

THE GEOPOLITICAL MAPS OF THE ROMANIAN IDENTITY (II)

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Abstract. *Civilization also means a self-imposed order, as part of personal liberty. Personal liberty implies the awareness of the Other, as a person and as space. The Other is not merely an individual, it is a collective actor. That is, order is about mapping space – the shape of the collective Other. The highest social function of mapping space is culture. The specialized institution/instrument of culture to deal with the social order by mapping the actual, the past, and the possible social space is the Atlas, with its historical, sociological, anthropological, etc. maps. Culture offers people space awareness, that is, the ability to know the meaning of space and a sense of personal and collective belonging. The most obvious instrument for doing so is the Atlas. Here I will present some geopolitical maps regarding the Romanian Ethnic Space structured under three categories: ethnic evolution, geopolitical pressures on the Romanian space and the significant-densities of the Aromanians to the south of the Danube. Part Two will represent some of the most significant maps by Simion Mehedinți – the founder of modern Romanian geography and a forefather of geopolitics.*

Keywords. Geopolitics, Geohistory, Romanian Ethnic Space, Aromanians, Significant-Density Theory, Maps.

1. Golopenția's social function of geopolitics

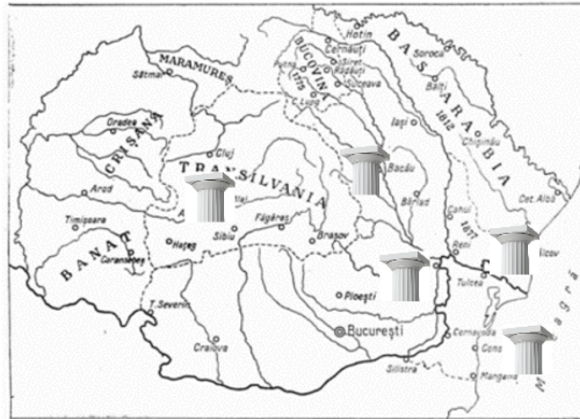
The former three cartographic groups stressed the importance of thinking geopolitically in foreign policy, and, in the subtext, the importance of geopolitics at the level of public thinking. Anton Golopenția is the one to make the theory of what we name the socialization of geopolitics, of the importance and process of geopolitical education for the nation (a civilized people). Here we will present some of Mehedinți's maps. Most of them have no explanations as such, only indirect ones, or not at all. Therefore, explanations are extracted by us from the analysis of the text.

The socialization of Geopolitics is the situational awareness education of the people. It is a byproduct of the "cultural personality" process, which stresses the importance of attaining the personal potential by aiming at the highest values. Nationhood is based on ethnicity, shared values and mostly on collective action based situational awareness.

The two instruments for socializing geopolitics are the Atlas (historical, geographical...) and Encyclopedia made from a Romanian perspective. These two are to place the individual in the national kinship (*neam*) and into life and world. In the following, we will extract the cartographic information from Simion Mehedinți

2. Maps (axes) of the Romanian space

The façades – strategic openings, fostering the nation-building process are internal and external. For instance, the Black Sea façade means "freedom and light" (Mehedinți, 1943: 163) and it is the natural attraction-driving force of the people living close to it (ibidem). The Mountains are the internal seeds of nation formation, and the Danube is the "axis" of historical maturation and social circulation, "the most political river of Europe" (Mehedinți, 1943: 47) and "the most historical" (Mehedinți, 1943: 70). The internal façades are the Carpathians (the "Carpathian Fortress"), the Forest, the Danube, the Black Sea – and the Straits ("the external façade").



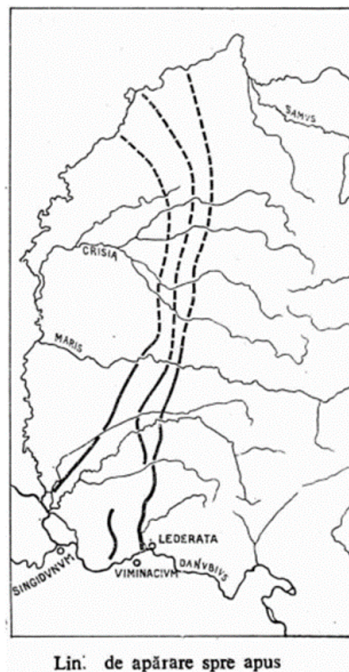
Map 1 Internal Geopolitical façades of Romania as pillars of nationhood (Mehedinți, 1943: 34)

The Communication Axis of the Romanian Space. Romania as the Connector between West and East, via the Constantinople railroad, from Berlin to the Persian Gulf, via the Black Sea. The second axis is Ploiești to Cernăuți toward Berlin.



