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ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ



**Adrian Cristian PAPARI**

# Aspecte identitare ale populației multietnice din Dobrogea, în contextul globalizării

*studiu antropologic pe populația aromână*



*Editura Muzeului Național al Literaturii Române*



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ÎN CONTEXTUL GLOBALIZĂRII  
*STUDIU ANTROPOLOGIC PE POPULAȚIA AROMÂNĂ***



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DIN DOBROGEA, ÎN CONTEXTUL GLOBALIZĂRII  
– STUDIU ANTROPOLOGIC PE POPULAȚIA AROMÂNĂ –**

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## **ADDENDA**

### **Abstract**

#### **Identity Issues of the Multiethnic Population of Dobrogea, in the Context of Globalization - Anthropological Research on Aromanian Population**

Certified by Byzantine historians from the tenth century under the name of "Vlachs", Aromanians have lived and still live in Greece, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria and, last but not least, in Romania. Over the centuries, the Aromanian cultural community was the subject of numerous researches, although special researches (monographic) were relatively few and did not cover the entire area of Aromanian influence and were even less in the field of anthropology.

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the study and preservation of inter-/multidisciplinary, development and expression of ethnic identity, sociological, historical, cultural, linguistic and religious approaches of the Aromanian community from Dobrogea.

The present approach will be based on gathering relevant anthropometric data in fields such as morphobiological, pathological, demographical and ethno-cultural normality parameters, concerning cultural traditions of the Aromanian population established on the territory of Dobrogea, which will contribute to the identification of taxonomic and constitutional typologies of this population.

In this research, distinctions will be made in terms of the results of the mathematico-statistical and anthropo-demographic analysis of the segments of young, adult and elderly population that will allow the identification of bio-psycho-cultural characteristics of the Aromanian population.

The dissertation is structured into two parts, a theoretical one and a practical one.

In the first part, in about 60 pages, are disclosed data about the ethnic diversity and the multiculturalism that can be found in Dobrogea, the research focusing particularly on historical data certifying the origin of Aromanians in the Dobrogea territory as well as on those revealing the ethno-cultural, anthropologic (biological) and psycho-behavioral identity of Aromanians .

## **I. THEORETICAL APPROACHES**

### **1.1. Ethnic Diversity in Dobrogea: *The Concept of Multiculturalism. The Concept of Interculturalism. Dobrogea –Multicultural and Multiethnic Realm. Demographic Data***

More and more frequently, we discover in scientific discourses and not only, the concepts of *multiculturalism*, *interculturalism* and *transculturation*. The term *multiculturalism* introduced in the U.S. in 1941, refers to "the coexistence of different cultures (in the anthropological sense) within a social system (most frequently within a nation), even if this coexistence is peaceful or conflictual", meanwhile, *interculturalism* is the set of phenomena that arise from the encounter of two cultures.

Currently, people talk about the idea of solidarity of the European nations in the context of globalization, taking into account however, ethno-cultural features of each nation.

The cohabitation of Romanians with other ethnic groups (Ukrainians, Lipovans) since ancient times before the XIX - XX centuries caused - in Dobrogea area - similarities in the manifestation of facts and aspects of traditional life, but also caused the preservation of some differences that become distinct issues, individualizing one or another of the ethnic groups that have lived and still live in the same environment (natural and social) and at the same time, determined the shaping of special and unique socio-cultural forms of life – in comparison with the rest of Dobrogea.

In Dobrogea, archaeological vestiges and historical documents reveal, on the one hand, the permanence of indigenous Romanian population and



the overlap in successive layers of the Romanian element from other areas, and on the other hand, the presence of aboriginal populations. In time, this social life fact lead to the outline of the *oikumenes from Dobrogea* with their axiological system, not easy to decipher and as complex as interesting.

Dobrogea, an ancient land with a rich history, having as a defining characteristic the coexistence of multiethnic communities, draws attention through the intercultural cohabitation open model, whose representation is decoded not only at the level of the material culture and at the level of the intangible culture, but also at the level of the traditional civilization from this area. The cohabitation model generated, in turn, free expression, based on the acceptance and understanding of the other, of *multiculturalism*.

## **1.2. Approaches on the Aromanian Population. Origins. Historical Background. Communities. Branches. Aromanians – Ethno-Cultural Approaches. Aromanians – Psycho-Ethnic Features. The Aromanian Community from Dobrogea**

Aromanians, Vlachs or Macedo-Romanians are descendants of Romanized Thracians from the south of the Danube, from the historical geographic area of Macedonia, separated by their brothers from the north of the Danube - Romanians or Daco-Romanians - initially only by the Danube (in the times of their early formation as a people), and later on, from the VI-VII centuries also by Bulgarians - migrant Turkish people (Turanian) later Slavicized, who came from North-Eastern Russia and settled in the geographical space where was going to be established later, the national state of Bulgaria.

From early times until nowadays, Aromanians were divided into groups or branches, their names coming from the geographical lands and from the major cities populated by them. Therefore, the main branches are: Pindeans, Farsherots, Gramustians, Muzachiars, Arnauchians, Arnauts or Albanian Vlachs, Epirotes, Macedo-Romanians from Rhodes, Megleno-Romanians.

