilvaniei* [Contributions to the Problem of the Fortifications and Forms of Habitation in South-eastern Transylvania], *Alu* 8–9, 1976–1977, p. 59–61, 64; G. FERENCZI, *Cădelnița de bronz din perioada feudalismului timpuriu de la Odorheiul Secuiesc – “Cetatea Bud”* [The Bronze Censer from the Early Feudal Period from Odorheiul Secuiesc – “Cetatea Bud”], *Apu* 18, 1980, p. 185–193; P. BINDER, *Antecedente și consecințe sud-transilvănene ale formării voievodatului Munteniei (sec. XIII–XIV)* [Antecedents and Consequences in Southern Transylvania of the Emergence of the Wallachian State (sec. XIII–XIV)] (I), *AHar* 2, 1996, p. 265–266; I.M. ȚIPLIC, *Organizarea...*, p. 176; Zs. L. BORDI, *Fortificațiile medievale timpurii din Pădurea Rica. Turnul estic* [The Early Medieval Fortifications from Pădurea Rica. The Eastern Tower], *ASic* 4, 2007, p. 287–300.

²⁰ V. SPINEI, *Moldova...*, p. 88, 89, 161.

²¹ R. POPA, R. ȘTEFĂNESCU, *Șantierul arheologic Ungra, jud. Brașov* [The Archaeological Excavations at Ungra, Brașov County], *MCA* 14, 1980, p. 498–503; A. LUKÁCS, *Țara Făgărașului în evul mediu: secolele XIII–XVI* [The Făgăraș Land in the Middle Ages: the 13th–16th Centuries], București 1999, p. 153–154; D.N. BUSUIOC-VON HASSELBACH, *Țara Făgărașului în secolul al XIII-lea. Mănăstirea cisterciană Cârța* [The Făgăraș Land in the 13th Century. The Cistercian Monastery Cârța], vol. II, Cluj-Napoca 2001, p. 43–44; I.M. ȚIPLIC, *Organizarea...*, p. 253; A. IONIȚĂ, *Grupuri...*, p. 392.

²² *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 12 (nr. 19); T. NÄGLER, *Așezarea sașilor în Transilvania* [The Settlement of the Saxons in Transylvania], București 1992, p. 151; D.N. BUSUIOC-VON HASSELBACH, *Țara Făgărașului...*, p. 42. P. BINDER, *Antecedente...*, p. 273 supposed that *castrum* concerned the fortified church existing there.

damages. The Teutonic knights established fortresses at Marienburg (Feldioara), Teliu, Hălmeag, Ungra, and possibly at Codlea ("Cetatea Neagră")²³. The number of the knights from *terra Borza* is not known, but it was probably between 200 and 300²⁴. The swords discovered at Codlea, Rupăr, Sânpetru and Vurpăr could be ascribed to these knights. A possible testimony of the fights of the Teutons in *Cumania* is the spearhead discovered at Tătăranu (Vrancea county), in a mound near the Râmnic River. This weapon is something unusual for the archaeological discoveries from that region, but specific for the heavy cavalry of the Teutonic knights²⁵.

The location of the so-called *castrum munitissimum*, built somewhere *ultra montes nivium partem contulit Comanie*, remains unclear, and it is even possible that those mountains are not the Carpathians in generally, but the Bârsa Mountains²⁶, which would mean that the *castrum munitissimum* could be placed at Codlea, on the way to the Bran-Rucăr pass which offered the opportunity to enter *Cumania* from the west. *Crucpurg*, another fortress mentioned in a document from the spring of 1212²⁷, supposed by many historians to be somewhere in south-western Moldavia (and identified with the future bishopric Milcovia) or even in northern Walachia²⁸, was in fact inside the Bârsa Land, at Teliu near Prejmer (Tartlau).

²³ The documents about the Teutonic Order in Transylvania: *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 11–20, 22–26, 28–32, 35–46 (nr. 19, 22, 27, 28, 31, 34–37, 39–42, 44–49, 51, 53). A short selection of studies: I. FERENȚ, *Începuturile Bisericii Catolice din Moldova* [The Beginnings of the Catholic Church in Moldavia], ed. E. FERENȚ, Iași 2004, p. 15–60; G. BAKÓ, *Cavalerii...*, p. 143–160; H. GLASSL, *Der Deutsche Orden im Burzenland und in Kumanien (1211–1225)*, UJ 3, 1971, p. 23–49; R. POPA, *Kreuzritterburgen im Südosten Transilvaniens*, IBLB 47, 1990–1991, p. 107–112; Ș. TURCUȘ, *Sfântul Scamin...*, p. 208–231; A.A. RUSU, *Castelarea carpatică. Fortificații și cetăți din Transilvania și teritoriile învecinate (sec. XIII–XIV)* [The Castellation in the Carpathian region. Fortifications and Strongholds from Transylvania and the Neighbor Territories, 13th–14th Centuries], Cluj-Napoca 2005, p. 434–441; IDEM, *Die Burgen des Deutschen Ordens im Burzenland. Zu hohe Erwartungen an eine Forschungsfrage?*, [in:] *Generalprobe...*, p. 79; R. HAUTALA, G. SABDENOVA, *Hungarian Expansion in Cumania on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion of 1241*, AEMA 22, 2016, p. 72–83; L. PÓSÁN, *Das Verhältnis zwischen dem Deutschen Orden und den siebenbürgischen Bischöfen im Burzenland (1211–1225)*, OMI 24, 2019, p. 39–90.

²⁴ H. GLASSL, *Der Deutsche Orden...*, p. 32 (only 100!); E. GLÜCK, *Contribuții cu privire la prezența cavalerilor teutoni în Țara Bârsei (1211–1225)* [Contributions concerning the Presence of the Teutonic Knights in the Land of Bârsa (1211–1225)], Cri 21, 1991, p. 55; R. POPA, *Kreuzritterburgen...*, p. 108.

²⁵ Z.K. PINTER, *Waffenfunde aus der Deutschordenszeit in Siebenbürgen*, FVL 57, 2014, p. 8–14.

