

## **THE ORIGIN OF SOME STORIES AND LEGENDS OF ROMANIANS**

### ***Historical notes and analyses on ancient texts***

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Motto: "Dacia does not fully present an extreme antiquity. But studying the prehistoric times of the countries of the Carpathians and the Lower Danube, a vanished old world, the cradle of ante-Hellenic civilizations, is looming before our eyes" -Nicolare Densusianu

"You will never do anything in this world without courage. It is the greatest quality of the mind, next to honor" -Aristotle

## Abstract

"There will come a time when attention will be paid to this people, not too much known. Songs and harmonies will be heard coming from this country that too little it is talked about. After thousands of years of its existence, this nation will rise and the world will wonder as if, by a miracle, finally finding out how much this nation knew about universal conscience. The happiness of these people remained hidden; Their misfortunes were not known. No one wrote their mythology. Few knew their history. And yet, these people had, more than any others, the genius of the myth!" -

- [Romanian Princess Martha Bibesco]

In her researches, the archaeologist **Maria Gimbutas** observed a relationship between some archaeological discoveries, mythology and folkloric productions containing elements, difficult to explain, that are not related to the present. These elements appear to be echoes coming from much more distant times, from prehistory, a situation that would imply a continuity of the population in these areas. In the introduction to her 1989 book, Gimbutas notes: "This volume is a study in archeomithology, a field that includes archaeology, comparative mythology, and folklore, one that archaeologists have yet to explore" [Gimbutas 1989: xviii]. With this approach, proposing a new field of research, she risked becoming the "black sheep" among traditional archaeologists. [Adrian Poruciuc, 2010 Prehistoric roots of Romanian and Southeast European Traditions]

**Maria Gimbutas' new idea appears to be revolutionary, but it can be applicable only in certain areas with millennial history and roots in prehistory as is, for example, some people of Balcanic Peninsula.**

Today Romanians have a rich folklore and even if there are some elements in common with their historical neighbors - Greeks, Albanians, Serbs, Bulgarians, they have especially

some traditions in record from antiquity and for which archaeologists have made discoveries throughout South-Eastern Europe. The Romanian folklore has more of a cultural character than a mythical one, but as we will see below, it has some elements with deep roots in prehistory. Also, some cultural elements, such as popular tales, some words use in today Romanian peasants' villages language appear to have reflections in Homeric myths type, suggesting an earlier possible origin. In these circumstances, it can be assumed that the perpetuation of these mythical elements would have been possible only with a continuity of the native population in South-Eastern Europe.

### Romanian songs and carols apparently with roots in prehistory

In his book<sup>1</sup> about prehistoric roots of Romanian's folklore traditions, the author Adrian Poruciuc observed that what is defined as 'classical mythology' it can be perceived in some prehistoric artifacts unearthed by archaeologists but, paradoxically, from a chronological point of view, such elements can be found in the folklore productions of modern times. In these circumstances, he says, it can be assumed that everything we know today as 'mythology' derives, more or less, from the cultural ritual life of prehistoric peasants, and it is assumed that the perpetuation of these mythical rituals would have been possible only with a continuity of the native population in South-Eastern Europe.

Many of the folk ritual songs and carols in Romanian folklore have cultural, not mythical characteristics. Some of them reflect an older religious thought, **which precedes Homeric mythology** populated with divine beings resembling humans and divine genealogical ties in name and action, and where the supreme authority is **Zeus**, a typical manifestation of Indo-European patriarchal traditions.

The older Romanian songs and carols feature motifs about the 'dolphin eating apples', 'dancing lion', 'Lad riding the horse', or 'the sea flooding', 'fetutza<sup>2</sup> riding the bull', some of which are associated today with Christmas and New Year ceremonies and wishes. **It is obvious that they have a connection with a different world and it is worth mentioning that motifs with 'dolf' or the 'Black Sea' appear in regions of Romania whose inhabitants have never seen a real dolphin or the Sea.**



Below it is a translation of a southern Romanian carol first recorded by the Romanian historian **G. Tocilescu**, and included in the **Ilin, Stancu's** book. [Poezia obiceirilor de iarna: 70-71, Ed. 1985, București, Minerva.]:

<i>It's Gheorghe, strong lad, / With his brothers / Sitting at his back [...] / "Sit, brothers, and eat, / Eat and do not mind/ I am leaving for the orchards: / <b>The dolf has begun/ To steal from our trees, /</b></i>	<i><b>And to eat our apples."</b> Then Gheorghe, strong lad, / Ran fast to his house, / And he took his bow, / His bow and his arrow. / He aimed at the dolf, / <b>And the dolf surrendered.</b></i>
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- (1) "Prehistoric roots of Romanian and Southeast European traditions ", the author Adrian Poruciuc, Edited by Joan Marler, with a preface of Miriam Robbins Dexter, University of California, Los Angeles, Sebastopol, CA, 2010
- (2) I use this Romanian word "Fătutza" being the same word used by Hesiod ca. 800 BC in the myth of Phaeton, where "Fătutza" herded the oxen herds of the Sun God, and her sister Lampetia herded His sheep.

### Carols with the lad riding a white stallion.

In the south of Romania, there are "*the carols of the boy*" which appears to have an echo in the mythical "*the Thracian rider*". A young fighter, riding a magical stallion, is a character in many carols that appear in eastern and southern Romania. There is an obvious connection between the character of the *Thracian Rider* and the tradition of the *Danuban Knights* with roots from the Bronze Age.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Mithras on horse or Thracian Rider</u></b></p>  <p>GORDIAN III and Tranquillina, AD 29 July 238- 25 Feb 244, MOESIA Inferior, <b>ISTROS (ICTRIHNWN)</b> Mithras on horse, bird perched right on column. Bronze pentassarion, Varbanov, I 688, AMNG I/I 525, var (obv legend) "Rider god" steles are at the Burdur Museum, in Turkey and Histria Museum in Romania. Under the Roman Emperor Gordian III the god on horseback appears on coins minted at Talos, in neighboring Lycia, and at ISTRUS, in the province of Lower Moesia, between Thrace and the Danube.</p>	<p>It is generally thought that the young emperor's grandfather came from an Anatolian family, because of his unusual cognomen, Gordianus. [Sabazios on coins, illustrated in the M. Halkam collection]. The iconic image of the god or hero on horseback battling the chthonic serpent, on which his horse tramples, appears on <b>Thracic and Celtic votive columns, and with the coming of Christianity it was easily transformed into the image of Saint George and the Dragon</b>, whose earliest known depictions are from tenth - and eleventh-century Cappadocia and eleventh-century Georgia and Armenia. [See Saint George and the Dragon]</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Thracian horseman metope. National Museum of Romanian History</u></b></p> 	<p><b>Histria or Istros</b> (Ancient Greek: Ἰστρίη, The Thracian River god, Danube), was a Greek colony or polis (πόλις, city) <b>near the mouths of the Danube (known as Ister river in Ancient Greek), on the western coast of the Black Sea.</b> Established by Milesian settlers in order to facilitate trade with the native Getae. Around AD 30, <b>Histria came under Roman domination.</b> During the Roman period from the 1st to 3rd centuries AD, temples were built for the Roman gods, besides a public bath and houses for the wealthy. Altogether, it was in continuous existence for some 14 centuries, starting with the Greek period up to the <b>Roman-Byzantine period. The Halmyris bay</b> where was the city founded was closed by sand deposits and access to the Black Sea gradually was cut. Trade continued until the 6th century AD</p>


## Romanian folk carols with the motifs, 'over flow of the sea' and 'the virgin (fetutza) and the bull'


The author **Adrian Poruciuc** mentions folk songs and carols with mythical elements such as the great flood, and since these songs do not contain religious material - compared to those of the Mesopotamia with reference to the heavy rain and flood - he comes to the conclusion that they contain a much older material and, knowingly, he suggests that they could be related to the flooding of the Black Sea during the early Neolithic era ca. 5300 BC which is described by geologists **William Ryan and Walter Pitman**. [*'Noah's Flood' book, 1998 edition*]. The authors believe that the place being flooded by deluge, described in the Old Testament, is the Black Sea. It is important to mention that, none of the Romanian carols, directly important for this discussion, refer to a catastrophic flood produced by heavy rain.

Many Romanian carols with the motif – *'maiden and the bull'* - have common elements such as *'the overflow of the big sea'* with waves that reach the mountains and carry with them signs of destruction of the terrestrial vegetation. Often, in the *'songs of the sea'* in Romanian folklore appears *'the white stallion'*, the mythical *'deer that is ridden by a virgin (fetutza)'*, or the *'bull that has a heroine between its horns'*, the lover of the strong man (*n.b. 'Fat Frumos' or 'Handsome Lad'*). By making a connection with archaeological evidence from the late Neolithic (Chalcolithic) era, the image – *"maiden and the wild bull"* - and to the evidence of the Hellenic myth – *"Zeus and Europa"* **older content - less patriarchal - than that of the Hellenic myth and it is obviously older than the Europe's myth.** The connection of this discovery with the classical myth of Europe would not be the only one, since Nilsson (1972)<sup>3</sup> mentions that among the art objects found at Mycenae are some blue glass plates showing 'a woman sitting on the back of a large Bull'.

An archaeological discovery with this theme is an image of a *"bull's head having a female person between its horns"*, represented below. Very interestingly, it was discovered in the Neolithic Chalcolithic archaeological site Căscioarele, Ialomita, exactly in southern Romania's area where the carol below, right side, was collected.

<u>Cascioarele archeological site</u>	<u>Carol collected around Cascioarele village</u>
<div data-bbox="305 1377 581 1696" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="215 1713 808 1808">Female figure sitting between the horns of a bull's head. Cascioarele (Romania). 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC [after Monah 1997]</p>	<p data-bbox="834 1371 1385 1430">[Ilina, Stancu., ed. 1985. <i>Poezia obiceiturilor de iarna</i>. București: Minerva].</p> <p data-bbox="834 1465 1437 1839"><i>Smooth [lin]/ And smoother/ The sea come/As winds go around it:/ What does the sea carry along?/ Drift wood and bird cherries,/And firs with/ green twigs/ Among firs,/ Among bird cherries/ A wild bull [buhur],/ Swims and swims,/ And he keeps his horns/ High above the water [...]/ At the tip/ Of his horn/ There swings a little swing/ Whoever sits in the swing?/ There sits Mia,/ The dead one,/ And she sews,/ And she weeps /"Little bull,/Little bull,/...</i></p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Zeus and Europa</b></p>  <p>SIDON: 72 B.C.- A.D. 6. AE 21. BMC.145. Obv: Laureate bust of Zeus r. / Rev: EUROPA seated front on bull charging l, her veil billowing in the wind. 7.97 gm, 23mm. Europa was the daughter of Agenor rex of Tire, the sister of Cadmus, Phineas and Thasus</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Europe's Mith</b></p> <p><b>ZEUS</b> was enamored of <b>Europa</b>, a sister of <b>Thrace</b> and decided to seduce her. He transformed himself into a tame white bull and mixed in with her father's herds. While <b>EUROPA</b> and her female attendants were gathering flowers, she saw the bull, and eventually got onto his back. <b>ZEUS took that opportunity and ran to the sea and swam, with her on his back, to the island of CRETE.</b> He then revealed his true identity, and Europa became the first queen of CRETE. ZEUS gave her a necklace made by HEPHAESTUS and three additional gifts: <b>Talos, Laelaps</b>, a dog and a javelin that never missed. Zeus later re-created the shape of the white bull in the stars, which is now known as the constellation TAURUS</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Talos and Hound Laelaps</b></p> 	<p><b>Phaistos, Crete, c. 3rd Century B.C.</b> GB85359. Bronze AE 17, Svoronos Crete 74; SNG Cop 520; BMC Crete p. 64, 27-28, F, a little rough, 3.702g, 17.1mm, 225o, Phaistos mint, <b>Talos</b>, nude, hurling the stones to Argonauts according to the legend; <b>reverse hound Laelaps</b>, ΦΑΙC/ΤΙΩΝ in two lines, starting above, ending in exergue; rare</p>	<p>The symbolism of this coin is an allusion to the myth of Europe, who, seduced by Zeus and taken way to Crete, receives a necklace and the following three gifts from ZEUS: a winged bronze man named Talos to guard her from pirates and invaders /Rev: A hunting dog named Laelaps who never catches his prey/ A spear that always hits the target Bibliotheca</p>
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(3) Nilsson, M. P. 1972 [1932]. *The Mycenaean Origin of Greek Mythology*. Edited by E. Vermeulen. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press.