Map 2 Romania as a Connector between West and East via Black Sea (Mehedinți, 1943: 134)

The ancient axes of defense of Transylvanian's inland, including Limes Dacicus at the Someș' Gates. The Carpathians are at the Eastern border of Europe, but they had to be defended to the Someș Gate against the barbarians – in Antiquity, and against the nowadays Hungarian irredentism. The Mehedinți's map draws into attention the Carol fortified line built in the 30s of the 20th century, much less developed than the Roman limes presented here.



Map 3 Defending lines of Transylvania
(from Antiquity to the present days). (see
Mehedinți, 1943: 135).

3. Danube and the Sea maps

Danube is organically linked to the Black Sea by lines of communication and by the continuous current, which reaches far away toward the Straits. "Unfortunately, Romanians approached [organizing] the Danube's mouth exactly when big fatality started to be showing up. A physical one, another ethnographic and an historical-geographic one stemmed from the international trade to the Pontus Euxinus and brought it into decay."¹ (Mehedinți, 1943: 74)

It is about silting of the shores, and, on the other hand, the Tatars and Turkish pressure – their occupation of Dobruja in the 15th century.

Danube has two geopolitical functions, one internal and the other external. The internal function of the Danube is its catalytic role in unifying Romania – "The territorial integration of the Romanian State, in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, was determined, to a great extent, by the Danube."² (Mehedinți, 1943: 152).

Danube's geopolitical functions were choked by the Ottoman's occupation of the right-side strategic points, called raia, for almost four centuries (for instance Giurgiu's and Turnu's raia were established in 1417, Brăila's in 1540, Tighina's in 1538³), ending in 1829, with the Adrianopol's Treaty.

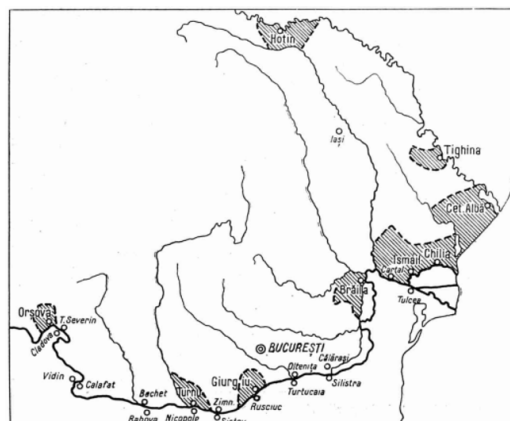
¹ "Din nefericire, Românii s-au apropiat de gurile Dunării, tocmai în momentul când o mare fatalitate se ivește în istoria acestei mări. Un factor fizic, unul etnografic și altul istorico-geografic stăvillesc comerțul internațional din Pontul Euxin și aruncă marea aceasta în paragină."

² „Întregirea teritorială a Statului Român, în secolul al XIX-lea și la începutul secolului al XX-lea, a fost determinată, în cea mai mare parte, de Dunăre.”

³ *Atlas istoric*, harta „54. Țările Române (mijlocul sec. XIV – mijlocul sec. XVI)”, harta „68. Țările Române de la jumătatea sec. XVI – începutul sec. XVIII.”



Map 4 Mouth of the Danube are connected to the Straits (see Mehedinți, 1943: 151). Observe the correct name: Bessarabia – given to the southern part of right-side province of Moldavia.



Map 5 Figure 5 Ottoman raia on the Romanian territory (15-19 centuries) (see Mehedinți, 1943: 153)

The external geopolitical function is linked to the Danube Delta: "... the mouths of the Danube are the vital point of the Rhine-Danube diagonal (... the "eighth sea" of Europe) ..." (Mehedinți, 1943: 267).