²⁶ M. TANASE, *La Transylvanie meridionale des XII^e–XIII^e siècles, l'ambiguïté des frontières "naturelles"*, [in:] *Frontières. Actes du 125^e Congrès national des Sociétés historiques et scientifiques, section histoire du monde moderne, de la Révolution française et des révolutions* (Lille, 2000), Paris 2002, p. 23–24.

²⁷ *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 14 (nr. 22).

²⁸ See, for instance: I. NANIA, *Cruceburg-Episcopatul Cumaniei – Cetatea Dâmboviței – Cetățeni*, ArV 8, 1976, p. 75–92; V. SIBIESCU, *Episcopatul cuman de la Milcovia (1227–1241): împrejurările înființării; rezistența băștinașilor români-ortodocși* [The Cuman Bishopric from Milcovia (1227–1241): the

This is proved by the Saxon name of the village *Kretzbrig* and also by the name *Grosacruzbach* attested in a document from 9th December 1449²⁹. *Terra Boze* mentioned in two letters of Honorius III from 12th December 1223 and 30th April 1224³⁰ was not in the *Buzău* region, as stated József Laszlovszky and Zoltán Soós, and later on Ovidiu Pecican³¹. It is a mistaken form of the same *Burza*.

Actually, there are no certain proofs for an expansion of the Hungarian kingdom beyond the Carpathians achieved with the military force of the Teutonic knights, because all we know about that are the vague statements *ultra montes nivium partem contulit Comanie* and *et inde progreditur usque ad Danubium*. The second quotation comes from a charter dated in the spring of 1222, which described the territory granted to the Teutons (here is mentioned *Cruceburg* for the second and last time), but the authenticity of this document which presents the maximal extension of the territory donated to the Teutonic Order was denied by Maria Holban (her demonstration was often ignored by the following researchers)³². Between 1211 and 1225, the land of Bârsa was indeed successfully defended against the Cuman attacks by the Teutonic knights, but no territory outside the Carpathians was annexed to the Hungarian kingdom. Even if they performed their duty to fight against the Cumans in *terra Borza*, with offensives beyond the mountains,

Circumstances of the Foundation; the Resistance of the Romanian Orthodox Natives], [in:] *Spiritualitate și istorie la întorsura Carpaților*, vol. I, Buzău 1983, p. 292; I.M. ȚIPLIC, *Cavalerii teutoni și fortificațiile lor din Țara Bârsei* [The Teutonic Knights and their Fortifications in the Bârsa Land], C.AMC 6, 2000, p. 150–151; A. PARAGINĂ, *Habitatul medieval la curbura exterioară a Carpaților în secolele X–XV* [The Medieval Habitate in the Outer Curvature of the Carpathians in the 10th–15th Centuries], Brăila 2002, p. 37–39, 76, 94–95, 109–110; S. IOSIPESCU, *Carpații sud-estici în evul mediu târziu (1166–1526). O istorie europeană prin pasurile montane* [The South-eastern Carpathians in the Later Middle Ages (1166–1526). An European History through Mountain Gorges], Brăila 2013, p. 72, 74; R. HAUTALA, G. SABDENOVA, *Hungarian...*, p. 77.

²⁹ *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, vol. V, 1438–1457. Nummer 2300–3098, ed. K.G. GÜNDISCH, București 1975, p. 287 (nr. 2690); I. FERENȚ, *Începuturile...*, p. 27; P. BINDER, *Contribuții la localizarea Cruceburgului și unele probleme legate de ea* [Contributions to the Location of Cruceburg and Some Related Problems], Cum 1, 1967, p. 124–125; G. NUSSBÄCHER, *Din cronici...*, p. 23; P. BINDER, *Antecedente...*, p. 274–275; I.M. ȚIPLIC, *Organizarea...*, p. 124–125; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 52; A.A. RUSU, *Die Burgen...*, p. 81–82.

³⁰ *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 26, 29 (nr. 37, 40).

³¹ J. LASZLOVSZKY, Z. SOÓS, *Historical Monuments of the Teutonic Order in Transilvania*, [in:] *The Crusades and the Military Orders. Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, ed. Zs. HUNYADI, J. LASZLOVSZKY, Budapest 2001, p. 325; O. PECICAN, *Între cruciați și tătari. Creștinătate occidentală, vlahi și nomazi în Europa Central-Sud-Estică (1204–1241)* [Between Crusaders and Tatars. Western Christendom, Vlachs and Nomads in the Central and South-Eastern Europe (1204–1241)], ²Cluj-Napoca 2010, p. 150.

³² *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 19, 30 (doc. 31, 41); H. ZIMMERMANN, *Der deutsche Orden...*, p. 169–172 (nr. 6); M. HOLBAN, *Din cronica relațiilor româno-ungare în secolele XIII–XIV* [From the Chronicle of the Romanian-Hungarian Relations in the 13th–14th Centuries], București 1981, p. 9–48 (the document was falsified by the Order, in the attempt to receive back the donation).

the Teutons became themselves a danger, but for the royal authority and for the local noblemen who lost the opportunity to acquire more land (*terra Borza* was included in the Papal property). The knights were expelled in 1225 by Andrew II, although the king had no more rights over the donated land³³.

Cumania remained after the departure of the Teutonic knights an open issue for Andrew II, but also for the Catholic Church, because the Cumans were among the few pagans still living near the European Christendom. The conversion of the Cumans was a religious and a political problem, which provided to Andrew II another way to extend his domination, when the Cumans themselves were eager to accept not only the Christian religion, but also the subjection to the Hungarian Kingdom. After the Mongol victory of Kalka against the Russians and the Cumans (31st March 1223), many Cumans run away to the westernmost part of their realm, searching for protection, and in this context they entered in the attention of the Dominican missionaries from the Hungarian province of the order (established in 1221 by Paulus Hungarus from Bologna). The friars started their activity in Cumania around 1225, but they were already present short time after 1221 in a region close to *Cumania*, in *Terra Sceurin*, as results from a report written sometime before 1259 by Svipert from Patak (Sárospatak), included by Gérard of Frachet (1205–1271) in his compilation *Vitae fratrum*:

Tandem numero fratrum accrescente missi a fratre Paulo intraverunt fratres in terram que Sceurinum vocatur, cuius habitatores scismatici partier et publici heretici errant, ubi multis tribulationibus perpepissis tandem convalescentes multos ab heresi ad veram fidem et a scismate ad ecclesie unitatem convertunt³⁴.