In some Romanian carols the motif "*the girl riding the wild bull* " is obviously older than the myth of **Europe**. Also, "*the dancing and talking Lion*" is older than the legendary "*Nemean Lion*" which Hercules fought. The mythical lion appears in Romanian carols and songs of Christmas and New Year greetings and celebration. Such references have no correspondence in the traditions of the neighboring populations, say the Romanian specialists, and they appear to be from the pre-Christian era, indicating a connection, through their topic and symbolism, with the Thracian culture. Below are Romanian carols with the motif <*the girl and the ox* > - with common elements such as '*the overflow of the great sea*'

<p>[translated after Herța, I. 2000. <i>Colinde românești</i>. București: Muzeul Literaturii române.]</p> <p><i>"The sea comes so high / That it has no bounds; / Its shores batter the mountains, / And its drops sprinkle the clouds. / What do its billows carry? / All firs tall and green, /Together with spruces. / A grey wild bull [bour sur] swims, / With something between his horns. / What does he carry between his horns? /He carries a swing of silk. / Whoever lies in the swing? / Oh, it's [Ana], fair maiden!"</i></p>	<p><b>Fragment dinr-un colind a unei fete, din Transilvania</b> [Ilin Stancu ed. 1985. 'Poezia obiceiurilor de iarna'. București: Minerva].</p> <p><i>- Lilac, green lilac -/ The sea comes as high as can be, / So high that it has no shores;/ But what does it carry along? /It carries firs and lilacs. / A grey ox [bou sur] swims among them, / A grey ox with grey horns. / What does he carry between his horns? /He carries a fine little swing/ Made of white fir-wood. / Whatever's spread over the swing? /Green grass from the meadow. / Whoever lies on the swing? / Oh, it's a young widow, /Who keeps stitching scarves</i></p>
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<p><b>A funeral fir-song recorded around 1880, Banat, southwestern Romania. [Marian 2000: (1892. <i>Inmormantarea la romani</i>. edited by I. Datcu, București: Saeculum].</b></p> <p><i>The sea comes and comes;/ What does it bring a long? / Mud, And troubled water, / And uprooted firs· / Young Mariuta/ Keeps praying and praying:/ “Fir tree, / Be my brother! / Stretch, / Oh, stretch your stem, / That I step on it”</i></p>	<p>Enthusiastic intellectuals of the nineteenth-twentieth centuries who collected Romanian folklore had the tendency to interpret folk productions in the light of classical antiquity. Along that line, earlier Romanian ethnologists equated the furious sea, in dirges like this one, with the world-surrounding <i>Okeanos</i> of the ancient Greeks.</p>
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The representation of '*the overflow of the sea*', perpetuated through oral transmission in texts that have retained their ritual functions today, cannot be conceived only as a 'mythical reflection'. We should see this representation caused by a traumatic experience of some ancestors of today's Romanians. It is difficult to decide whether these ancestors were refugees from the Aegean regions devastated by tsunami waves, such as those produced in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC by the volcanic disasters in Tera (Santorini), or those earlier in the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, when the inhabitants of the circum Pontic- Euxine Sea had to take refuge to higher ground, following the breaking of the natural bridge between the Balkans and Anatolia. This accident may have been caused by an earthquake, rising sea levels due to melting glaciers, when the high waters of the Mediterranean rushed into what was below a large freshwater lake.

Nowadays, it is known that the explosion of the volcano of **Santorini**, which blew up the **island of Tera** in about 1500 BC, and revised to about 1650 BC after the analysis of the ice sheets of **Antarctica**, caused tsunami waves in the Mediterranean Sea that destroyed Knossos and the flourishing civilization of Crete. The hesitant way, of identifying the cause and the time when these floods occurred, has a reason; apart from the Mesopotamian-Biblical-Greek flood connection – neither the Balkan Aegean Neolithic, nor the later Minoan Bronze Age left a text or myths attesting to a 'great flood'.

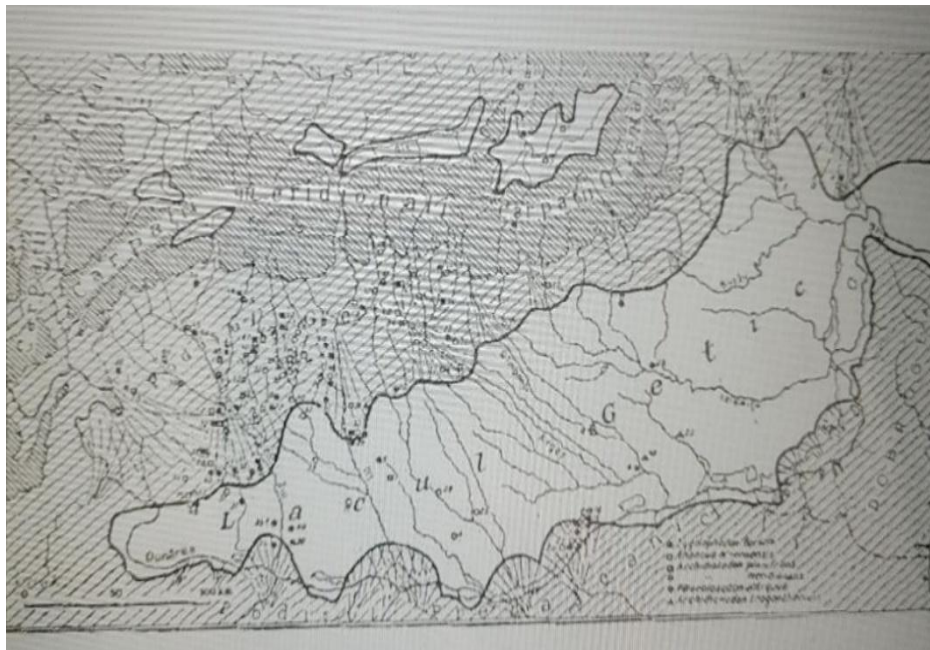
*“In these circumstances, the preservation of a motif of 'flooding of the sea' in Romanian folklore, transmitted orally through ritual songs, is almost magic. I would be happy to find information, writes Poruciuc, about the existence of a reference to the 'sea flooding' in the folkloric oral traditions of other peoples of South-Eastern Europe.”*

### Traces of the buried forest from Mihailesti village caused by diluvial climatic episodes

Four decades ago, the excavations made on the route that should have become the **Bucharest-Danube Canal** revealed the traces of a prehistoric forest that was about 6300 years old. These fossilized trees attracted the attention of scientists who began to study the trunks of trees with a length of 12-14 meters and a diameter of 1.5 m. Between 1985 and 1989 the researches were carried out under the aegis of the Bucharest Municipality Museum and with students from the faculties of the University of Bucharest. A report on this study, entitled "*Considerations regarding the buried forest in the lower Arges River Basin*", was published by Prof. Vasile Boroneant who coordinated these studies.

The excavations were carried out in many localities in the Arges river basin and the tributaries of Dimbovita, Colentina and Sabar. From a depth of 3-16 meters, hundreds of huge, almost intact trees were brought to light from under the alluvial sand and gravel, apparently driven out by diluvial climatic episodes. The strongest diluvial episode was at the base, where the trees were trapped in their normal position, as they were in the forest, with branches and vegetation. They were so well preserved that the bark and even the leaves could be recognized, indicating a relatively recent history.

After the stop of the canal's works, at the fall of the communist regime in 1989, the buried forest fell into oblivion. Later, in 1998, it returned to the attention of specialists and for the scientific museum and heritage preservation of the **Cornetu** site, a research team was formed with specialists from the University centers of Bucharest, Cluj, Constanta, from the Institute of Metrology, Hydrology in Bucharest, and from the Bucharest History Museum. From the outset, the specialists mention that the researched area on the route of the canal lacks evidence of habitation from the Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Old Neolithic.



*The south of România's map showing the Getic Lake and the flooded area of Romanian Field*

[https://biblioteca-digitala.ro/reviste/Cercetari-arheologice-in-Bucuresti/06-Cercetari-Arheologice-in-Bucuresti-VI-2005\\_013.pdf](https://biblioteca-digitala.ro/reviste/Cercetari-arheologice-in-Bucuresti/06-Cercetari-Arheologice-in-Bucuresti-VI-2005_013.pdf)

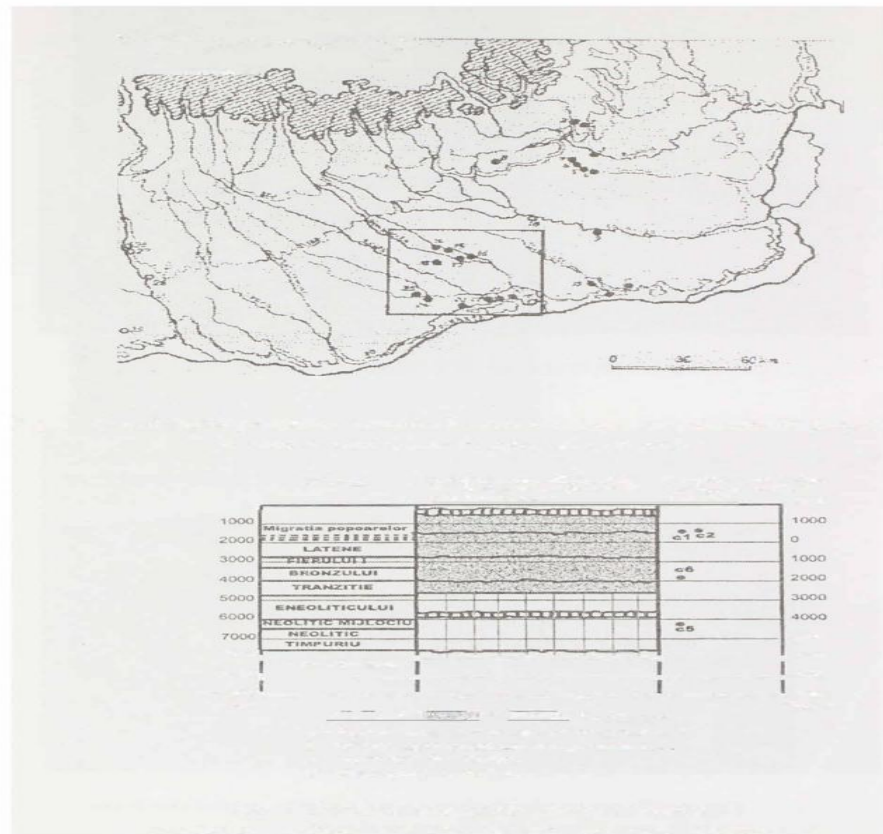
To clarify this problem, the researchers from the **Cornetu archaeological site** have been used. The relief in this geographical area was completed later, after the withdrawal of the waters from the southern and eastern part of the former **Getic Lake**. From this space, it was found that the discoveries from the old Neolithic era are missing, which in the central and western part of the Romanian Plain are occupied by the **Cris-Starcevo culture with Karanovo influences**. **Archaeologists have concluded that, the spread of**



these periods and cultures did not depend on cultural and human causes, but on climatic causes related to a flooding and retreat of the waters of Getic Lake towards the Black Sea.

The wood samples taken from the buried forests have been studied by specialists from the **Universities of Bremen and Kiel** and dated with **radioactive carbon (C14)**. The results can be seen below, on the time diagram for the buried wood samples indicated on the Lake Getic' map. For the base samples at 7.1 m, they gave the age of 4344 BC, for the sample at 5.5 m the age of 1880 BC and for the upper layer, the age of 686 BC.

American specialists in underwater archaeology have studied the traces of a settlement from the beginning of the Neolithic era, discovered under the waters of the Black Sea, off the Bulgarian coast. The results of the radioactive carbon study, made on samples from the buried forests of the Romanian Plain described above, can be related to the geo-climatic episodes that took place at the end of the ice age, if we admit large errors in dating.



Thus, the conclusions of the research of geologists **William Ryan and Walter Pitman** in connection with the archaeology of the Black Sea, confirmed by the marine underwater explorations of Dr. Robert Ballard, give a date of flooding of the Black Sea about **5300 BC**, which with large errors can be compared

with the date of **4344 BC** of the trees buried at 7.1 m in the Romanian Plain. It is known, by specialists in the field, that radioactive carbon dating of objects submerged in sea water gives large errors.

The explosion of the Tera volcano in the Mediterranean Sea dated to approx. 1500 – and corrected to 1650 BC – which produced tsunami waves and sea level rise, may have also produced a great period of drought and volcanic ash deposition, which influenced the area's climate for a long time producing diluvial climatic episodes and consequently the water inundation of the Getic Plain. Interestingly, approximately the same date is indicated by radioactive carbon studies for wood samples from the intermediate level 5.5 m, namely about 1500-1880 BC. As for the age of 686 BC of the last level, indicated by radioactive carbon studies on wood samples, no geo-climatic event is known that would have caused the flooding of the Dacian Plain.