The second stage of the geopolitical rebirth of Romania after Adrianople's Treaty of 1829, is the partial return of Bessarabia to Moldova Principality, the three districts (*judete*): Cahul, Bolgrad and Ismail, after the Russian defeat by the Allies (Great Britain, France, Turkey and Sardinia) concluded in 1856 with the Treaty of Paris: "regaining the Danube's mouth in 1856, after the Russian defeat in Crimea, was a great step forward to the economic and political development of the Romanians."¹ (Mehedinți, 1943: 78)

¹ "... redobândirea gurilor Dunării la 1856, după înfrângerea rușilor în Crimeea, era un mare pas în dezvoltarea economică și politică a neamului românesc."



Ținutul de la gurile Dunării.

Map 6 The Old, the New Dobruja (the Cadrilater) and the three Bessarabian districts recovered in 1856 (Mehedinți, 1943: 154)

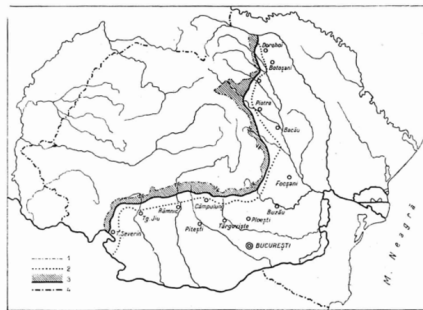
The third stage is the Union of Moldavia and Walachia – 1859 – the Principality of Romania. The fourth is the independence in 1878, when Romania gains access to the Black Sea geopolitical façade. The fifth and the last is the recovery of the old region of Cadrilater from Bulgaria, in 1913. Most of these geopolitical stages were part of the Eastern Question – the strategic management of the legacy of the crumbling Ottoman Empire: “The fifth step was the border rectification in 1913. The Bulgarians, arriving in Ceatalgea [during the first Balkan war, near Constantinople], were not only satisfied with Constantinople and the Bosphorus, but also wanted the whole coast to the Danube delta i.e., all of Romania by the sea! The imperialism fever is disturbing To defend ourselves against these threats, it was necessary to straighten the border in Deliorman [Cadrilater], bringing it closer to the line proposed to us in 1878 [by the Russians] and which we could not accept because it had been presented to us as a kind of exchange with the three Bessarabian counties [Cahul, Ismail, Bolgrad], torn again by the Russians. Here, then, is how the Danube contributed to the territorial integration of the Romanian State until 1913

1.” (Mehedinți, 1943: 156).

The Danube and Black Sea are part of the Ponto-Baltic isthmus geopolitical complex (Mehedinți, 1943: 87), the Eastern frontier of Europe.

The collapse of the Danube line and the loss of Dobruja in May 1918 (Treaty of Bucharest). Just before the accomplishment of the Great Romania by the end of 1918, by October 1917, the fall of Russia in the hand of Bolsheviks left Romania to fight alone with Germany, Austro-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey.

¹ „Al cincilea pas a fost rectificarea de graniță din 1913. Bulgarii, ajunși la Ceatalgea [primul război balcanic], nu se mulțumeau numai cu Constantinople și cu Bosforul, ci voiau și tot țărmul până la delta Dunării, adică toată România de lângă mare! Frigurile imperialismului sunt turburătoare Pentru a ne apăra față de aceste amenințări, a fost nevoie de îndreptarea graniței în Deliorman [Cadrilater]n, apropiind-o de linia care ne fusese propusă la 1878 și pe care n-o putusem accepta, fiindcă ne fusese prezentată ca un fel de schimb cu cele trei județe basarabene [Cahul, Ismail, Bolgrad], smulse iarăși de ruși. Iată, așadar, în ce fel Dunărea a ajutat întregirea teritorială a Statului românesc până la 1913.”



1 — Granița în 1914; 2 — Granița cerută în tratatul din 1918; 3 — Granița redusă prin tratative; 4 — Granița la încheierea păcii.