The text was edited in this way by Simon Tugwell, who read *Sceurin* instead of *Ferevciensis* or *Scevestium*, as it was published in the previous editions. The Dominican mission in *terra Sceurin* was also mentioned in a later document, from 1237³⁵.

³³ Ș. PAPACOSTEA, *Between...*, p. 45–46; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 52.

³⁴ GERARDUS DE FRACHETO, *Vitae fratrum ordinis praedicatorum necnon Cronica ordinis ab anno MCCIII usque ad MCCLIV ad fidem codicum manuscriptorum accurate recognovit, notis breviter illustravit fr. Benedictus Maria Reichert*, Louvain 1896 [= MOFPF, 1] (cetera: GERARDUS DE FRACHETO), p. 305; S. TUGWELL, *Notes on the Life of St Dominic, V: The Dating of Jordan's Libellus*, AFP 68, 1998, p. 87; C.F. DOBRE, *Mendicants in Moldavia: Mission in an Orthodox Land (Thirteenth to Fifteenth Century)*, Daun 2008, p. 18–22. For the identification of Svipert see A. RELTGEN-TALLON, *Les martyrs dominicains de Hongrie et leur insertion réussie dans la mémoire hagiographique de l'Ordre des frères Prêcheurs*, [in:] *Les saints et leur culte en Europe centrale au Moyen Âge (XI^e – début du XVI^e siècle)*, ed. M.-M. DE CEVINS, O. MARIN, Turnhout 2017 [= Hag, 13], p. 213.

³⁵ *Acta Honorii III (1216–1227) et Gregorii IX (1227–1241). E Registris Vaticanis aliisque fontibus collegit*, ed. A.L. TĂUTU, Vatican 1950 [= PCRCICO.F, series III, 3], p. 300–301 (nr. 224).

Therefore, *Sceurin* could be identified with the land of *Severin*, a north-Danubian possession of Bulgaria conquered most probable in 1199, when Tsar Johannis extended his domination from Vidin to Belgrade³⁶. The place name *Severin* comes from the Slavic noun *sever* (“north”), which survived in the Romanian language as a common noun until the 16th century. Dimitre Onciul, followed by other historians, demonstrated that the name designated a position to the north of the Bulgarian state, which mastered the fortress³⁷. The archaeological researches revealed that at Turnu Severin existed a small fort with polygonal shape, constructed in the south-western corner of the former Roman camp Drobeta (stones taken from the ancient buildings were used for this new precinct thick of 2 m). The coin issued by John Asan II is a chronological clue for the end of the use of the well where it was found³⁸. Therefore, when the Dominicans came in *terra Sceurin*, this region was still under Bulgarian domination, not yet conquered by Hungary. The fort of Severin was built as an outpost of the Tsarate. This fact explains the religious situation encountered there. Besides the “schismatics” (Orthodoxes), in *terra Sceurin* lived heretics. The latter were the dualist Bogomils, who were still living in Bulgaria, despite the constant persecutions.

The most valuable knowledge about the circumstances of the conversion of the Cumans occurred in 1227 came from the same relation of Svipert. The first result was the conversion of the chief Bortz (*primo omnium ducem Cumanorum nomine Burch, cum aliquibus de familia sua baptizaverunt*), followed by another one, Membrok, *ducem nobiliorem, cum mille circiter de familia sua*. They were baptized by a mission conducted by Robert, the archbishop of Esztergom (Gran), sent for this purpose in *Cumania* by Pope Gregory IX (his letter of 31st July 1227 shows that the conversion was already done). The legate of the Pope travelled to *Cumania* with the assistance of crownprince Béla, the future king Béla IV. In the end, as wrote in 1238 the friar Benedictus to the magister of the order,

aliqui principes memoratorum Cumanorum fuerunt baptizati successive, annis singulis co-operante nobis Dei gracia plura millia nobilium et inferiorum utriusque sexus de ipsa gente baptismi gracia suscipientes tam in ieiuniis quadragesimalibus, quam alii christiani ritus observancis fidem catholicam pro viribus imitantur. Et quod hec omnia beneficio nostri

³⁶ A. MADGEARU, *The Asanids...*, p. 132–134, 207.

³⁷ D. ONCIUL, *Titlul lui Mircea cel Bătrân și posesiunile lui* [The Title of Mircea the Old and his Possessions] (published in 1903); IDEM, *Scieri istorice*, vol. II, ed. A. SACERDOȚEANU, București 1968, p. 64; G.I. BRĂȚIANU, *În jurul întemeierii statelor românești* [About the Foundation of the Romanian States] (II), RI, serie nouă 4.3–4, 1993, p. 365–366; M. DAVIDESCU, *Monumente medievale din Turnu Severin* [Medieval Monuments from Turnu Severin], București 1969, p. 5; A. IONIȚĂ, *Spațiul...*, p. 32; A.A. RUSU, *Castelarea...*, p. 475; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 83.

³⁸ M. DAVIDESCU, *Monumente...*, p. 13–23; G.I. CANTACUZINO, *Certains problèmes concernant les vestiges médiévaux de Drobeta-Turnu Severin*, Da, Nouvelle Serie 43–45, 1999–2001, p. 166–171, 177; A. IONIȚĂ, *Spațiul...*, p. 50, 128–129; A.A. RUSU, *Castelarea...*, p. 477–478; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 82–88.

ordinis provenerint, cum dignis graciaram accionibus recognoscunt. Verum quia Tartarorum crudelitas non minus ipsis Cumanis quam ceteris orientalibus, imo eis eo gravius quo et vicinius imminet periculum, rogant ipsi et nos cum ipsis, supplicantes quatenus universitatem ipsorum, utpote novellam ordinis in fide plantacionem quod dominus per suam misericordiam et clemenciam protegat et conservet, omnium fratrum oracionibus in capitulo generali prima sollicitudine commendetis³⁹.