A great cataclysm was identified globally in the year **AD 530** by the studies made on the rings of the secular trees' trunks sections, in different areas of the world. The cataclysm, which would have occurred globally, was followed by a great period of drought and volcanic ash deposition, which influenced the earth's climate for a long time. This episode had great demographic implications and from the reporting of contemporary chronicles in different parts of the world, experts identified the cause of this episode, as the explosion of the **Krakatoa** volcano in Indonesia.

[https://youtu.be/mZokOcLj-Dc?si=-EYJruMwD\\_c5LpN0](https://youtu.be/mZokOcLj-Dc?si=-EYJruMwD_c5LpN0)




### **Tales with Pacală and Tâdală, tăntălău, tontălău**

The word “**tăntălău**” it is not in the Rumanian dictionary, but very often used in popular language. It is said to be misused, and correctly it would be “**tantalus**”, which originates from the Latin ‘**tont**’, with the same meaning-‘**stupid**’. But it is possible this Latin word also to have the same origin, as we can see below:

Well-known legends from Greek mythology tells us how “**Tantalus**”, **also known as Atys, the pelasgian<sup>1</sup>, the king of Sipylus in Lydia, Zeus’ son**, abused the divine favor by revealing to humans the secrets of the Gods, and how he stole nectar and ambrosia, the food of the Gods, and offered it to mortals. [Pindar, *First Olympian Ode*].


**Tantalus, hearing that the Gods know everything, he was so "dumb" that he wanted to "fool" them. He sacrificed his son, Pelops, and served him to the Gods at the divine table. Zeus immediately noticed the sacrilege and punished him and his descendants for eternity, sending him to Tartarus, where he could not drink water and feed himself. [Homer, Odyssey, 8th century BC.]. Pelops was brought back to life by the Olympian Gods and he became king of Peloponnese. [From, Pindar, Olympian Odes]/ [Strabo] / [Pausanias].**

(1) Strabo, reading Anticlid of Athena, tells how the Pelasgians first colonized Lemnos and Imbros Islands, and some of them crossed into Italy with **TIRRHENUS, THE SON OF ATYS**, and some Athenian Antiquities' writers relate that a part of the Pelasgians came to Athena, in their peregrinations and they sat where they had a chance, like birds, therefore the Athenians called them Pelasgians, or Storks. [Strabo, Geographic Book 5. 2.5]

 <p>Mysia, Kyzikos, c. 450-400 BC. AR Hemiobol (8mm, 0.33g, 9h). <b>Head of Atys wearing a phrygian/dacian cap.</b> Reverse: Bull's head facing slightly right. Von Fritze II 23; SNG BnF -; SNG von Aulock 7336. Notice the Frigian/ Dacic pileus</p>	 <p>Head of Atys</p>	 <p>Herdsmen N. Grigorescu</p>
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Other sources [Strabo, X. p 471], [Apollonius Rodius iii. 5.1] tell us how **ATYS** was the son of **Cybele**, Mother of the mountains and of the Gods, Goddess of the Earth, Gea, Gaia<sup>2</sup>, Grand Ma, Gherghita, born at Gerghis, on the holy Mountain of IDA in Troas [Xenophon]. She can be identified together with her sons in the statuette from the Late Bronze Age ca. 3000 BC found in Tara (County) Buzău, close to area of prehistoric 'Cucuteni' culture on Moldavia region of Romania; and if we have reached that point – it can be seen how things appears to be connected – the Cucuteni have been a Matriarchal Culture, so finding the statuette of Cybele, 'Grand Ma' in Naieni Comune would not have been out of context, and then the age of Cybele, from 1500 BC as Heraclitus suggested, would be a possible bridge back to ca. 3500 BC<sup>3</sup>, the last traces of the **Cucuteni Culture**. Of course, the transition from the Neolithic deity 'Mother of the Earth' to Cybele and Demeter lasted several millennia and the position and name was preserved.

- (2) *Gaia, Grand MA remained in memory of Romanians in the same spirit described by Heraclitus, instructive, reproachful.*
- (3) *Approximately this date 4000 BC - 3500 BC is indicated by specialists as the beginning of the dispersion of the (I E) speaking population from the north of the Black Sea/Caucasus to other areas such as Western Europe, the Balkan Peninsula, Italy, Anatolia and others. [Article "Yamnaya - Corded Wares – Bell Beakers, or How to Conceptualize Events of 5000 years ago that shaped Modern Europe" 2019, Professor Volker Heyd]*

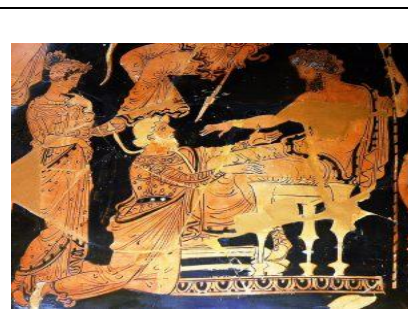
<p><b>Plotina, Traian Emperor's wife.</b> She was renowned for her interest in philosophy, and her virtue, dignity and simplicity. She was particularly devoted to the Epicurean philosophical school in Athens, Greece.</p>  <p>LYDIA, SARDIS. <b>Pompeia Plotina Claudia</b> (Augusta between 105-123). Bronz. Obv: ΠΛΩΤΕΪΝΑ ΣΕΒΑΚΤΗ. Draped bust right. Rev: ΠΑΡΔΙΑΝΩΝ. Riding <b>PELOPS</b>, rising his hand. RPC III 2397; SNG München 518. Condition: Fine. Weight: 3.16 g.</p>	<p><b><u>Pelops become king in Peloponnesus and organized the beginning of Olympics games:</u></b></p> <p>The legend: Myrtilus was the son of the messenger god Hermes and mother either an Amazon named <b>Phaethusa</b> or daughter of Danaus, <b>Clymene</b> (Notice the dualism!). He was the charioteer of King Oenomaus of Pisa. So, during the race, Oenomaus' chariot was destroyed by Mytilus' sabotage and Oenomaus was dragged to death by his horses. <b>Pelops was declared winner, and he received the throne of the city as well as the king's daughter as a bride.</b> Since then, Pelops organized annual games in memory of his father-in-law as well as in honor of the gods; such was the beginnings of the Olympic Games.</p>
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Tantalus 'stupidity', believing that he is cleverer than the gods, cost him dearly and this was the beginning of the course of the tragedies of his followers; the children of **Pelops**, **Niobe**, grandsons **Atreus**, **Chrysipus**, and great-grandsons **Agamemnon** and **Menelaus**, and his children **Orestes**, **Electra** and **Iphigenia**, were all luckless, each with his own tragic story.

It is possible, that this word "Tăntălău", as well as the name "Tândală", from the archaic Romanian folk stories with 'stupid people', named "Păcală si Tândală" existing in the villages of Romania - 'Dacia Antiqua', to have origins from the name of 'Tantalus' of those ancient myths! The same origin seems to have the Latin word "*tont*".

Wilhelm Meyer Luke Swiss Philologist, (1861 – 1936), mentions the word **Tăntălău**.

Below it can be seen the similarity of Pelops' costume and of the statuette from Cyprus with the Dacian costume and that of the today Romanian peasants! Also, it is worth mentioning that both Tantalus (Atys) and Pelops, his son, are shown on the coin of Kyzikos and on the Hellenic Krater bearing Phrygian /Dacian pileus, confirming their Pelasgian origin.



Tantalus, Pelops and Agamemnon



Laius (king of Thebes, father of Oedipus), **Chrysippus**, **Pelops**, with **Phrygian/Dacian hat!** Image from Krater, 320 BC, Getty Museum California.



Cyprus statuette, Man (Man) in **Phrygian costume**, from the Hellenistic period 3rd to 1st century BC. [Wikipedia].

Bas-relief Detail – '**Dacian fighter**' from the Trajanus' Column of Rome and an oil painting by Miklos Barabas, 1844 –entitled '**Romanian Peasants**', where we can see the similarity of the Dacians and Romanian peasants' costume with the ancient Pelops and Phrygian costume.



Guerrier dace (bas-relief, Colonne Trajane, Rome)  
Dacian warrior (bas-relief, Trajan's column, Rome)



Paysans roumains (huile sur toile, Miklos Barabas, 1844)  
Romanian peasants (oil painting by Miklos Barabas, 1844)

[Wikipedia]



### About the shepherd Ballade of Miorita

The word *Mioara* (Sheep), known from the ballad of '*Miorita*', may have been obtained by anagramming the word *Moir*a /*Moire*.

In Greek mythology, the three **Moire** were sisters who determined each person's fate: **Clotho** with the ball of thread, **Lachesis** with the thread of life, and **Atropos**, the one who cannot be turned and who cuts the thread of life. Hesiod [*Theogonia* (215)] referring to '**Moirés**', says:

*"She, the Black Night, she alone and not being loved by any god, also gave birth to Hesperides who, over the fabulous Ocean Current, holds golden apples and orchards full of fruit, and gave birth to destinies, the moirés, the cruel, unforgiving Fate - Klotho, Lachesis and Atropos, who at the birth of mortals allocate their share of good and evil".*

It is worth mentioning that by "Ocean Current" the ancient writers meant the "river Istros", so those '*Moirés*', and '*the Gardens of Hesperides*' is possible to be located north of the Danube, in Dacia.

Observing in the '*Miorita shepard ballad*', the dialogue between shepard (Cioban) and his *Mioara* (the sheep) it is clear, how he talks to his 'fate':

*"Miorita Laie, Laie bucálaie, / For three days now your mouth is no longer silent... Master, master, you shall call thee dogs, / The strongest and the brotherliest, / Because at the sunset they want to kill thee / The Hungarian Baci and the Vrâncean - one!"...*

The connection between 'Sheep' named '*Mioara*', as a personification of fate, and '*Moir*a' (the fate) it is understandable; the shepherds of Dacia, from immemorial times, through their transhumation, traveled to *Pelasgian Thessaly* and the *Mounts of Pindus*, whom Seneca (AD 4-65), the tutor of Emperor Nero, named them the Thracians Mounts! (*Seneca, Hercule Furans* 2)

Pausanias [book 10.5.7] says, hearing from the local Delphians, how a group of Hyperborean shepherds, led by Olen<sup>1</sup>, came with their flocks to the very spot where the oracle would later be founded, and so they began the deification of Apollo<sup>2</sup> the Hyperborean. At Delphi, there were statues of two Moirae and with them, instead of the third, was a statue of Apollon Moiragete.

[From the book "Apollo and his Oracle in the Orestia," by Deborah H. Roberts].

Pausanias reported that **Ge, the Earth Goddess**, was in the beginning worshipped in that place:

*"They say that in the earliest of times the oracular seat belonged to Mother Earth, who appointed as prophetess Daphnis, one of the nymphs of the mountain"*



PELINNA THESSALY AE19 – 306-197BC, 4.51g. Obv: Veiled head of **MANTHO** right. Rev: Horseman right. Rogers 433. Being a prophetess of APOLLO, **she is also called DAPHNE**, i. e. **the laurel virgin**

**MANTHO** (Mavrri) A daughter of the Theban soothsayer Teiresias. She herself was a prophetess, first of the Ismenian Apollo at Thebes, where monuments of her existed [*Paus. ix. 10. § 3*], and subsequently of the Delphian and Clarian Apollo. In Roman myth, **MANTO** went to Italy and gave birth to Ocnus (father: **Tiberinus, the genius of the river Tiber**). Ocnus founded the town of **MANTUA** named it after his mother. The legend: **While in Thebes, Manto warned Niobe not to anger the gods and advised her to ask Leto for forgiveness but Niobe<sup>3</sup> refused and continued to insult Leto, leading to the death of her 12 children**

- (1) The name Olen remained the name Olah, name given to Valach shepard population in Pind Mountains.
- (2) Delphi had a prehistory as an oracular site long before Apollo. (--). The *omphalos* of Delphi was also documented from the pre-Hellenic period. Symbol of the navel, it was laden with genital meaning, but it was above all a 'center of the world' [...]. This venerable oracular site, where from ancient times the sacrality and the powers of **Mother Earth** were manifested, received a new religious orientation under the reign of Apollo [*Eliade 1978*].
- (3) Niobe was a daughter of Tantalus and sister of Pelops



Niobe, Yamanlar Dagı, Ismir

#### Niobe's Legend

Niobe was the wife of Amphion, king of Thebes, the daughter of Tantalus king of Sipylus, Lydia. Having 6 boys and 6 daughters, she offends the titan Leto by talking about her fertility, who had only two children, Apollo and Artemis [*Homer, Iliad*]. As a punishment for her pride, Apollo kills all her boys and Artemis all Niobe's daughters. Niobe, weeping for her children, returns to Phrygia where she has been turned into a rock on Mount Sipylus, When it rains, She continues to cry even to this day.