Map 7 The frontiers of Romania after the Peace Treaty of Bucharest Apr/May 1918 (Mehediński, 1943: 156). The blue dotted line is added by us to represent the Mehediński's missing Eastern new frontier (the loss of Dobruja)

Kirițescu's map is a more graphic view of the same geo-strategic situation of Romania, in May 1918: the loss of three of the four internal façades – the Carpathians, the Danube, and the Black Sea. The Black Sea loss was only somehow compensated by the Unification of Bessarabia, on the 27th of March, the same year, since no other port compared with Constanța's capabilities. (see Kirițescu, 1922: 427-433)

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Map 8 "Mutilation of Romania after the Treaty of Bucharest" – Constantin Kirițescu, vol II, 1943: 427. Black area designates the territory lost by the Kingdom of Romania: the Carpathian main heights, Dobruja, Turnu Severin, important parts of Moldavia.

4. Maps of Transylvania

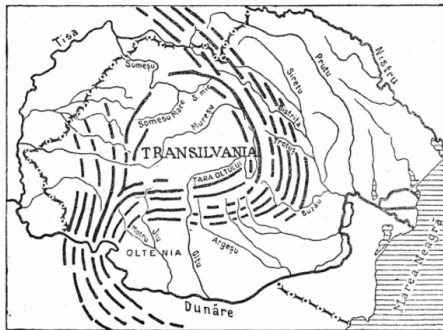
There are several lines of discussion regarding the mapping of Transylvania, emphasizing the:

1. Centrality, considering its:
 - a. relationship to the Carpathian Fortress concept, to which it is inextricably related;
 - b. role in accommodating various foreign invasions;
 - c. political contribution to developing the Romanian statehood in the Middle Ages;
 - d. cultural weight in forming the Romanian society.

1. Role in defending Europe, being part to the geopolitical complex: The Ponto-Baltic Isthmus

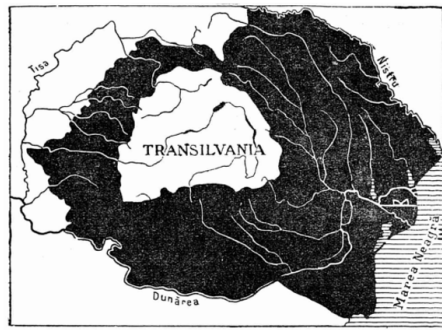
2. Peripheral position during the Hungarian domination (1867) vs. its flourishing after the reintegration in the Romanian State 1918.

1. Transylvania's Centrality. Transylvania is the focal point of the Romanian ethnogeography. The Carpathian Fortress



Carpații împrejurul Transilvaniei.

Map 9 Geography: "The Carpathians around Transylvania" (Mehedinți, 1943: 188)



Transilvania în mijlocul României.

Map 10 Transylvania - the core of Romania (Mehedinți, 1943: 186)

Transylvania is at the core of the Romanian statehood and its role is deeply linked to the political Carpathian Fortress function.

From the collective mentality viewpoint and geographically, the term to describe this double centrality is the "Carpathian Fortress" (Cetatea Carpaților). We should note that the Carpathian Fortress is ethnically denominated as Romanian or pre-Romanian. Here are its most specific lines:

a. the function of the Fortress is the same with the function of Transylvania: "the core of the country"¹ (Mehedinți, 186) its orographic center and the "last bastion of Europe against the «Great Siberia»..." (Mehedinți, 187, 191)².

b. Since Antiquity, the Carpathian Fortress was the main bulwark against the *nomadic* tribes from Asia. Its name was *Dacia*: „In Antiquity, the bulwark against the Asiatic nomadism was the Carpathian Fortress – Dacia.” (Mehedinți, 285)³. “The most advanced Europe’s bastion of Europe in front of Asia” (Mehedinți, 307)⁴. Since then, it was inhabited by the ancestors of Romanians, the “Carpathian people” which had from the beginning this geopolitical function, to deflect, or to absorb the major invasions: “The Carpathian people ... is *the oldest political formation in front of the steppes*, where from the Asiatic invasions from the Scythian and Huns to the Magyars, Pecheneg, Cumans and Tatars.” (Mehedinți, 1943: 306-307)⁵