It is clear that the Mongol expansion to the west determined the Cumans to adhere to the Christian religion. The danger of a possible Islamisation of the Cumans after the conquest of Sudak (a city in Crimea previously controlled by them) by a Seljuq army in 1225⁴⁰ was an additional reason for the creation of the Cuman bishopric in 1228, directly dependent to Rome, and not to a Hungarian eparchy. The precise limits of the Cuman bishopric are unknown, but it is certain that included central and southern Moldavia up to the Siret River, as well as eastern Wallachia up to the Olt River. The letter of Gregory IX from 31st July 1227 contains the first mention of the name *Cumania* as a distinct land. The Cuman bishopric answered to the need to convert the remaining pagans, which endangered the *Christianitas*, being in the same time the new instrument of expansion of the Hungarian kingdom east and south of the Carpathians⁴¹. In the letter addressed to archbishop Robert on 21st March 1228, the Pope was aware that the new converted population had two enemies in the east: the Seljuqs who occupied Sudak, and the *infideles*, who were actually the still heathen Cumans, rivals of those led by Bortz (*et proficiscentibus ad recuperandum Christianorum terras Cumanis vicinas quas*

³⁹ *Acta Honorii III et Gregorii IX...*, p. 206–209 (doc. 158, 159); GERARDUS DE FRACHETO, p. 306–309. A shorter notice about the conversion at ALBERICUS TRIUM FONTIUM, *Chronicon*, [in:] *Chronica aevi Suevici*, ed. G.H. PERTZ, Hannovera 1874 [= *MGH.SF*, 23], p. 920.

⁴⁰ Ș. PAPACOSTEA, “*Terra Borza...*”, p. 36; D. KOROBEINIKOV, *A Broken Mirror. The Kipçak World in the Thirteenth Century*, [in:] *The Other Europe in the Middle Ages. Avars, Bulgars, Khazars and Cumans*, ed. F. CURTA, Leiden–Boston 2008 [= *ECEEMA*, 2], p. 388–389; M. BALIVET, H. LESSAN PEZECHKI, *Seldjukides de Rûm contre Horde d’Or: l’expédition de Crimée d’après Ibn Bibî (vers 1225)*, RMMM 143, 2018 (La Horde d’Or et l’islamisation des steppes eurasiatiques), p. 267–283; K. GOLEV, *On the Edge...*, p. 105–107.

⁴¹ I. FERENȚ, *Începuturile...*, p. 225–245; M. HOLBAN, *Din cronica...*, p. 65–66; Ș. PAPACOSTEA, *Between...*, p. 103–108; Ș. TURCUȘ, *Sfântul Scaun...*, p. 159, 290–300; F. SOLOMON, *Politică și confesiune la început de ev mediu moldovenesc* [Policy and Confession at the Beginning of the Moldavian Middle Ages], Iași 2004, p. 87–89; S. KOVÁCS, *Bortz, a Cuman Chief in the 13th Century*, AO.ASH 58.3, 2005, p. 255–266; V. ACHIM, *Politică...*, p. 56–68, 84; V. SPINEI, *The Cuman Bishopric – Genesis and Evolution*, [in:] *The Other Europe...*, p. 413–456; M.O. CĂȚOI, *Ofensivă catolică și rezistență schismatică la Dunărea de Jos în prima jumătate a secolului al XIII-lea* [Catholic Offensive and Schismatic Resistance at the Lower Danube in the First Half of the 13th Century], [in:] *Istorie bisericească, misiune creștină și viață culturală*, vol. II, *Creștinismul românesc și organizarea bisericească în secolele XIII–XIV. Știri și interpretări noi*, Galați 2010, p. 194; R.M. MIHALACHE, *Hierocratic Aspects related to the Legation of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom to Cumania (1227)*, TrRev 23.1, 2014, p. 118–131; C.F. DOBRE, *Mendicants...*, p. 22–26, 46–47; R. HAUTALA, G. SABDENOVA, *Hungarian...*, p. 85–89.

Soldanus de Iconio vel infideles alii occuparunt, ac euntibus contra illos, qui Cumanos conversos impugnant, et prohibent alios ad fidem christianam venire)⁴².

The residence of the first bishop Theoderic (former prior of the Dominican province of Hungary) was somewhere on the Milcov valley, around Odobești, or around Focșani (after 1347, the bishopric will be restored with the name *Milcovia*)⁴³. The purpose of the bishopric was to include in the Catholic Church the entire population of the region, regardless their ethnicity. The Szeklers were already Catholic. They came in the Cuman bishopric as colonists, border guards, or by their free will, from their *terra* located north of Bârsa. The memory of a Hungarian infiltration is preserved by several toponyms in Moldavia and north-eastern Wallachia (*Saac, Săcuieni, Chiojd, Palanca, Lapoșu, Miclăușu* and others)⁴⁴. The final result of this mixture of Hungarian speaking and Romanian speaking populations migrated from Transylvania in several instances until the 18th century was the so-called Csangos, the Catholic community from the Bacău and Neamț counties (the name means “estranged, wanderer”)⁴⁵.

The subjection of the Cumans living in the bishopric made useless the preservation of the peaceful relations with John Asan II, which were previously required for the common attitude toward the Cumans. In 1228, Andrew II decided a campaign against Vidin, a city which was for a long time a target of the southern expansion of Hungary. Viorel Achim considered that the Hungarian King wished to strike the hegemonic position acquired by Asanid Tsarate in relation to the Latin Empire⁴⁶, but the competition for *Cumania* was the main reason for the hostility between Andrew II and John Asan II. This rivalry was indirectly attested by an obscure passage from the above mentioned letter from 21st March 1228: *ac euntibus contra illos, qui Cumanos conversos impugnant*. It is high probable that this other enemy, who

⁴² *Acta Honorii III et Gregorii IX...*, p. 208 (nr. 159); I. FERENȚ, *Începuturile...*, p. 246–247; V. SPINEI, *The Cuman Bishopric...*, p. 429–430.