The most famous oracles of the ancient world were those of **Delphi** and **Dodona**, both founded by **Pelasgians** [*Pliny, IV.41*], and the geographer **Mnaseas of Patrae** (3rd century BC), pupil of **Eratosthenes**, tells us how - **the inhabitants of Delphi were native of Hyperborea** [*Hist. Greek. III. p.153, frag. 24*].

Speaking of the Oracle of Delphi, we recall here the beautiful words left to humanity on the frontispiece of the Apollo's temple by the seven pre-Socratic philosophers of the ancient world: - "**Know thyself**" and "**Nothing in excess**", which the Romanian King **Michael the I-st**, always reminded Us. Among those philosophers, some historians consider to be the **Thracian philosopher Anakarsis<sup>4</sup>**, the son of Gnurus [*Herodotus, iv. 76*], contemporary of **Solon**, whom he visited in Athens of about 589 BC, [*Socrates, ap Diogenes Laertius, i. 101*] at a time when Solon was occupied with his legislative measures.



As a life lesson, Anacharsis did not understand why in Greece the Olympic awards were handed out by politicians, instead of laureates of previous Olympic Games.

(4) He arrived at the house of Solon and said, "I have traveled here from afar to make you my friend." Solon replied, "It's better to make friends at home." Thereupon the Scythian replied, "Then it is necessary for you, being at home, to make me your friend" Solon laughed and accepted him as his friend. [Hermippus, ap Diogenes Laertius, i. 101-2]

Below: basso-relief of Moiré, view of the sanctuary of Delphi [Wikipedia], and a coin with the head of Antioch the 2-nd, Theos of Seleucid Empire (261 – 246 BC), on the reverse **Apollo** standing on **the <Omphalos>** - "the belly button of the world" <sup>5</sup> in Delphi. ("Earth's navel", in detail below!)





(5) There is a popular saying in Romania today; -" You believe that, you are- the belly button of the world" - addressing to someone who believe about himself, as an important persona!



### The Handsome (Făt frumos) Fairy Tales. "You could look at the sun, but couldn't look at him."

**Phaeton** was known in Hellenic mythology as a "lively and beautiful" young man, son of the **Sun God (Phoebus)** and **Oceanid Clymene**, daughter of **Titania Thetis**. From other sources, **Phaeton** would have been the son of **Cephalus and Aurora** (the East) - **Eos** [Hesiod], [Pausanias], or **Tithonus-prince Trojan, son of Laomedon** (father of Priam) and **Aurora, according to Apollodorus**. [Classical Dictionary, by J. Lemprière, D.D., London, 1818]. Interesting the duality! **The Aurora, the Titaniad**, would have given to people the light!

According to **Homer**, [Odyssey, 8 the century B.C], **Phaëthon** had two sisters; **<Phaethusa>, the personification of brilliance, and "Lampetia" (lamp)<sup>1</sup>, the personification of light – called Heliades**, daughters of the sun who shepherded seven herds of oxen and seven flocks of sheep of Sun God, in Thrinacia-according to some, the Sicily. Interesting for us, it is the myth version of the "beautiful Phaeton" which is related to a Trojan dynasty.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HOMER</b></p>  <p>Coin of Smyrna, Ionia, 2nd century BC, Bronze <b>Homerum</b>, Ref. SNG Cop 1127ff. variant, on the obverse the crowned head of Apollo, and on the reverse <b>HOMER</b> with the right hand resting the chin.</p>	<p>Fresco by Pellegrino Tibaldi 1554/56, with <b>Odysseus' men stealing cattle herds of the Sun God.</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MEDUZA / AURORA</b></p>  <p>Republican denarius, Rome 47 BC, with <b>Medusa</b> on the obverse and on the reverse <b>Aurora (Eos)</b> herding the <b>horses of the Sun.</b></p>
	<p><b>Eos and Tithonus</b> with a Lyre, on an Attic vessel, Oinochoe (wine cup), ca. 470 - 460 BC, Louvre. [Wikipedia].</p>	

The myth of **Phaethon** is universal and it appears in a various version in many classical writers such as **Hesiod (8th century BC)**, **Aeschylus (5th century BC)**, **Pindar (5th century BC)**, **Apollonius Rodius (3rd century BC)**, **Ovid**, **Virgil (1st century BC)**, **Hyginus (64 BC-AD 17)**, **Philostratus the Elder (5th century AD)**.

Romanians from the villages today still say - I have a "**făt si o fethutză**" - meaning "**a boy and a girl**", words that resemble in form and have the same meaning as "**Phaeton and Phaethusa**", sons of the **Sun God in the Helladic' myth**. I do not know if, these words appear today in other languages, and if they are used with the same meaning somewhere else, but it is obvious that from the mists of time, the Romanian villagers have called their sons.

If so, it could have a connection with myth, explained by its age, originally being probably just a **shepherd legend** spread out by word of mouth and, like most archaic myths, put it into writing later and developed in different versions by the ancient Helladic authors. Thus, it became a universal myth. If so, here in **Dacia/Thrace**, it could have been the origin of this myth, in simple form, and it would be an indication of the **antiquity of Romanians and their language**.



(1) The word 'lamp' from the vocabulary of Romanian peasants is found in many European languages, so it appears to be a primordial substrate Indo-European word. 'Lampetia' associated with 'Phaeton and Phaethusa', in the Hellenic' myth, indicate to be archaic Romanian language's words and cannot be mentioned as coming from Russian or German languages, as it is erroneously indicated in the explanatory dictionaries.

The three words '**phaeton**', '**phaethusa**', '**lamp(etia)**' are the primordial words of life, which are found in Hesiod's Indo-European myth, in record from 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. These words are widely used even today, only in the language of Romanian villages, in the same form and semantically, thus indicating much older roots than the Hellenic myth; therefore, it is possible that the origin of this myth was from the prehistoric people of Dacic/ Getic space and, it is obvious that the perpetuation




of these mythical elements and words would have been possible only with a continuity of a large part of the native population, that survived in the Romanian villages, from immemorial time.

Today, it is known among specialists in this field, that everything we define today as mythology derives, more or less, from the ritual-cultural life of prehistoric peasants. In the analysis of "Phaeton myth" below, written by Philostratus the Elder, we find elements that reinforce these conclusions; i.e., *'at the gates of heaven' / 'Mother Gaea' / 'River Istros' / 'Horele' / 'Oceanus Pothomacos'* (identified as river Istros), all related with Dacians' mythology.

The following are some examples where the alternation between the bison heads and the solar disks symbolizes the connection of the place with the herds of the Sun God.

 <p>Fresco inside the Thracian tomb of <b>Seuthe III (323-316 BC)</b> Kazanlak. Note <b>the alternation of heads and solar disk</b> [Wikipedia]</p>	 <p>Coin of Seute iii [Wikipedia]</p>	 <p>Bas-relief from <b>Istria, Temple of Aphrodite, History Museum, Bucharest</b>, where you can see the <u>alternation of bison heads and solar disk</u>.</p>
 <p>Reconstruction of the <b>Arsinoe temple</b> and bas-relief of <b>Samothrace</b> with <b>bison head and solar disk</b>, Louvre Museum, Paris.</p>	 <p>Silver coin – hemibol ca. 380 BC, from <b>Kyme (supposedly Hesiod's birthplace!)</b>, with a horse on the obverse and the solar disk on the reverse.</p>	 <p>Coin of Mysia, Sec 4 BC. Apollo's head on the obverse, identified with the <b>Sun god</b>, and on the reverse, a <b>rosette, the symbol of the sun</b>.</p>

In surviving passages from **Aeschylus'** lost play called, **'The Heliades'**, the daughters of **Helios** appear in the myth of **Phaethon**. **Aeschylus** seems to have been inspired by **Hesiod**, and if he speaks of seven daughters of **Helios**, **Aeschylus** recognizes only three—**Lampetia**, **Aegle** and **Phaethusa**—as daughters of the Sun God and **Rhoda**, or **Rhodes**. Perhaps, this is why the Rhodians built one of the **"seven wonders of the ancient world"** named **Colossus of Rhodes**, circa 280 BC, a huge statue representing the **Sun God**. This monument was made to celebrate the victory of the **Rhodians** against the naval attack of **Dimitrie Poliorketes**. Almost all ancient Rhodes coins have a rose flower on the reverse, which is the symbol of the solar disk.

 <p>Phaeton driving the solar carriage on a red ceramic cup in the British Museum.</p>	 <p>Silver drachma from <b>Rhodes Island, Caria</b>, ca. 88 BC-14 AD, with the <b>Sun God with rays</b>, often identified with <b>Apollo</b>, on the <b>obverse</b>, and on the reverse a rose flower, the symbol of the sun.</p>	 <p>Coin 306-287 BC. from Cyprus. On the obverse is the Head of <b>Demetrios I Poliorketes</b>, son of <b>Antigonos</b>, and on the reverse is a Bow of a Ship.</p>
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### Philostratus the Elder on the myth of Phaeton

It is noteworthy the interpretation of this myth written by the Greek author Philostratus the Elder, from the 3rd century AD, which, apparently, describes an ancient fresco from Naples. [*"Images"*, Chap. 1. 11]. Below it is a translation adapted to Romanian language, after a translation from Greek language, by Fairbanks:

*"Golden are the tears of the **Heliades**, daughters of **Helios**, at the death of their brother **Phaeton**!*

*Desire and pride drove him to climb into his father's golden carriage to light up the earth himself, just for one day. But because he was not good at reining in horses, he collapsed into the distant waters of Eridanus. Scholars interpret the image as an overcrowding of natural elements of fire, but for poets and artists it appears only the image of a horse-drawn chariot – at its fall from the swirling heavens. **For, loook! The night drives away the light from the south and the disk of the Sun throws himself towards the Earth, dragging the stars after him. The Horas (the seasons) leave their places at the gates of heaven<sup>2</sup>**, soaring in darkness towards each other, while the horses race madly, throwing away their reins.*

*In desperation, **Gaea**<sup>3</sup> raises her hands to heaven amid the fire that envelops her. Here is now the young man falling from the chariot with his hair on fire and his chest burning, ending his flight in the waters of Eridanus. **The white swans** on the water's edge mourn the young man and fly his story to the river Kaistos (n.b. Cayster, near Ephesus) and to **Istros**. Zephyr accompanies their singing like musical instruments. This story will thus be heard all over the world. As for **the women on the river's edge, the Heliades**, the unfortunate daughters of **Helios**, hearing of their brother's death, will turn into trees weeping eternally on the waterfront for his fate. They will become **poplars**<sup>4</sup> (**weeping willows!**) with its branches immersed in the water of the river, which also*



lattice on its way from the springs, offering its bed to receive **Phaeton**. The river gathers the tears of the Heliades, which frost and heat will transform them into drops of golden amber... **And so, they will be carried through the glittering waters by Okeanos<sup>5</sup> to the barbarians."**

(2) The syntax "The gates of the sky" is very common in Romanian folklore.

(3) Gaea is often invoked in the Romanian villages as admonitory, rebuker, in the spirit of Heraclitus.

(4) Poplars, is not a correct translation. These are the "weeping willows" on the banks of the rivers

(5) Okeanos Potomakos is identified in many ancient writings with the river Istros (Danube) flowing into Pontus Euxine.

Interesting, in the Philostratus' text, are details such as the theme of swans, which also appears in another ancient myth, were it is said that Apollo annually returned to Hyperborea on the back of a swan! So, says Sudas, in his 10 th century Encyclopedia, referring to the books of **Abaris the Hyperborean**, son of **Seuthes**, who is said to have been a contemporary of **Pythagoras of Samos** (570-495 BC). Another reference to **Apollo the Hyperborean** is by **Himerius**, Greek sophist, AD 315, citing the **Alcaeus** from **Mytilene** ca. 625- 580 BC.

Another detail drawing attention from Philostratus' text is the mention of the **river Ister** (n.b. Danube), which **Sophocles**, the Greek tragedian calls it, in one of his trilogies, 'holý' and also the mention of the **Hores (the seasons)**, ... and how the story of **Phaeton** reaches **the barbarians on the river Ocean!**

The course of the seasons was also symbolically described as the dance of the Horae, and they were accordingly given the attributes of spring flowers, fragrance and graceful freshness. In Hesiod's Works and Days (lines 74-75), the fair-haired Horai, together with the Charites and Peitho crown Pandora—she of "all gifts"—with garlands of flowers.