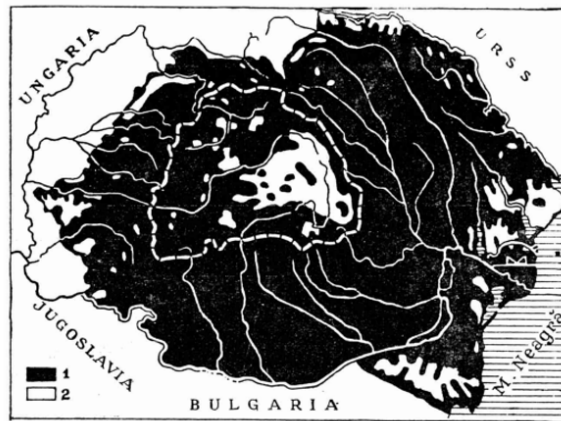
¹ „sâmbure al țării întregi”.

² „Transilvania este centrul orografic al pământului românesc ... ca sâmbure al cetății carpatice și ca așezare geografică, formează cu adevărat ultimul bastion al Europei în fața «Marei Siberii». ... Transilvania ne apare ca sâmburele unui întreg orografic, ale cărui părți se îmbină în chip organic.”

³ „În antichitate, cum am văzut, stavila contra nomadismului asiatic a fost cetatea carpatică - Dacia.”

⁴ „... cetatea Carpaților reprezintă «bastionul cel mai înaintat al Europei» în fața Asiei.” – Peterm in Mehedinți, op. cit. Mehedinți does not indicate a precise source.

⁵ „Poporul carpatic ... e cea mai veche formație politică în fața stepelor pe care s-au scurs toate invaziile asiatice dela Sciți și Huni până la Maghiari, Pecenegi, Cumani și Tătari.”



1. Românii dintre hotarele regatului. — 2. Insule de străini.

Map 11 Transylvania - the core of Romania
(Mehedinți, 1943: 186)

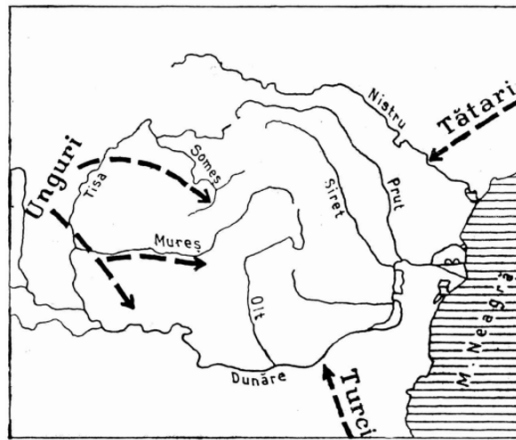


1. Ducatul Făgărașului. — 2. Ducatul Amlășului. — 3. Posesiunile domnilor moldoveni în Transilvania.

Map 12 Transylvania is deeply interlinked to the
statehood of Moldavia and Wallachia (here are
represented their respective possessions in the
Middle Ages). (Mehedinți, 1943: 246)

c. Meanwhile, the internal function of the Carpathian fortress is to bridge and concentrate the Romanian ethnicity. Mehedinți insists that the Carpathians are not the spine, as George Vâlsan and others wrote, but the bridge of the Romanian space. Mehedinți could spare this theoretical detour by understanding that *spine* is the same with *axis*, which means also *bridging*. (Mehedinți, 1943: 148)¹ The same function is related to cultural function. It seems that the seed of the Romanian language is around the Abrud area, in the Apuseni Mountains (Mehedinți, 1943: 211).

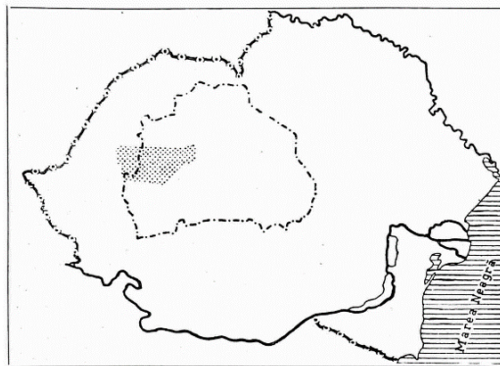
¹ "Carpații n-au fost zidul despărțitor, ... n-au fost «coloană vertebrală»...; din contra, plaiurile lor, atât de icumenice, și forma rotundă a «cetății» ... au servit ca mijloc de concentrare și unificare..."