⁴³ *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 455–456 (nr. 499); vol. II, Hermannstadt 1897, p. 39–40 (nr. 621); V. SIBIESCU, *Episcopatul...*, p. 309–310; F. SOLOMON, *Politică...*, p. 104–108.

⁴⁴ L. MIKECS, *Ursprung und Schicksal der Tschango-Ungarn*, UngJ 23, 1943, p. 258–266; C.C. GIURESCU, D.C. GIURESCU, *Istoria românilor*, vol. I, *Din cele mai vechi timpuri până la întemeierea statelor românești* [The History of the Romanians, vol. I, From the Oldest Times to the Foundation of the Romanian States], București 1975, p. 210–211, 242; A. PARAGINĂ, *Habitatul...*, p. 45.

⁴⁵ For instance: R. ROSETTI, *Despre unguri și episcopiile catolice din Moldova* [About Hungarians and the Catholic Bishoprics from Moldavia], AAR.MSI, seria II, 27.10, 1904–1905, p. 247–253, 282–287; L. MIKECS, *Ursprung...*, p. 247–280; D. MĂRTINAȘ, *Originea ceangăilor din Moldova* [The Origin of the Moldavian Csángós], București 1985; R. BAKER, *On the Origin of the Moldavian Csángós*, SEER 75.4, 1997, p. 658–680; A. COȘA, *Problema originii catolicilor din Moldova* [The Problem of the Origin of the Moldavian Catholics], Car 31, 2002, p. 79–106; *Hungarian Csángós in Moldavia. Essays on the Past and Present of the Hungarian Csángós in Moldavia*, ed. L. DIÓSZEGI, Budapest 2002; B.-M. BĂLAN, *Caracteristici geodemografice ale comunităților de ceangăi din zona Roman-Bacău. Lucrare de licență*, București 2014.

⁴⁶ V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 68, 76–78; A. BÁRÁNY, *The Relations...*, p. 237–240.

was not pagan, was John Asan II⁴⁷. Therefore, the year 1228 represented another turning point in the Cuman issue.

The following moment of the expansion of Hungary was the annexation of *Terra Severin* sometimes between 1228 and 1232, as a *Banat*. The title of *Ban* was borrowed from Croatia, when this kingdom was annexed by Hungary, in 1102⁴⁸. Andrew II followed this model of the Bans from Croatia and Slavonia as a special way to include a new territory in his kingdom: instead of a new county, a Banat ruled by a deputy of the king, located near the still powerful Bulgaria. *Luca bano de Sceurin* is the first certain known holder of this dignity (mentioned in a document from 22nd August 1233)⁴⁹. The Banat of Severin included the Semenik and Almäj Mountains, and a region in Oltenia whose area could not be established with precision⁵⁰.

The final act of the Hungarian expansion in *Cumania* was the introduction of the title of King of *Cumania* by Bela IV in 1236⁵¹. The region where it was established the bishopric of *Cumania* continued to be under the influence of the Church of Târnovo, even after the end of the domination of the Bulgarian state in this north-Danubian territory. A letter of Pope Gregory IX (14th November 1234) to crownprince Bela IV mentioned some “pseudo-bishops” who were illegally serving the Romanians living inside the Cuman bishopric:

In Cumanorum episcopate, sicut accepimus, quidam populi, qui Walathi vocantur, existunt, qui etsi censeantur nomine christiano, sub una tamen fide varios ritus habentes et mores, illa committunt, que huic sunt nomini inimica. [...] Episcopo Cumanorum, qui loci diocesanus existit, sed a quibusdam pseudoepiscopis Grecorum ritum tenentibus universa recipiunt ecclesiastica sacramenta, et nonnulli de Regno Ungarie, tam Ungari, quam Theutonici et alii orthodoxi, morandi causa cum ipsis transeunt ad eosdem, et sic cum eis, quia populus unus facti cum eisdem Walathis, eo contempto, premissa recipiunt sacramenta in grave orthodoxorum scandalum et derogationem non modicam fidei christiane. Ne igitur ex diversitate rituum pericula proveniant animarum, nos volentes huiusmodi periculum obviare, ne prefati Walathi materiam habeant pro defectu sacramentorum ad scismaticos episcopos accedendi, idem episcopo nostris damus litteris in mandatis, ut catholicum eis episcopum illi nationi conformem provida deliberatione constituat sibi iuxta generalis statuta concilii vicarium in predictis, qui ei per omnia sit obediens et subiectus.

⁴⁷ I. FERENȚ, *Începuturile...*, p. 246–247; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 67–68.

⁴⁸ J.V.A. FINE Jr., *The Early Medieval Balkans. A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century*, Ann Arbor 1991, p. 285.

⁴⁹ *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis*, tomus III, vol. II, ed. G. FEJÉR, Buda 1829, p. 348; M. HOLBAN, *Din cronica...*, p. 55–57; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 79–83; S. FORȚIU, *Magnus Buzad, primul ban de Severin (~1228–'30)?; Un Luca, care nu-i Iula, ban de Severin (1233)! [Magnus Buzad, the First Ban of Severin (~1228–'30)?; A Luca, who is not Iula, Ban of Severin (1233)!]*, [in:] *Arheovest VIII–2. In Honorem Alexandru Rădulescu Interdisciplinaritate în arheologie și istorie (Timișoara, noiembrie 2020)*, Szegeed 2020, p. 727–868.

⁵⁰ V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 82–88.

⁵¹ *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 65 (nr. 74); V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 63.

The pseudobishops were false not because they were schismatic, but because they were considered to be outside the canon law, since they acted in another bishop's diocese. This means that the "pseudo-bishops" belonged to the Bulgarian archdiocese of Tărnovo⁵².