The dance of the 'Horai', which symbolizes 'the succession of seasons' is still performed today, **only in Romania, by the Sânzienele, Euphrosinele, Aglaiele and the Graceful Girls, and is called, 'HORA'.**



Neo Attic Baso-relief, **Dionysus and Horele**, 1st century. **To be observed initially three seasons mentioned by Homer, standing at the gates of heaven.** (in the Mediterranean it was not Winter).



Edward Poynter's painting, 1894 **with six Horae, later being added the three graces with different names: Euphrosyne (Beauty), Aglaea (Joy) and Thalia (Charm).**



The imperial Roman coin of **MOESIA INFERIOR**, Marcianopolis, bearing on the obverse **JULIA DOMNA**, wife of Emperor Septimius Severus AD 193-217, and on the reverse the three graces.

It is noteworthy how the sun chariot also appears in the myth of Euripides' Medea, 431 BC and in one of the shepherd legends collected in the Cindrel and Surian mountains of Romania, in connection with Nedeia, annual shepherd's festival. [Source: Anca Florinela Vasilescu, coordinator of the Mountain Culture Festival program, Sibiu County, Porumbacu de Sus, Cindrel.] Mount Surian means “mountain of the Sun”, in the Sanscrit language “Suria” means sun. [“The Cambridge History of India”, Vol 1, 1922, Chapter 3, Page 76]

		
<p>Sânziene in Romania dancing <b>Hora</b>, at a Dacic festival, 2017. [Wikipedia]</p>	<p><b>Hora</b> of the Sinins in Mara Mures. [Wikipedia]</p>	<p>Baso relief, "<b>The Borghese Dancers</b>" representing the seasons' and the three Graces' <b>Horae</b> [Villa Borghese, Roma, Italy]</p>

### The archaic origin of the Martisor's cult of Romanians

The cult of "**Martisor**" has an archaic pagan **Daco/Thracian** origin, which is celebrated nowadays at the beginning of March, **mainly in Romania including Moldova across the Prut as part of Romania** and in some villages south of the Danube, in the former Roman provinces, the two **Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia** where there are still minority populations of **Dacian / Thracian** origin called today **Vlachs, Aromanians or Rumari**. Following today the Martisor's cult places of spreading, it can be seen the areas where there are descendant minority of this ancient people.

But let's go down the history line and try to understand the origin of this cult:


The last six books of the **Aeneid** deal with the history of **Central Italy, Latium**, with its primitive religion, religious ceremonies, temples and rituals. Religion, it is understood at that time, had an archaic, purely local, Italic character, with main deities such as **Saturn, Janus, Jupiter and March**, the god of war. Other deities are mentioned as **Silvanus, Ceres, Picunum (God of agriculture) husband of Pomona, goddess of fruit trees, Pilums who invented Pilum, for grinding cereals**. Annual festivals were held such as **Saturnalia, Lupercalia, Salii** and others.

Words, or derivative words, from names of deities in the archaic religion in Latium, are found today in the language of Romanians: **pomana** (charity), **pomi** (trees), **poame** (dried fruits), **pic**, **piuá**, (for grinding in the kitchen, or millstones). **The connection does not seem to be direct, the words were not brought here by anyone, but it seems that they existed in those archaic times, there and here in Getia!**


The Order of the **Virgin Vestals** was instituted by the second king of Rome, **Numa Pompilius**, and had the role of organizing and directing official religious processions during festivals, which were followed by a public feast. Animals were often sacrificed using, instead of a sword or a dagger - a stone (lapis flint)-symbol of **Jupiter**, (according to Servius, [viii, 64], and in some processions blood from the sacrifice of



animals was spread with the blade of a knife on the foreheads of children, primitive customs that seem to have origins in Neolithic era.

 <p><b>A. Postmus's</b> A. f. Sp. n. <b>Albinus</b> Denar AR. 81 BC), bust of <b>DIANA</b>, bow and sheath of arrows on the shoulder, ox's head above, Reverse: A POSTUMIUS A F SP N ALBINUS, wearing a toga, standing on rocks and sprinkling the ox to be sacrificed. Conform: Crawford 372/1. Condition: very fine. 3.90g. Diameter: 20 mm</p>	<p><b>Numismatic Note:</b></p> <p>Aulus Postmus Albinus was a Roman statesman, serving as consul under Marcus Antony, the father of Mark Antony. While <b>Albinus</b> was, relatively, unknown in history <b>he was adoptive father of Brutus, one of Caesar's assassins in 44 BC.</b> Brutus' full name was 'Decimus Junius Brutus Albinus'. The <b>name of Albinus is from the banker's family of this coin.</b> The origins of the Albinus family go back to the century, when the original name was Albus.</p> <p><b><u>This coin confirms, as well as classical authors, how the animal' sacrifice, in archaic Rome was part of Apollo and Diana's cult!</u></b></p>
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During religious ceremonies, the Virgin Vestals used some ornaments called "infula", in which wreaths and scarves (fulare?) made of "strings of white and red wool, lightly braided" were attached with a white bow to the heads of sacrificed animals, offered to the gods. "Infula" ornaments were used especially in Apollo and Diana cult's ceremonies and was also worn by Priests (Fetial Priests) and Vestal Virgins. [William Smith, Dictionary]. Diana, goddess of hunting, was originally an Italic goddess, later equated with Artemis.

<p><b><u>CARACALLA/ Bull's head with infula fillets</u></b></p> 	<p>AR Denarius. AD 198. (17 mm, 3.3 g) RIC 6; RSC 53. a EF</p> <p>M AVR ANTON CAES PONTIF, Emperor draped bust right. Rev: DESTINATO IMPERAT, priestly sacrificial implements: lituus, apex, and simpulum.</p> <p><b><u>Bucranium with sacrificial filets, infula on the horns</u></b> [Wikipedia]</p>
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The "infula" ornaments of "white and red woolen cords lightly braided" seems to be the precursor of the 'Mărtisor', an archaic, pagan tradition, existing nowadays only among Romanians, when on March 1<sup>st</sup> various objects, symbolic miniatures, decorated with "white and red strings, slightly twisted", are offered to women, especially to virgins. March, is the same spring month when many religious holidays took place in archaic Rome, including New Year's Day. An interesting remark, the word "infula, fular" exists today only in Romanian vocabulary.



It is possible that those traditions had local roots in Dacia/Thrace/ Macedonia, because animals sacrificing processions using ornaments 'Infula' existed only in those areas from 6 Century BC, as it can be seen below on coins and basoreliefs.

The ancient coins from Phocis inhabited in antiquity by Thracians and from Tracian Chersonese (founded by Pelasgians) had also as symbol, a bull's head with 'sacrificial fillets' hanging from the horns.

Let's not forget how Thucydides said in his book 'The Peloponnesian War', referring to the myth of Philomela and Procne, that Tereus of the legend was not the historical king of Thrace - Tereus I, the founder of the Odrise dynasty in Thrace, but a mythical king in Daulia, in Phokis, a city inhabited by Thracians.




So, this would be the proof that "infula" ornaments used in animals' sacrifice, as described in the Aeneid, were practiced in ancient times in Dacia, Thrace and historical Macedonia and other regions inhabited by Thracians and associated with the cult of Apollo / Diana, Dionysus, Hermes since 6 century BC; and this may be the reason that the "*Martisor's cult*" appears today only in Romania and other places with Romanian's minority population.

 <p><b>PHOKIS inhabited by Thracians</b>, Bronze coin, ca. 357-346 BC. AE 13mm (2.23g). Lokris-Phokis. Obverse: <b>bull's head, "sacrificial fillet" hanging by the horns.</b> Reverse: <math>\phi\Omega</math>, legend in the laurel wreath. Lokris-Phokis 472.3. VF.</p>	 <p><b>THRACE, Chersonnesos.</b> 3rd century B.C. Plumb tessera (16 mm, 3.68 g). <b>Bison head with "sacrificial fillet" on horns</b> / Reverse head of <b>HERMES</b> to the right, wearing petasos. Rare.</p>	 <p>Ancient Greek <b>PHOKIS Elateia</b>, 3rd-2nd centuries BC AE 18 <b>Facing head of bull, wearing sacrificial fillet</b>; <math>\epsilon\lambda</math> above / Laureate head of <b>APOLLO</b> right 4.46 g, 17-18 mm, bronze References: BCD Lokris-Phokis 425; HGC 4, 1143</p>
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<p>[Wikipedia]</p>  	<p>AMNG 7. <b>Ancient Coinage of Thraco-Macedonian Tribes, Derrones. a Peonian Ttibe from the area near Shtip.</b></p> <p>AR Dodekadrachm cca 500- 480 BC DERONIK(ON). <b>Bulls yoked and perhaps red and white twested fillets around neck, standing left/</b> quadripartite incuse square. Rosen 119. (Used by permission of CNG, <a href="http://www.cngcoins.com">www.cngcoins.com</a>). From the William and Louise Fielder Collection. (Copyright © CNG) [Wikipedia]</p>
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Below are baso-reliefs from temples or tombstone of Dacia and Thrace where the ornaments "infula" are evident in the cult of Dionysus (Bassara) and "sacrificial fillets" on the horns of bisons.




 <p>Detail on the tomb in <b>Kazanlak/ Thracia (ca. 300 BC)</b>. You can see the 'infula' on the head of the Bisons. [Wikipedia]</p>	  <p>Romanian 'Mărtisor' 😊</p>
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 <p>Bas-relief from <b>ISTRIA, DACIA, TEMPLE OF AFRODITE (6 th. Century BC)</b>. <a href="#">History Museum, Bucharest</a>, where you can see the alternation of ox's heads with the solar disk. <b>It is possible that the cords that hangs from the horns of sacrificial bison are made of red and white wool braided. (infula)</b></p>	 <p>Neo Attic Bas-relief, <b>DYONISUS and HORELE (1st century)</b>. To be observed initially, three seasons mentioned by Homer, standing at the gates of heaven. (in the Mediterranean it was not Winter). <b>The objects in the procession appear to be braided cords, possibly of white and red wool. (infula)</b></p>	 <p>Bas relief of <b>ARSINOE temple from SAMOTHRACE</b> built ca. 288 BC-270 BC, <a href="#">Samothrace Museum</a>. <b>Cords of white and red wool, twisted (Infula) hanging from ox horns.</b> [Wikipedia]</p>
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**In Thrace, Dacia and at the ancient festivals of Samothrace, the animals' sacrifice have been practiced using 'infula' garlands**

The sanctuaries of SAMOTHRACE, where festivals of 'Mystery Religion' were celebrated, are very old. The historian Herodotus was 'initiated' there and he is one of very few authors to have left behind a few clues to the nature of mysteries. Later, during Hellenistic period it was a Macedonian sanctuary for the successors of Alexander the Great. Arsinoe the 2-nd built there a circular temple, for the meetings of the priests with the envoys of kings during the great festivals of the island.

The decoration of Arsinoe Rotunda with rosettes and garlanded bull's heads may be an indication that animals sacrifice may have taken place there. **Arsinoe the 2-nd was the daughter of Pharaoh Ptolemy the 1-st, Soter and wife of Lysimachus who ruled over Thrace.** She later on married her own brother Ptolemy the 2-nd and became Queen of Egypt.

<p><b><u>PTOLEMY the 1-st SOTER</u></b></p>  <p>Born 367 BC, ruler of Egypt 323-283 BC. Bronze (23 mm; 9.32 gm). Obv: Young beardless head of Alexander the Great wearing elephant skin headdress right. Rev: ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ; Eagle with wings spread standing left on thunderbolt. Sear SG 7765</p>	<p><b><u>PTOLEMY the 2-nd PHILADELPHOS</u></b></p>  <p>Coin AE24. 285-246 BC. Alexandria mint Egypt. Struck circa 260 BC. Deified head of Alexander the Great right, wearing elephant skin headdress / Eagle standing left on thunderbolt; E between legs. Soranos 450; SNG. Copenhagen. 12,50 grs. Nice tone. Ptolemy II was the son of Ptolemy I Soter, the founder of the Ptolemaic kingdom, and Berenice</p>	<p><b><u>Alexandria' Library and Faros</u></b></p>  <p>During the Ptolemy I is believed to start the construction of light house and library of of Alexandria and finished during the Ptolemy ii rain.</p>
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The Winged Victory (Nike) of Samothrace, a masterpiece of Greek sculpture dating from ca. 190 BC was discovered on the island, today in the Louvre Museum. The monument dedication is not clear, and it is thought that the statue was a gift from Rhodos to celebrate a naval victory.