Asediul cetății carpatice.

Map 13 Invasions of Romanian lands in the Middle Ages: Hungarians, Tatars and Turks (Mehedinți, 1943: 233)

d. This is linked to the ethnopolitical function, of resisting the invaders and, thus in forming the Romanians. (Mehedinți, 1943: 252)



Sămburele graiului românesc în apusul țării.

Map 14 The core of the Romanian language (Mehedinți, 1943: 211)

2. Defending Europe as part of the Ponto-Baltic Isthmus

The Carpathian Fortress is part of a larger geopolitical and geo-historical complex called the Ponto-Baltic isthmus. (Mehedinți, 1943: 274) We remember that the Isthmus is „the frontier between Asia and Europe” (Mehedinți, 1943: 272)¹, which stretches from the Baltic Sea to the Dardanelles passing by the Nistru and the Romanian Black Sea, separating two worlds, „utterly different” (Mehedinți, 1943: 306)².

¹ „Frumtaria din lungul Nistrului este vecină cu istmul ponto-baltic, hotarul dintre Asia și Europa. ...”

² „Astfel stând lucrurile, situația vecinilor Rusiei e clară: La istmul ponto-baltic stau față în față două lumi, cu două concepții diametral opuse. Spre răsărit, slavii mongolizați și câștigați pentru dictatură proletară; la apus, e lumea germano-latină care leagă individul de națiune, ca tot istoric (de aci și numele de regim «totalitar»), dar lasă omului în sânul familiei și al națiunii, apoi națiunii ca parte a omenirii, toată puțința de a-și desvolta personalitatea și a contribui cu partea sa de originalitate la progresul omenirii.”



Linia Stalin pe istmul ponto-baltic.

Map 15 Ponto-Baltic Isthmus (Mehedinti, 1943: 284)

Considering that Russia, especially the Soviet Russia, is the biggest threat to the European-order, Mehedinti thinks of the Isthmus as a defensive complex against this gigantic pressure. There are only two major physical obstacles in front of it: the Pripet marshlands, and the Carpathians – the Transylvanian Fortress.

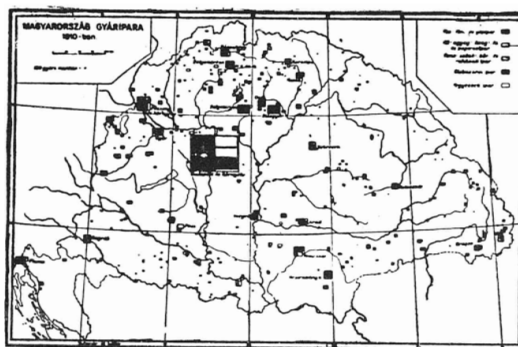
3. From the periphery of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire (1867) to the core of Romanian modern state (1918)

There are several reasons for the Transylvania's weakness during the Austro-Hungarian domination.

1. The natural configuration of the territory: naturally oriented toward Romania and excentrated against Hungary since the old times:

„The Tisza meadow forms ... a swampy border, which had great economic consequences. In this area, the connections between the Carpathian fortress and Hungary were few. Only at two points (Szeged and Solnoc) was crossing the Tisza a little easier. ... This explains the truly remarkable historical fact that Transylvania did not feel connected to the center of Hungary, that is, to the capital Buda-Pesta. ... And how foreign Transylvania was to the rest of Hungary is seen not only from the number and orientation of roads, but also from a decisive

fact, when it comes to trade relations: the fact that Transylvania had another currency, other weights and other units of measure than Hungary.”¹



Harta lui Szekfű, arătând distribuția industriei mari în 1910.

Map 16 The unequal distribution of heavy industry in former Austro-Hungarian Empire (Mehedinți, 1943: 222)

2. The chauvinist economic policies: “The Hungarians, wanting to make Budapest a great industrial center, used all the authority of the State to favor the Hungarian element.

«In 1906, the Hungarian parliament passed a law making the creation of any industrial enterprise conditional on the prior approval of that ministry. According to Undersecretary of State Szterényi, the purpose of this law was to employ Hungarian workers, by setting up factories, provided that 75% of the workers were Hungarian.