In the last months of 1234, the relations of Bulgaria with the Papacy and with the Patriarchate of Nicaea were unclear and confused, after the alliance against the Latin Empire closed at Gallipoli some months before, between John Asan II and John III Vatatzes. John Asan II abandoned his claim to rule in Constantinople and opted for the Orthodox faith. Because Nicaea had not yet sent the official acceptance of the autocephalous patriarchy, the Archdiocese of Tărnovo was still formally subordinated to Rome⁵³. If this new Orthodox coalition had expanded north of the Danube, it would have created problems for Hungary, too⁵⁴. It is possible that the Pope feared that the ecclesiastical relations between the Romanians from *Cumania* and the Tsarate of John Asan II could endanger the Hungarian domination there, or even in the Banat of Severin. In 1235–1236, the Tsar tried to conquer Constantinople in cooperation with the John III Vatatzes. The sieges failed, and for some months in 1237 John Asan II was again willing to return to the Latin Church. At the end of the same year, he turned back to the alliance with Nicaea, an action which determined Pope Gregory IX in January 1238 to ask Bela IV to launch a crusade against Bulgaria⁵⁵.

Until 1238, it seemed that *Cumania* will be preserved as a new border province, like the Banat of Severin, with its population converted to the Latin Christendom. The new wave of the Mongol advance to the west put an end to this hope. In 1238 began the great refuge of the Cumans. Led by Kuten, they were received

⁵² *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 60–61 (nr. 69) = *Acta Honorii III et Gregorii IX...*, p. 284–285 (nr. 209); Ș. PAPACOSTEA, *Between...*, p. 97–101; R. THEODORESCU, *Bizanț, Balcani, Occident la începuturile culturii medievale românești (secolele X–XIV)* [Byzantium, Balkans, West at the Beginnings of the Romanian Medieval Culture (10th–14th Centuries)], București 1974, p. 172–175; D. BARBU, *Byzance, Rome et les Roumains. Essais sur la production politique de la foi au Moyen Âge*, București 1998, p. 93–101; Ș. TURCUȘ, *Sfântul Scaun...*, p. 159–163; F. SOLOMON, *Politică...*, p. 89–92; V. SPINEI, *The Cuman Bishopric...*, p. 433–435; M.O. CĂȚOI, *Ofensivă...*, p. 189–192.

⁵³ F. DÖLGER, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches*, vol. III, (1204–1282), Munich–Berlin 1932, p. 11, 14 (nr. 1730, 1744); GEORGE AKROPOLITES, *The History*, praef., trans., comm. R. MACRIDES, Oxford 2007 [= OSB] (cetera: GEORGE AKROPOLITES), p. 191, 194–195; NIKEPHOROS GREGORAS, *Rhōmāische Geschichte. Historia Rhōmaïke*, II, 3, part 1, (*Kapitel I–VII*), trans. J.L. VAN DIETEN, Stuttgart 1973, p. 77; G. CANKOVA-PETKOVA, *Griechisch-bulgarische Bündnisse in den Jahren 1235 und 1246*, BBG 3, 1969, p. 49–51, 55–56; F. DALL'AGLIO, *Crusading in a Nearer East: The Balkan Politics of Honorius III and Gregory IX (1221–1241)*, [in:] *La papauté et les croisades. Actes du VI^e Congrès de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East*, Avignon, 27–31 août 2008, ed. M. BALARD, Farnham 2011, p. 178–180.

⁵⁴ F. SOLOMON, *Politică...*, p. 92–93 considered that John Asan II tried to organize an Orthodox alliance opposed to the expansion of Catholicism in the regions with Orthodox people north and south of the Danube (the bishoprics of Belgrade and Braničevo).

⁵⁵ V. ACHIM, *Politică...*, p. 89–91; A. MADGEARU, *The Asanids...*, p. 216–221.

in Hungary. From there, they went in Bulgaria⁵⁶. In 1241, the Cuman bishopric was destroyed by one of the Mongol armies which marched to Transylvania by the Oituz Pass. The borders were defended without success by the Romanians (*Olaci*) and Szeklers (*Siculi*), as it was recorded in the chronicles of Tholomeus de Lucca and Marino Sanudo Torsello. The army of the voievode of Transylvania Pousa came to help these local forces, but the Mongols won somewhere in the Bârsa land on 31st March 1241⁵⁷. The Golden Horde replaced the Cuman domination in Moldavia and Walachia, and even Bulgaria became in 1242 a tributary state of the Golden Horde, when Kadan's armies invaded it, coming from Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia⁵⁸.

Because the Golden Horde domination did not extend west of Olt in the first years after 1242, Bela IV tried to regain positions by summoning the Hospitaller Knights. The appearance of a new Orthodox coalition (Michael Asan and John III Vatatzes) in the spring of 1247 was a major danger for the Latin Empire⁵⁹, and this required an offensive Hungarian policy against Bulgaria, with the support of the Hospitallers. The charter given to them on 2nd June 1247 (known only in the transcript of 20th 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 Farçaş. It was also excepted *terra Lytua* of the Romanian voievode *Lytuoy*, vassal of the knights. The king has also given them *Cumania*, but this land bordered at west by the Olt River was actually dominated by the Golden Horde. Inside *Cumania*, the *terra* of Seneslau, another Romanian voievode, was left in his possession. *Terra Severin* remained a part of the Hungarian kingdom, but the function of Ban was abandoned or suspended. For *Cumania*, Bela IV could have only pretensions. One 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 east of the Olt River). Lytuoy and Seneslau had the duty to help the Hospitallers *cum apparatu suo bellico*, according to the obligations of *auxilium*

⁵⁶ I. VÁSÁRY, *Cumans...*, p. 64–66; V. SPINEI, *The Great Migrations...*, p. 444, 612–613; D. KOROBENIKOV, *A Broken Mirror...*, p. 391.