EURYDICE	ARSINOE the 2nd	LYSIMACHOS
 <p>Rare portrait, daughter of <b>LYIMACHUS</b>, Bronze AE 17, SNG A 2159; SNG Cop 1105; BMC Ionia, p. 56, 75 (Ephesus as Eurydicea), VF, Smyrna mint. <b>Smyrna was briefly renamed Eurydicea</b> at the same time that Ephesus was renamed after Arsinöe II, c. 288 - 281 BC</p>	 <p>IONIA – <b>EPHESOS AS ARSIONEIA</b>. Æ 16, 290 - 281 BC. (3.66 g, 16 mm). <b>Head of ARSINOE II</b> right (Queen of Egypt and Thrace) / Reverse: stag kneeling left, <b>astalagos</b><sup>1</sup> behind, ARSI. SNG Cop. 258 f. <b>When Lysimachos gained Ephesus, he renamed the city "Arsinoeia," honoring his wife, Arsinoe II</b></p>	 <p>King of Thrace: Lysimachos. 301-297 BC. Obverse: <b>Young male head right wearing Phrygian helmet</b>. Reverse: BASILEWS LYSIMAXOY</p>  <p>Thracian Kingdom. LYSIMACHOS. 305-281 BC. AR Drachm. Kolophon mint</p>

(1) An astragal was a gaming piece, made from the knuckle-bone of a sheep or goat, used in antiquity for divinization and games in a manner similar to dice. As children, my mother used to tell us that her brother and friends, from the village Cunesti of Romania, played with astragalos, made from goat legs, called 'gioale'.\_ 😊

 <p>[Wikipedia] Saturnalia: Festival between 17 and 23 Decembre Festival of Joy and Merriment in Ancient Rome. Table game</p>	 <p>[Wikipedia] Players with Knucklebone (astragalus), Greek origin, ancient culture; Period approx. 340 330 BC. Place of origin Southern Italy, terracotta material</p>
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**Following the places where the Martisor's cult exists today outside of Romania, it can be seen where there are Romanian minorities, descendants of ancient Dacian / Thracian people.**

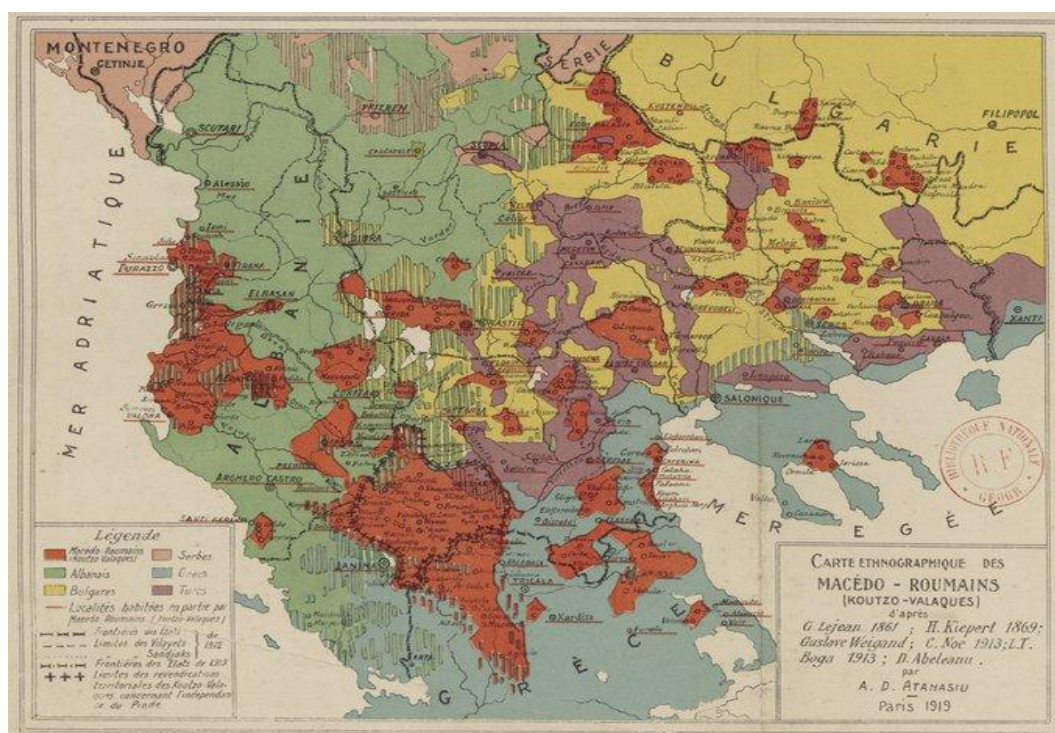
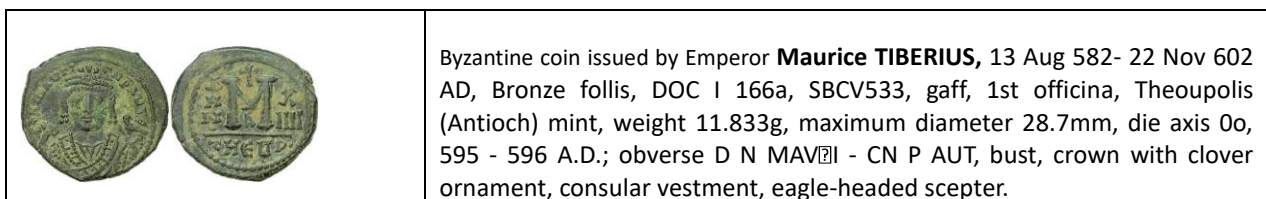
It has also been heard how the tradition of the 'Martisor' also appears in some villages south of the Danube where there is still a population of Romanians, and it is understood why, because **the tradition comes from the Dacians / Thracians** who remained there and who were assimilated by **the Slavs and Tatars** who came to **Moesia Inferior** around **AD 600**, during the reign of the Byzantine Emperor **Maurice**



**Tiberius.** In the Balkan campaigns of Emperor Maurice, the city of Tomis was besieged by the Avars in the winter of AD 597/598.

In connection with Maurice Tiberius, a curious story had taken place, related by a Byzantine chronicler, during a campaign of the emperor south of the Danube, against the intrusion of some Slavic and Avars tribes. A false alarm given "*torna, torna fratre*" was misunderstood - "*by all the Byzantine soldiers who spoke the language of their ancestors*" - says the chronicler of that time - and then upset the entire Byzantine army, thus losing traces of enemy leaders in the Danube Delta. The event was later recounted by another Byzantine chronicler, Theophan the Confessor (AD 752 – 817) in his work 'Cronographia', being considered an important event.

Nicolae Iorga, a known Rumanian historian, writes about this incident, and he believed that this would have been the first attestation of the Romanian language. The event is considered questionable by some historians - but one thing is very clear and important - as long as the chronicler of that time said - "*they spoke the language of their ancestors*". In addition, this information shows how the Byzantine army had in its composition, at that time, a large local contingent of Thracians / Dacians.



Ethnographic Map of the Macedo-Romans, Paris 1919, with information from 1869, 1913

<https://cersipamantromanesc.wordpress.com/tag/aromanii-din-balcani-istorie/>

Below are films about Romanian (Vlahi) from the Balkan peninsula:

<https://youtu.be/xaATecdsqGk?si=z5Y02BBv8HuWGAwZ>

<http://arhiva.formula-as.ro/2011/992/societate-37/krk-insula-ciobanilor-vlahi-14371>

### **Possible origins of the word "Sat" (village), archaic "Satala"**

The word **Sat**, **Sate** meaning (village, villages) is mentioned in the Romanian dictionary, with Latin origin, from "fossata"! Nowadays there is a place named **Satala**, meaning 'vici' in Latin, (modern Sadak) in Asia Minor, in ancient Armenia, surrounded by mountains, near the Euphrates River. There, in antiquity were quartered, since before AD 80 from the time of emperor **Vespasian**, the Roman legions XVI, 'Flavia Firma' and XV, 'Apollinaris'. Emperor **Trajan**, after submitting **Dacia**, fortified the place in AD 115, turning it into a **castrum**.

**The word *Satala* (Sat-ala, meaning in Romanian language- "that village") is first identified in Homer's Iliad as "a place where armies gathered".**

 <p><b>Satala</b>, vici in Armenia, nowadays in Turkey, <b>the base of the Roman legions</b>. In ruins; towers and legs of the aqueduct.</p>	 <p>Denarius coin of <b>Vespasian</b> 69-79 BC, minted in Rome, rev: Goddess of harvests, Anona.</p>	 <p>Coin with Trajan's head 117 BC, Rome. Rev: <u>The personification of <b>Danube River</b> with its hand in the neck of beautiful <b>Dacia</b>, forcing her to the ground, a subtle reference of Trajan's victory against the Dacians.</u></p>
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According to Varro, the name of the god **SATURN** is derived from "status" which means "to sow." [Varro, "De lingua latina" 5.64]. Dominique Briquel, in his French work ["Jupiter, Saturn e la Capitol, Essays.", p 144"], [Saturn and the Capitol, Essays", p 144], tells how, even if this etymology does not seem plausible for the linguistic groups it, never the less, reflects the original characteristic of the patron God of rural settlements of agriculture. **Saturn's** name appears in the **ancient "Saliare Hymns" of Romans**.

**Saturnalia** was an archaic celebration that took place in Latium's localities every year from December 17 to 23, even before the formation of Rome. A more probable etymology is the connection of the name **Saturn** with the Etruscan god 'Satre', a small ancient town in Latium, called 'Satria'.



A tribe named 'Satre' is also mentioned by Herodotus [Book 7, Chapter III], who says that they were all Thracians, free men, who lived in the mountains and had on their summit an oracle of "Dionysus/Baccus (Roman)", similar to that of Delphi. A priestess, named Bessi, performed the rituals. In Lydia, it is known, another name of Dionysus was, "Basara".

In the studies of linguists from the "Royal Society of Literature", Cambridge, England in the nineteenth century, there is identified a geographical route of tribes and localities named <Bessa>, from India to the British Isles, the middle of the route being in Thrace. Similarities, between Vedic poems, Hellenic myths and Arthurian legends traditions and customs, are recorded on these routes from India in the Mediterranean, Thrace, Italy, to Britain.

These localities are always associated with mountainous areas: Stefanus of Byzant mentions *Bessygicae*, a race of people in India, Ptolemy speaks of a population *Bessadae*, after the river Ganges; *Bassara* was a city in Assyria, Strabo speaks of *Besa* in Egypt, a city *Besbicus*, in Propontis; Herodotus/Strabo/Pliny describe tribes *Bessi* in Thrace, a city *Bessa* in Phocis, in Peloponnese, and Locri, cities that participated in the Trojan War, along with the Greeks, mentioned by Strabo and Sefanus of Byzantium; *Bessa* a town in Thessaly, *Besidiae* in Calabria, the Brutii (Livi, book 30); *Bescia* (*Brescia*), not far from Latium, *Besano*, *Bessippo* in Spain and *Besse* in French Brittany. The study also shows a geographical route of the Dionysian/Baccusian cult, *Bessi* being the name of the Satrian priest of Bacchus, always associated with *goats and satyrs*, the goat being a holy animal for Bacchus, as shown as a symbol on the following coins.