The chauvinist goal was partly achieved, but the price of this experience was the ruin of Transylvanian industry ... [In 1910] Of 2643 industrial enterprises, with more than 20 workers, Budapest comprised 1296, or almost half, while Transylvania once very prosperous, it was left with only 382. Thus, Transylvania, whose creative economic individuality had facilitated it to have a preponderant influence in the Danube countries, was reduced by the Hungarian governments, to the role of vassal province, as a mere sender of raw materials for large industry centralized around Budapest. » [Moga, L'orientation économique de la Transylvanie, Rev. of Transylvanie, 1940, pp. 96 and 101, respectively]” (Mehedinți, 1943: 221).²

The result was a massive dwindling of industry in Transylvania which, in 1910 had only 382 companies. After 1918, since Transylvania was organically integrated into the Great Romania. If in 1920, Transylvania's heavy industry used 167.388 H.P and the number of

¹ „Lunca Tisei formează ... un hotar mlăștinos, care a avut mari urmări economice. În zona aceasta legăturile dintre cetatea carpatică și Ungaria erau puține. Numai în două puncte (Seghedin și Solnoc) trecerea peste Tisa era ceva mai ușoară. ... Așa se explică faptul istoric în adevăr remarcabil că Transilvania nu s-a simțit legată de centrul Ungariei, adică de capitala Buda-Pesta. ... Iar cât de străină era Transilvania de restul Ungariei se vede nu numai din numărul și orientarea drumurilor, dar și dintr-un fapt decisiv, când e vorba de relații comerciale: de faptul că Transilvania avea altă monedă, alte greutăți și alte unități de măsuri decât Ungaria.” (Mehedinți, 1943: 217-218)

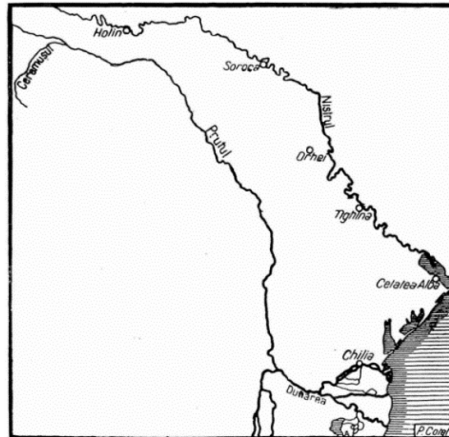
² „Ungurii, voind să facă din Budapesta un mare centru industrial, au întrebuințat toată autoritatea Statului, ca să favorizeze elementul maghiar. «În 1906, parlamentul unguresc a votat o lege care subordona crearea oricărei întreprinderi industriale de aprobarea prealabilă a ministerului respectiv. După mărturisirea Subsecretarului de Stat Szterényi, scopul acestei legi era să dea de lucru muncitorilor de rasă maghiară, prin înființarea de fabrici» cu condiția ca 75% din lucrători să fie Maghiari.

Scopul șovinist a fost în parte atins, dar prețul acestei experiențe a fost ruinarea industriei din Transilvania ... [La 1910] Din 2643 de întreprinderi industriale, având mai mult de 20 lucrători, Budapesta cuprindea 1296, adică aproape jumătate, pe când Transilvania odinioară atât de înfloritoare, rămăsese numai cu 382. «Astfel, Transilvania, a cărei individualitate economică creatoare îi înlesnise să aibă o influență preponderantă în țările dunărene, a fost redusă de guvernele ungurești, la rol de provincie vasală, de simplă trimițătoare de materii prime pentru industria mare centralizată împrejurul Budapestei.» [din Moga, L'orientation économique de la Transylvanie, Rev. de Transylvanie, 1940, p. 96, respectiv 101]”

companies was 231, in 1937 there were 568 companies and 207.157 HP. (Mehedinți, 1943: 219-223).

5. Maps of Bessarabia - the eastern border. The Ponto-Baltic Isthmus

Bessarabia is the “Eastern hinge of Moldavia and the Eastern border of Europe” (Mehedinți, 268)¹.