⁵⁷ *Annales Frisacenses*, ed. L. WEILAND, [in:] *Annales Aevi Suevici*, Hannovera 1879 [= MGH.SS, 24], p. 65; MARINO SANUDO TORSSELLO, *Secreta fidelium Crucis*, [in:] JACQUES BONGARS, *Gesta Dei per Francos sive orientalium expeditionum et regni Francorum Hierosolimitani historia (...)*, II, Hannovera 1611, p. 214 (III, 11) (MARINO SANUDO TORSSELLO, *The Book of the Secrets of the Faithful of the Cross Liber Secretorum Fidelium Crucis*, trans. P. LOCK, London–New York 2011 [= CTT, 21], p. 340); Ş. PAPACOSTEA, *Between...*, p. 152–158; V. SPINEI, *The Great Migrations...*, p. 627–630, 634–642; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 95–102; V. SPINEI, *Mongolii și românii în sinteza de istorie ecleziastică a lui Tholomeu din Lucca* [The Mongols and the Romanians in the Tholomeus of Lucca's Synthesis of Ecclesiastical History], Iași 2012, p. 26–27; S. IOSIPESCU, *Carpații...*, p. 85–90.

⁵⁸ D. KOROBENIKOV, *A Broken Mirror...*, p. 391–395; A. MADGEARU, *The Asanids...*, p. 228–234.

⁵⁹ F. DÖLGER, *Regesten...*, p. 20 (nr. 1787); GEORGE AKROPOLITES, p. 230–232, 242; D.G. ANGELOV, *Theodore II Laskaris, Elena Asenina and Bulgaria*, [in:] *Средновековният българин и "другите"*. Сборник в чест на 60-годишнината на проф. дин Петър Ангелов, ed. A. НИКОЛОВ, Г.Н. НИКОЛОВ, София 2013, p. 283.

specific for the vassalage relations. This means that the knezi and voievodes disposed of a kind of permanent military force, provided by the *maiores terrae*, owners of villages⁶⁰.

The ephemere participation of the Hospitallers to the defence of Hungary is confirmed by a letter of Bela IV addressed to Pope Innocentius IV on 11th November 1247, which specified that they were settled in *Terra Severin* with the mission to fight along the Danube up to the Black Sea:

nisi a domo Hospitalis Iherosolimitani, 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 oportuna⁶¹.

The Mongol domination prevented the emergence of a Cuman kingdom in Moldavia, vassal of Hungary. Only the decline of the Golden Horde made possible a new penetration of the Hungarian kingdom in the former *Cumania*, in 1345, as a consequence of the campaign led by the count of the Szeklers Andrew Läckfi⁶². In 1347 was established the bishopric of Milcovia. Like the former bishopric of *Cumania*, it was subordinated directly to the Pope, not to the bishopric of Esztergom⁶³.

The former *Cumania* entered in the new states created during the 14th century by the Romanians liberated from the Hungarian domination, Wallachia and Moldavia. So, the final gainers of the competition for *Cumania* between Hungary and

⁶⁰ *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 73–76 (nr. 82) = *Documenta...*, p. 21–27 (nr. 10); M. HOLBAN, *Din cronica...*, p. 74–85; Ş. TURCUŞ, *Sfântul Scaun...*, p. 240–242; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 131–135; I.A. POP, S. ŞIPOŞ, *Silviu Dragomir și dosarul Diplomei cavalerilor ioaniți* [Silviu Dragomir and the Controversy of the Hospitallers Diploma], Cluj-Napoca 2009; M.O. CĂȚOI, *Ofensivă...*, p. 197–203.

⁶¹ *Acta Innocentii PP IV (1243–1254). E Regestis Vaticanis aliisque fontibus collegerunt notisque adornarunt*, ed. T.T. HALUŠČENSKYJ, M.M. WOJNAR, Roma 1962 [= PCRCICO.F, series III, 4.1], p. 192–193 (nr. 112); M. HOLBAN, *Din cronica...*, p. 76–78, 82–84; Ş. TURCUŞ, *Sfântul Scaun...*, p. 238–242; V. ACHIM, *Politica...*, p. 88, 128–137; I.A. POP, S. ŞIPOŞ, *Silviu Dragomir...*, p. 117; S. IOSIPESCU, *Carpații...*, p. 95–96; Zs. HUNYADI, *The Hospitallers in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary, c. 1150–1387*, Budapest 2010, p. 39; Ş. TURCUŞ, *Pontifical Diplomas Correlated with the Diploma of the Joannites: The Inheritance of Queen Violant of Aragon and the Land of Severin*, TrRev 22, Sup. 4, 2013, p. 134–144. The right date in 1247, not in 1254, was demonstrated by Viorel Achim.

⁶² V. SPINEI, *Moldova...*, p. 260–264; R. CÂRCIUMARU, *Concernant l'expédition hongroise au sud de la Moldavie (1345)*, AUVT.AH 11.1, 2009, p. 79–86; S. IOSIPESCU, *Carpații...*, p. 151–158.

⁶³ *Urkundenbuch...*, vol. I, p. 455 (nr. 499); vol. II, p. 40 (nr. 621); V. SPINEI, *Moldova...*, p. 265–267; V. SIBIESCU, *Episcopatul...*, p. 309–310; F. SOLOMON, *Politică...*, p. 104–108.

Bulgaria were the Orthodox Romanians who lived there, and who assimilated the remaining Cuman population. Their ethnic name was preserved by place and river names (*Comana*, *Comănești*, *Comanca*) and by the personal name *Coman*, whose first mention is in 1398 (besides them, there are many place and river names of Pecheneg or Cuman origin inherited from the period of cohabitation with the Romanian population)⁶⁴. A particular importance has the name *Vadul Cumanilor*, given to a ford near Vidin. The village *Kumanski brod* was attested for the first time in a charter from 1385⁶⁵. This crossing point was used by the Cumans in their attack against Vidin in 1114⁶⁶, and it is probable that they used the same ford in 1214 when they were involved in the rebellion of this city.