**Thracian towns' coins with deities, Apollo, Hermes, Dionysus / Bachus (Basara) and sacred symbols: cups, grapes, satyrs, nymphs, goats, rams and bisons (oxen).**

 <p>Coin of Ag. of <b>THASOS, THRACE</b>, Stater 510-480 BC, <u>bearded satire</u> with a nymph protesting.</p>	 <p>Silver Coin. <b>THASOS, THRACE</b>, (Circa 412-404 BC), <u>Satir kneeling, cup in hand</u>, Rev: Rev: ΘΑΣΙΩΝ, Amphora</p>	 <p>Coin of Ag. From AINOS (<b>Poltybria</b>), <b>TRACIA</b> diobol, <u>Hermes</u>, Rev: <u>GOAT</u>.</p>
 <p>Bronze Coin <b>Aioli, AIGAI</b> Sec 3 BC. Head with diadem of <b>Apollo</b>. Rev: <u>GOAT, very rarely.</u></p>	 <p><b>TROAS</b>, Neandria, Sec 4 BC. AR Obol (8mm, 0.54g.). Head of Apollo / Rev: Aries</p>	 <p><b>TROAS</b>. Lamponeia. Bronze, Sec 4 BC. Obv: Head of <b>Dionysus</b>: ox's head; <u>grape above</u></p>

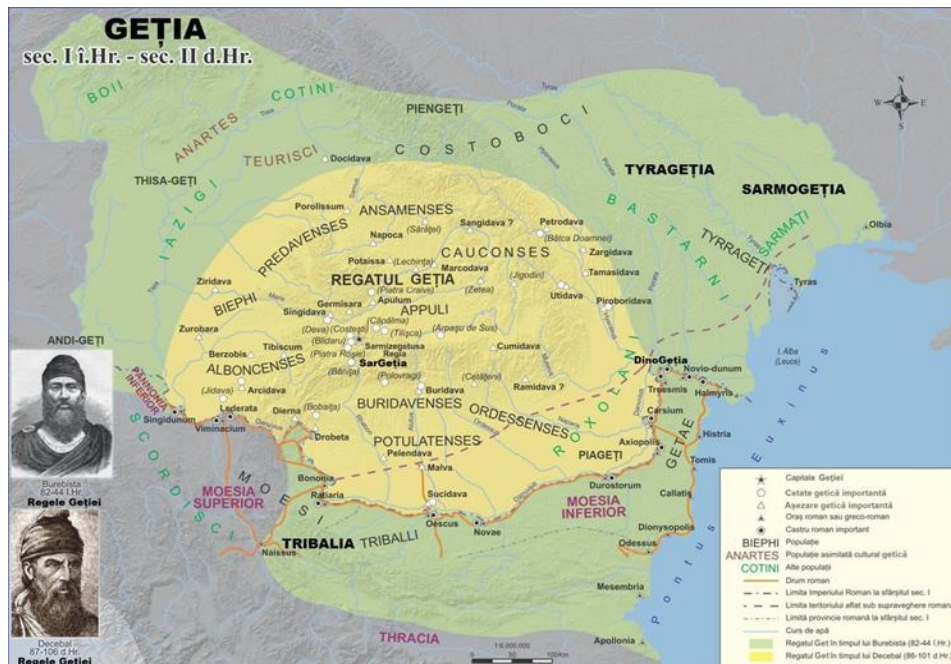
This cult was practiced from **India** to the whole **Mediterranean**, as indicated by Strabo, and as far west as **French Brittany**. The culture of the **Bessi** tribes was continued in the **British Isles** by the **Celtic** tribes.

But the **Bessi** migration line is also identical to the **Satre** route. The names are less clear, but we find **Satriads** from **Ariana** in **India** to **Persia**, **Arabia Felix** and **Phrygia**; **Satrae** is found in **Crete**, **Satracus**, a settlement and river in **Cyprus**; **Satrocentae**, a Thracian tribe near **Satre** in **Thrace**; **Satria**, **Satricum** in **Italy**, **Satala**, **Satula**, nearby or communes with **Samnites** in **Italy**; **Saturna**, **Saturatia** in **Calabria**; **Asturias** in **Spain**, by anagramming would be **Saturia**.


The conclusion of the study would be that- **Satrae** - was clearly not the name of the tribes or people, but the places associated with the Thracian tribes- **Bessi** - who deified **Dionysus/Baccus (Basara)**.

[From, "Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature, The United Kingdom, Vol XIX, 1897. Research and examination of people, languages, customs, and others, mentioned by Herodotus, Strabo, etc. in India, Thrace, Italy, and Western Europe", by Dr. Phené, F.S.A.].

Certainly, at that time, in the nineteenth century, the authors of this study were not aware of the fact that "Getia/ Dacia / Thrace" was full of settlements that we call today **Sate (Villages)**. It should be noted that south of the Danube was the place where the Thracian **Bessi** tribes were leaving. Bellow it is an ancient map of Geto/Dacia/ Moesia where settlements, fortresses and Roman camps are shown between the 1-st century BC – and AD 2-nd century. [Wikipedia]



**The name of "Bassarabia<sup>2</sup> Country" today República Moldova, possible origin from Bachus, Bah / Bassara, the Lydian's name of Dionysos.**

 <p><b>LYDIA. SARDES.</b> (ca. 4th century B.C.) AE Chalkous 12 mm. 1.7 gm. Obv: Head of <b>DIONYSOS</b> to the left, bearing <b>the crown of vine leaves</b>. Rev: F-S (in Lydian), <b>the famous Thracian cup</b>. CNG E-Auction 248 (2011), 119 (as 'Syros'). Gorny &amp; Mosch 203 (2012), 197 (as 'Naxos'). Vögtli, Pergamon 524. Rare. The Dionysian Mysteries of Greece and the Roman Empire seem to have evolved from a primitive initiation cult of origin, probably Thracian, or Phrygian, which spread across the Mediterranean area in the early classical period in Hellada.</p>	<p><b>Bassareus, another name of Dionysus</b>, [Horace. <i>Carmen Saeculare</i> i, 18.11]; [Macrobius. <i>Saturnalia</i>, i, 18.] which, according to Greek explanations, comes from "<b>bassara</b>" (<b>βασσάρα</b>) or "<b>bassaris</b>" (<b>βασσαρίς</b>), the long toga, made of fox skins [Hesychius], which the god and maenad wore in Thrace, where maenad- were often called <b>bassarae</b> or <b>bassarides</b>.</p> <p><i>"To a sober mind (n.b. Heraclitus, Ephesus, born ca. 534 BC), the drunkenness of cultic worshippers must have been particularly unappealing in a cosmopolitan city like Ephesus, with goods of wines on every side, drunken Greeks initiated into the Thracian ecstasies of Dionysus ranking amok with drunken Phrygians worshiping Sabazius, Lydians possessed by Bassareus, and Cretans in the frenzy of Zagreus, all claiming in their cups to have transcended understanding."</i> [From Book Heraclitus, <i>Fragments' Introduction</i> p. xxv, Translated by Brooks Haxton].</p>
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The region between the **Prut and Dniester** was artificially named **Basarabia** by the Russians in 1807, in negotiations with **Napoleon I**. Initially, the name 'Bessarabia' was given to a narrow strip of land, bordering the Danube, the former "**Danube Wallachia**", from the mouth of **Siret River** to town of **Chilia Vechea**, mentioned between the ninth and twelfth centuries in **Byzantine'** writings [confirmation is required].

This strip of land was awarded in 1343-1345 by the Wallachian prince **Basarab I and his son Nicolae Alexandru** from **Prince Dimitrie, a Christianized Tartar**. [Col. Reserve. dr. *Mircea Dogaru*].

This would confirm the name of **Bassarabia** existing since the IX (9) century AD and therefore, there is a possibility the name to come from the Lydian '**Bassara**', name for **Dionysus/ Bacus - the god of wine, and not from a 'Cuman' name of Basarab, as some historians is saying today!** After all, the region of Basarabia is known for production of a large quantity of fine wines since antiquity, qualifying it to **Bassara's Country**.

(2) **Basarabia is ancestral Romanian Land taken by Russia in 1940 by ultimatum dictate, after Ribbentrop- Molotov pact.**

[https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ocupa%C8%9Bia\\_sovietic%C4%83\\_a\\_Basarabiei\\_%C8%99i\\_Bucovinei\\_de\\_Nord](https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ocupa%C8%9Bia_sovietic%C4%83_a_Basarabiei_%C8%99i_Bucovinei_de_Nord)

**About the name of the shepherds' village of (A)Polovragi.**

The above **Getia/ Dacia's** map shows many interesting things. At first glance, it is indicated the area of expansion in antiquity of the Thracian/Daco/Getae population. The area of Thrace in the south, that

stretched from Macedonia to the **Pindus Mountains**, is not included. Let us not forget, however, that Seneca called the Pindus Mountains – the Thracian' Mountains. [Seneca, *Hercule Furens* 2].

A remark, which would be of interest here, is the indication on this map of the settlement **Polovragi**, south of the **Parâng Mountains** in Oltenia, a village of **Dacian** shepherds, thus attesting its existence from the mists of time. Being so old, it is possible that the toponymy of the place to come from the name of the nearby cave –" (A)Polo-vragi." <sup>3</sup>

**Other Grotto named "Woman's Cave", in Romanian language – "Pestera Muierii" (Muhera, Latin) is nearby Novaci village**, where, during our studding' years, the shepherd Badea Matea, the father of our colleague Ion, was the guide! 😊 I had arrived there with my colleagues coming over the mountains from our summer student' internship in **Sibiu town of Transylvania**, passing over the **Cindrel Mountains**, into the '**Valea Frumoasei**' (Beauty's Valley), **Obârsa Lotrului** in **Lovistea Country**, **Latorița Peak**, **Paring Mountains**, **Rânca Chalet** - walking then on shepherds' paths – today, the '**Transalpine Road**'.

(3) There are some opinions that this word "vragi" is of Slavic origin but, apparently, it is not, because it is an archaic Thracian word meaning "**healer, sorcerer**", of course in the archaic sense to work miracles; while in the Slavic vocabulary of our neighbors it can be from the linguistic substrate or a loanword meaning "**charlatan**", by the time the Slavs came into Balkan area. Never, in the conception of our grandparents or Romanian' villages inhabitants, never did 'vragi' word meant -'charlatan'. It is not necessary to mention here, what Plato said, in his' *Dialogues*", about the *Getic healing practices*, when you cannot heal the body without the soul! Also, when we were children, our grandma really believed that she can heal us, trough incantations! 😊





*Transalpina Road*




An argument in favor of "Apollo - vragiul" name would be that in antiquity, **the cult of Apollo was practiced in Grottes and Temples** and in Roman mythology, Apollo had, among many other attributions, that of "**Apollo Medicus**". These arguments appear in the book – [*"Apollo"*, by Fritz Graf, Ed. Routledge,



London and NY, 2009] where it is says” the Romans instituted a cult of Apollo Medicus, and also it can be understood from the symbolism of the Roman imperial coin, below, minted in Troas, having on the reverse the cult of Apollo *Sminthius*(Apollo-out of mind, in Romanian language).

On this coin, it can be seen the shepherd Ordes in front of a statue of Apollo Sminthius and a grotto (cave) where this cult was practiced. The scene is from Homer’s Iliad, but the symbolism of the coin isn’t clear today, due to cult’s misunderstanding.

 <p><b>ALEXANDRIA, TROAS</b> mint, c. 3rd Century A.D. Time of <b>Trebonianus Gallus</b> or <b>Valerian i</b> ,(251-260), Bronze AE 21, BMC Troas p. 13, 41; Bellinger Troy type 20 , SNG Canakkale -, Lindgren SNG Tanrikulu -, SNG Cop -, SNGvA -, SNG Hunterian -, VF/F, weight 4.045g, diameter 20.8 mm, die axis 0o, Avers: CO ALEX TRO, bustul Tyche, Roman standard.</p>	<p>Reverse: [COL] AV TROA[D], (Colonia Augusta, Troad)</p> <p><u>Numismatic Note</u>  <b>The shepherd Ordes, standing to his left, appears to be wearing his Phrygian (Dacian) hat, pileus, holding in his right hand the shepherd's crooked staff. The statue of Apollo Sminthius is in front, and a CAVERN (Pestera). On the right, a bull. Extremely rare and interesting!</b></p>	 <p>[Wikipedia]  <b>Note the shepherd's crooked staff. This staff was seen in the nineteenth century among the Aromanians from Macedonia and the Pindus Mountains, having a wolf's head, the Dacian Symbol.</b></p>
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 <p><b>TRAJAN DECIUS</b> (AD 249-251). AR Antoninianus. Rome Mint. RIC IV, pt 3 12(b). Very Fine. Radiate head right/Dacia standing left, holding vertical staff with ram's head, DACIA. A very nice example of a popular type. <b>There is a dealer error. The staff is the famous Dacian flag wolf's head, not ram's head</b></p>	 <p>This Dacian symbol (wolf's head) identifies the Dacian origin of the Aromanian Vlach shepherds. <sup>4</sup></p>	 <p>Dacian flag on the Traian's Column</p>
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(4) Note: Compare the attitude of the Aromanian shepherd with the position of Dacia with the standard on the Traian Decius' coin.

### The name of Lovistea country

In addition, the area we are talking about here **in Dacia is full of archaeological places and Roman toponyms**, probably from the time of the **Dacian-Roman wars (AD 101 – 106)** when the Roman legions under emperor Traian defeated the Dacians.

The Roman legions entered Dacia on the bridge built by them at Drobeta (today, Turnu Severin), advanced on via Alba-Carolina (Olt River Valley), it is believed up to Tapae, identified by some historians at the confluence of Lotru River<sup>1</sup> with the Olt River, in Tara Lovistea - possibly Joviste's County - meaning 'God's land', on the heights of Paring mountains, where it rains, thunders and is lightning very often. Joviste<sup>2</sup> was the name of young Jupiter, and lightning was His' main attribute! As a child, our grandparents told us, that thunders and lightning were from the God.