Cea mai înaintată linie de cetăți europene în fața stepei.

Map 17 Bessarabia – the Eastern frontier of the Great Romania, a component of the Ponto-Baltic

The Nistru river is part of the Ponto-Baltic Isthmus, “the frontier between Asia and Europe...” (Mehedinți, 287)².

At the same time, Bessarabia is integrated into the complex of surroundings of the Carpathians – “Europe’s most advanced bastion to the east...” (Mehedinți, 287)³.

In behavioral terms, the Nistru river is the border between the sedentary and nomadic populations (idem, 273).



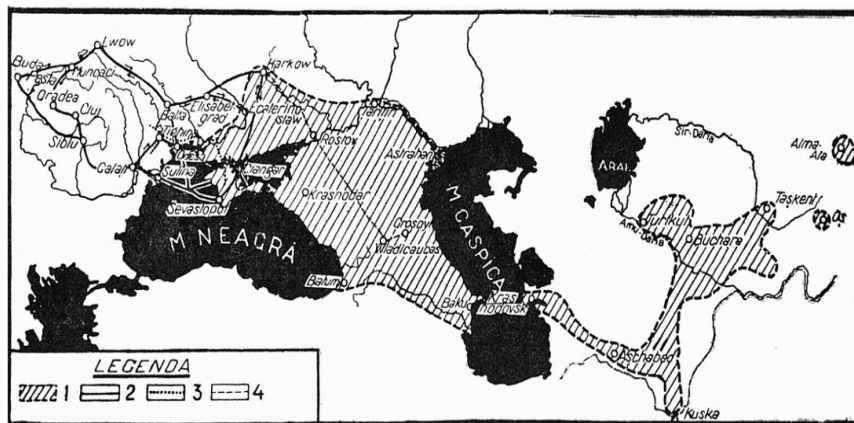
Linia Stalin pe istmul ponto-baltic.

Map 18 Ponto-Baltic Isthmus (Mehedinți, 1943. 284). Bessarabia is its southernmost pillar.

¹ „Marginea răsăriteană a Moldovei este hotarul de răsărit al Europei.”

² „Frunteria din lungul Nistrului este vecină cu istmul ponto-baltic, hotarul dintre Asia și Europa. ...”

³ „... cetatea carpatică și împrejurimile ei formează bastionul cel mai înaintat al Europei spre răsărit ...”



1. Răspândirea păstorilor români până la răsărit de Lacul Aral.
2. Drumul turmelor din Carpați spre pustă și spre stepa dela Nordul Mării Negre.
3. Calea oilor din Moldova până în Crimeea.
4. Drumul lănei între Caucaz și interiorul Rusiei. (După N. Dragomir).

Map 19 Bessarabia was the springboard-contact between the Romanian territory and Eurasia through flocks of sheep. (Mehedinți, 1943: 278)

Bessarabia was central to the Eastern transhumance from the Carpathian Fortress toward the Caspian Sea, as Wallachia was toward the Balkans. Transhumance vs. nomadism is the main cultural and behavioral difference Romanians and other peoples from Eurasia: "From the Carpathians, herds descended to the Black Sea in Dobrogea, to the Crimea and even further from the Sea of Azov to the Caucasus, the Caspian and the Transcaspien steppes. Just as superlative nomadism is an Asian phenomenon, so too, transhumance in the big style is a European phenomenon, namely Romanian. ... I only revealed its exceptional dimensions ... to see how agricultural colonization across the Dniester was supported by a pastoral movement in the same direction. Thus, a kind of Moldovan "brand" was created there." (Mehedinți, 1943: 279)¹

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¹ "Din Carpați, turmele coborau până la Marea Neagră în Dobrogea, până în Crimeea și chiar mai departe de Marea Azovului, spre Caucaz, Caspica și stepele transcaspiene. După cum nomadismul superlativ este un fenomen asiatic, tot așa, transhumanța în stil mare este un fenomen european și anume românesc. ...; am relevat doar dimensiunile sale excepționale ... spre a vedea cum colonizarea agricolă dincolo de Nistru a fost sprijinită și de o mișcare pastorală în aceeași direcție. Astfel s-a creat acolo un soi de «marcă» moldoveană."