Appendix. A false testimony of the name *Cumani nigri*

In his monumental *History of the Romanians* published for the first time in 1889, Alexandru D. Xenopol quoted the passage *Cumania vero dicitur terra Valachiae quae inhabitatur a Cumanis nigris, quae est sita a fluvio Olth inter alpes et Danubium, facens versus Tartariam, que nunc inhabitatur a Valachis et nuncupatur pars Transalpiniae et Moldaviae*, ascribing it to a decree of King Sigismund from 1435, published in *Tripartitum opus iuris consuetudinarii inciti regni Hungariae* (Wien, 1581)⁶⁷. This assertion was endorsed by Victor Spinei in his monograph published in 1982. Quoting Petrus de Reva, *De monarchia et sacra corona regni Hungariae* (Frankfurt, 1659) (reproduced by Johann Georg Schwandtner, *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum*, II (Wien, 1746), p. 832), Spinei, and following him, Pavel Parasca, stated that the decree of 1435 reflected some knowledge of former *Cumania*⁶⁸. Actually, the passage does not exist in the decree of King Sigismund from 1435. The single mention of *Cumania* in the decree is in the beginning formula *Sigismundus Divina favente clementia, Romanorum Imperator, semper Augustus, ac Ungariae, Bohemiae, Dalmatiae, Croatiae, Ramae, Serviae, Galliciae, Lodomeriae, Comaniae,*

⁶⁴ P. DIACONU, *Les Coumans au Bas-Danube aux XI^e et XII^e siècles*, București 1978, p. 26–34; V. SPINEI, *The Romanians and the Turkic Nomads North of the Danube Delta from the Tenth to the Mid-Thirteenth Century*, Leiden–Boston 2009 [= ECEEMA, 6], p. 311–330.

⁶⁵ *Documenta Romaniae Historica. B. Țara Românească*, vol. I, (1247–1500), ed. P.P. PANAITESCU, D. MIOC, București 1966, p. 20–21 (nr. 7); B.P. HASDEU, *Originile Craiovei, 1230–1400* [The Origins of Craiova, 1230–1400], București 1878, p. 15–20.

⁶⁶ P. DIACONU, *Les Coumans...*, p. 59–61; A. MADGEARU, *Byzantine Military Organization on the Danube, 10th–12th Centuries*, Leiden–Boston 2013 [= ECEEMA, 22], p. 144.

⁶⁷ A.D. XENOPOL, *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană* [The History of the Romanians in the Trajanic Dacia], vol. II, ed. I. VLĂDESCU, ³București 1925, p. 214.

⁶⁸ V. SPINEI, *Moldova...*, p. 35, 49; P. PARASCA, *Interferențe etno-politice în terminologia spațiului carpato-ponto-nistrean în secolele XI – prima jumătate a celui de-al XIII-lea* [Ethnopolitical Interferences in the Terminology of the Carpathian-Ponto-Dnestrian Space between the 11th Century and the First Half of the 13th Century], H&P 1.1–2, 2008, p. 98–99.

*Bulgariaeque Rex*⁶⁹. The historian Petrus de Reva (Péter Révay, 1568–1622), guard of the royal crown, explained what meant *Comania*, in the long description of the possessions of the Hungarian kings, real or lost (it follows after *Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosna, Servia, Bulgaria* and *Gallicia*). The complete passage is this:

Cumania dicitur terra Valachiae, Zauolcha vocata, et quam iuxta opinionem quorundam, Strabo Cataoniam⁷⁰ appellat, eciam Circasia dicta, quae inhabitabatur a Cumanis Nigris, sita a fluuio Olt, inter Alpes et Danubium, iacens versus Tartariam, et nuncupatur pars Transalpinae, et Moldauiae. Gens regionis a vero Dei cultu aliena, quam Bela quartus a Tartaris sedibus suis pulsam, cum Cutteno eorum Rege, Regno quoque in tutelam accepto, hospitio exceperat, et fidei Christianae initiatam, Palatinali iudicio commiserat. Insignia habet leonem coronatum, non absimilem leoni Bohemico, Belgicque⁷¹.

By a mere chance I was able to identify the source of inspiration. Petrus de Reva made a faulty compilation after a relation about the Mongol invasion in 1241 found in the book written by a knight of the Saint John Order, Antoine Geuffroy, *Aulae Turcicae, Othomannicive Imperii descriptio* [...] (Basel, 1573), p. 148:

Baydo, uel Bathi, tertius Hoccatae filius cum Tartaris, quos sibi dederat pater, per Rasciam, Cumaniam et Moscoviam, Poloniam ingressus est, inde Hungariam et Austriam, igni ferroque depopulans, ita ut ipsemet postea fame coactus sit, terris istis derelictis, redire in Tartariam. Cumaniam, ultra pontum Euxinum, quam hodie uocant Zauolcha, et Zahadey, et iuxta quorundam opinionem est, quam Strabo Cataoniam appellat, hodie dicta Circasia.

The words *Zavolcha* and *Zahadey* remain enigmatic, but this passage could explain the strange assertions of Petrus de Reva about *Cumania*. His knowledge about *Cumani Nigri* could come from *Chronicon Budense*, printed for the first time in 1473.

⁶⁹ *Tripartitum Corpus Iuris Hungarici, seu Decretum generale incltyti Regni Hungariae, partiumque eidem annexarum. Tomus primus continens Opus tripartitum juris consuetudinarii ejusdem regni auctore Stephano de Werböcz*, Buda 1822, p. 184.

⁷⁰ It is a confusion. Cataonia was a part of Cappadocia. Strabo (XI, 12, 2 and XII, 2, 3) mentioned Comana (also known as Hierapolis) among its cities. Another Comana existed in Pontus Polemoniacus (both names are of Hittite origin). See *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites*, ed. R. STILLWELL, W.L. MACDONALD, M. HOLLAND MCALLISTER, Princeton 1976, p. 233–234.

⁷¹ PETRUS DE REVA, *De monarchia et sacra corona regni Hungariae*, Frankfurt 1659, p. 148.

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Alexandru Madgearu

Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History

6, Constantin Mille Street, Sector 1

RO – 70 100 Bucharest, Romania

amadgearu@yahoo.com