At the foot of Mount Parâng, where the Mount Retezat begins, there is city of Vulcan, named so, possibly, after another Roman deity, (for the Greeks, Hephaistos), which appears below as a symbol on another republican Roman coin.

(1) Name given possibly by Romans. Varrus says that in ancient times soldiers were called 'latrones' and that now the same name 'latrones' is given to fugitive soldiers who block roads, stay hidden and attack the victims. [Varrus, "The Lingua Latina", Book VII 51-38, pg 317]. It is possible that the Dacians, who came from the mountains on the Lotru river valley, ambushed the Roman army at Tapae, hence the name Lotru of the river.

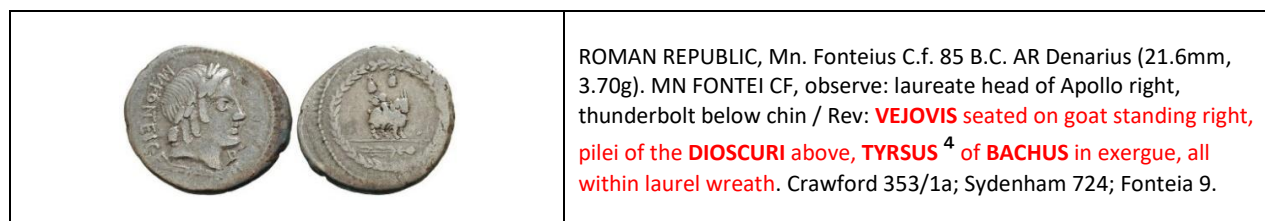
(2) Joviste, the name of the young Jupiter, which appears in some epigraphs. In another case, there was a dispute between archaeologists, referring to the confusion of the letter J with L on a Roman inscription. Considering this, the meaning could be - "God's Land." There are other opinions, how the name Loviste could be of Cuman origin!

[https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C8%9Aara\\_Lovi%C8%99tei](https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C8%9Aara_Lovi%C8%99tei)

On the observe of the Roman Republican coin below, there is the head of Apollo with the thunderbolt below his chin. On the revers, VE-JOVIS is a little-known Italian deity. He was worshiped in the temple of Apollo on the Capitol of Rome, where a statue existed, referring to infancy of JUPITER who was suckled by the goat Amaltheia, on Mount Ida<sup>3</sup>. The supreme God of the Romans was Jupiter, nicknamed Jovis and in some inscriptions appears "Joviste". On the coin, the thyrsus staff carried by Bacchus (Basara) can be seen, topped by a pine cone and bunch of ivy leaves wreathed with tendrils of vine. Above, there are two Lydian/Dacian's pileus, the symbol of Dioscuri's, Castor and Pollux.

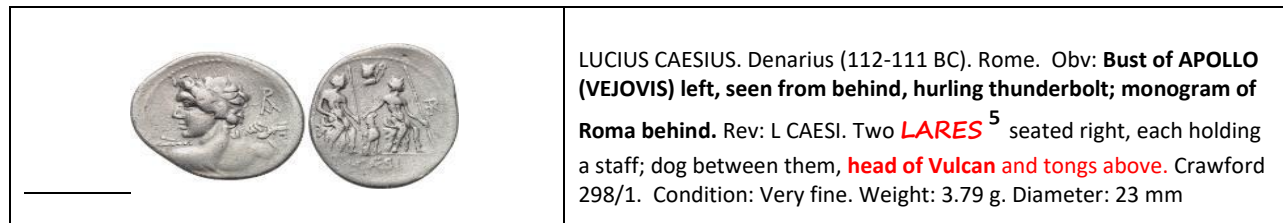
Jupiter, for Romans, was the same with Thracian and Greeks' -Apollo - as Catullus says in one of his poems: "Latona's child, offspring / Of high Jove, your mother/ Bore you under the olive / tree on Delos" [Catullus, by Aurel Burl with selection of poems translated by Humphrey Clucas, published 2010].

(3) Not to be confused with Mount IDA near Troy where, it is said, was born the goddess Cybele, entered into Greek's theogony with the name Gaia, Gea, the goddess of earth.





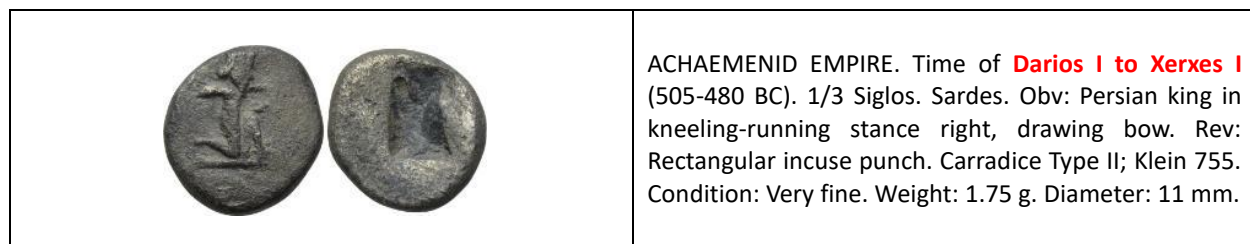
(4) *The Thyrsus*, it was an attribute of *Bahos* (Bacchus), a spear wrapped with vines and a fir cone at the top. In the town of Romania, *Compel Lung* (Long Field), the young fir trees are called ‘Tursi’, [*Studies in Folklore, Volumes 1-2, Elena Niculitǎ-Voronca, Bucharest, 1908*].



(5) *The protective deities 'LARES'* often appear in archaic folklore in Romanian villages and in different forms on the seals or emblems of buildings in interwar Bucharest. Two winged angels, facing each other, a flower between them, holding the seals and blowing a horn or trumpet. [*Folklore Studies by Elena Niculita Voronca, Vol 1, Chapter 5.5, Bucharest 1908*]

### Dochia's myth of Romanian peasants and the name of Cappadocia, possible a connection of prehistoric origins

According to Herodotus, in the time of Ionian revolt ca. 499 BC, the Cappadocians from Anatolia were reported as occupying a region from the **Taurus Mountains** to the vicinity of the **Pontus Euxine**. The earliest record of **Cappadocia's name**, the ancient Greek romanized **Kappadokya**, classical Syriac **Kapudokia** from Old Persian **Katpatuka**, Hittite **Katapeda** is dated from the late sixth century BC, when it appears in the trilingual inscriptions of two early Achaemenid emperors, **Darius the Great and Xerxes I**, as one of the countries (Old Persian **dahyu-** for country). In this list of countries, the Old Persian name is **Katpatuka**, and it was proposed by specialists, that Kat-patuka came from the Luwian language, meaning "Low Country" [*Coindoz M. Arhiologia / Prehistoire et archeologie nr. 241, 1988, pp 48-59*].



Since this toponymy of Cappadocia is little argued and assumed, let's try to look at this name from another perspective. The word '*Capa, capae*' is a Latin noun, meaning: 1· *capa, hooded cloak*: 2· *Cassock*,<sup>6</sup> *capa* or *mantle*. [Source: C.H. Beeson, "A Primer of Medieval Latin" 1925]. Having a logical exercise, this would mean **Docia's Capa** or **Docia's cassock**, in Romanian language "*Cojocul Dociei*" or "*Capa Dociei*".

(6) The **CASSOCK**, also called *soutane*, is a clerical coat used by the clergy in Oriental, East Orthodox and Catholic Churches and some Protestant denominations such as Anglicans and Lutherans. It derives historically from tunic of classical antiquity that in ancient Rome was worn underneath the toga and chiton. The word CASSOCK is in the form and semantic the same as Romanian Ciobanii's garment word, 'COJOC'.

In many Romanian legends the mythological character **Dochia** is always associated with her garment named **Cojoc**, from where comes the syntagm "**Cojoc or Cojoacele Dochiei**", meaning **Dochia's Capa** or in Latin "**Capa Dochiei**". Now we can have a connection between "**Dochia's Cojoc (capa)**" from Romanian myths and "**Dochia's Capa**", meaning **Cappadocia**.

The stories and legends of the Romanian folklore with "**Dochia and her Capas (cojoace)**" begin with the syntagm "*Once upon a time, that if it hadn't been there, it wouldn't have been told*". Was **Dochia** an emperor's daughter, a simple shepherdess, or a damned old woman? We don't know! From legend to history, or from mythology to tradition, **Dochia** left many customs and traditions that the Romanian peasants still practice today.

According to a legend, collected in Romanian villages by the writer Gheorghe Asachi (1838), Dochia was the daughter of the Dacian's king **Decebalus**. Legends from Ceahlau Mountains area, from Bucovina and elsewhere in Romania show how, being followed by the invading kings, **Dochia** fled, she undresses her nine (9) **capas (cojoace)** and reached the top of the mountain where she was frozen into a stone. In another story, **Dochia is a damned old woman (Baba)** who, when the spring has come, she gets rid of the her nine (9) capas (cojoace), and when she arrives on the mountain with her sheep, is caught by a blizzard, which has frozen her in a stone. Probably, from the myth of **Dochia**, the Bucegi Mountains wind eroded rocks are called **Babele (Old ladies)**, and from **Dochia** also came the tradition that the first nine (9) days of March, when the weather is usually capricious, are called **Babele**.




**Babele** (Old ladies), wind eroded rocks of the Bucegi Mountains, Romania



Dochia's rock, Ceahlau Mountains, Romania

It is worth mentioning that always the **number (9)** appears as a common pattern and, without being any connection, corresponds to the number of the **muses**, which the historians said, were of Thracian origin.

Apparently, there are many assumptions derived from historical realities mentioned in the writings of classical writers, and also many coincidences with Thracians in relation to **Cappadocia, Asia Minor**: ancient tribes in the **Antitaurus** mountains in **Cataonia**, *assimilated by the locals as Dacian shepherds* and mentioned by Strabo as servants of **Apollo** and the **Dacian temple and MA Goddess**, identified with **Cybele or Enio**, the consort of the **Thracian god Ares**; the name of the **Taurus mountains** which would come from the goddess **Diana Tauropolis**, the name of the settlement **Comana** coming from the strands of Diana's hair ('*coman'*, κόμην), as Strabo said, or name of **Comana** being possibly of Thracian origin; the **Pelasgians/Thracians'** tribes of Troad who were mentioned by Homer as neighbors of '*Cilices*', from where the name '*Cilicia Tracheia*' name could come.

<p><b>ARIARATHES III OF CAPPADOCHIA, TYANA</b></p>  <p>(ca. 230-220 BC) AE (bronze), <b>TYANA MINT</b>, GODDESS 'Ma' IN CHARIOT DRAWN BY TWO SPHINXES (LIONS?), very rare, Bronze (AE, 4.87g, 18mm), Simonetta (1977) 4, SNG von Aulock 6258, HGC 801 (R2). Av.: Phrygian head (Dacian!) Pileus. Rv.: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ - ΑΡΙΑΡΑΘΟΥ. / T - Y, Goddess with Raised Left Hand and with a scepter in his right hand. Very rare.</p>	<p><b>ENYO, Goddess of War</b> [Iliad 5.333], <u>Ma was the local Goddess in Comana (Cappadocia) and alternative(?) Phrygian goddess Kybele, (Cybele, latin), the mother of the gods, condemned by Apollo, according to legend, to remain an old woman.</u> Considered an Anatolian goddess who was introduced into Roman culture during the Second Punic War (3rd century BC). <b>The Romans identified Enyo with Bellona, who had similarities to the Anatolian goddess Ma. Enyo</b> (Greek: Ένυώ, in translation "<i>warlike</i>", was the god of war and destruction in Greek mythology, the consort of Ares, the Thracian god of war and appears in the epics of Homer! She is also identified as a sister of Zeus and Hera. (note the duality of origin!)</p>
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If these historical accounts exist, we can venture further and propose other etiology that the name of the **Cappadocia** region of **Anatolia** could also be of **Dacian/Thracian** origin, taking into account the coincidences with the myths of **Dochia** and her "*capas (cojoace)*" in **Dacia**.

This would have been possible only if the myth of **Baba Dochia**, perpetuated in Romanians peasants' folklore had the prehistoric origins, and possibly, carried out to **Cappadocia** after the Trojan War by **Dacian/Thracian** tribes, mentioned by Strabo as existing in **Troas** and around the **Hellespont**.

Under these conditions, it is possible that in prehistory, **Baba Dochia** was the same as **Great Mother**, just it is possible that in historical times in **Cappa(docia)**, **Docia** was the **Goddess Ma, (Cybele)** condemned by **Apollo**, according to Hellenic myth, to remain '*an old woman (Baba)*', the main local deity worshipped there by those **Dacan/Thracian** tribes, still being ethnically distinct in **Cappadocia**, in time of Strabo.