The ethnicity of Macedo-Romanians (Aromanians, Vlachs), in accordance with the Romans from the north of the Danube, was often mentioned in Byzantine historiographies and later on, our chroniclers

confirmed it as well. By their way of being, with their culture and customs, Aromanians emerged gradually and safely, creating a great civilization in the Balkans (Emilia Luchian, 2007; Gheorghe I. Brătianu, 1980; Nicolae Cuşa, 1990).

In Romania we meet them in Banat and Dobrogea, especially in the counties of Constanta, Tulcea and Braila. Most Aromanians in Romania generally form a compact population established in villages and communes, and despite numerous changes, inevitable adaptations they suffered, they kept the linguistic and ethnographic specificities more than others (Nicolae Cuşa, 1990; Theodor Capidan, 1932). This was possibly due to permanent concern of many elite representatives of this ethnicity (Octavian Goga, Ştefan Iosif, Constantin Belimace, Nusi Tulliu, Pericle Papahagi, Theodor Capidan ş.a) for the identification of methods and resources that ensure the preservation of the Aromanian culture and civilization of Romania.

Representatives of the Eastern Romanity world, Aromanians represent next to the Megleno-Romanians and the Istro-Romanians the most vigorous branch of South-Danubian Romanity spirit, keeping alive the consciousness of their identity. Aromanians have preserved and perpetuated through the techniques and practices of their deep culture a system of values with emblematic features in defining their group specificity.

Marks of identity: folklore, customs, costumes, culinary art, household textile art and craft, architecture are fundamental forms of communication and ways in which a human group reveal their specificity, traditional values.

A people formed in an uneven, rough and broken geographically environment, forever in motion by its transhumance, selected through a healthy inbreeding, with traditions of old civilization brought from city life during lengthy historical disturbances, allowed the creation and preservation of osmosis between body and spirit among all members of the national community - that instinctive *Aromanian solidarity*.

Through their individualistic, eccentric and mischievous structure (as signalled by various ethnographers and travellers in their writings),

Aromanians are betrayed by their physiognomy and also, distinguished through their intellectual and moral qualities - that will until it will be fully diluted in foreign environments. The survival of the Aromanian community will thus persist more, not through language but through its qualities (physical, intellectual, moral and so on; positive or negative) which are always outstanding. Aromanians, so consistently thickened as biological substance through better conservation of the ancient Thracian-Illyrian-Greek synthesis, to which successively Latin pragmatism was added and, to a lower degree, something of a Slavonian reverie as well as through denationalized elements over the ages, in the entire Balkan area, not only are they going to survive, even if their language disappears, but they are the common factor that gathers peoples in this European sector.

## **II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. General Approaches and Research Objectives**

In researching issues related to Aromanians we started by analyzing bibliographic data as well as from direct observation of the ethno-cultural and psychobehavioral reality by conducting field researches in the towns and villages of Constanta and Tulcea, where Aromanian population live.

The present approach will be based on gathering relevant anthropometric data in fields such as morphobiological, pathological, demographical and ethno-cultural normality parameters, concerning cultural traditions of the Aromanian population established on the territory of Dobrogea, which will contribute to the identification of taxonomic and constitutional typologies of this population.

#### **Research Objectives**

*The objectives* of a higher degree of specificity were:

- The research of morpho-dimensional characteristics of Aromanians ethnic subjects and the knowledge of the limits of somatic variability of Aromanian population in Dobrogea through anthropometric methods in comparison to Romanian subjects from the same region;
- The identification of attitudes and behaviours that fall under their traditional cultural values;

- The highlight of some personality traits and the drawing of a personologic profile of the Aromanian ethnic subjects.
- The identification of ethno-cultural values of the Aromanian ethnic population from Dobrogea and the conducting of an imagological research.

**The general hypothesis** of the research is: the changes taking place on the value level in the Romanian society determines differentiations (towards traditionalism or modernity) in the assumption and construction of the identity model of the Aromanian population in Dobrogea, in both rural and urban area.

**The variables** studied were:

- Cephalic-facial and body diameters
- Personality traits
- Level of anxiety, depression and perceived stress level
- Knowledge, attitudes and behaviour towards a number of dimensions such as: traditional art, traditions, myths, specific holidays, language, religion, etc..

## 2.2. Research material and methods

The research was conducted on a nonprobabilistic sample of 200 research participants made up of 100 Romanian ethnics as ethnic majority population and 100 Aromanian ethnics.

Men and women were selected in equal percentages, aged between 20 and 75 years, both from urban and rural area (urban area: rural area = 1: 1).

Subjects were included in the research group on purpose, taking into account the criteria: gender, age, area of origin, ethnicity.

**The implementation of the project required the use of the following tools:**

- ✓ *The research of the documents:* monographs and documents relating to Aromanians; anthropological atlases; Statistical Yearbook;
- ✓ *Anthropological research tip sheet;*

- ✓ *Questionnaire* for the identification of health-risk behaviours, including anamnestic data and data with eco-mezologic content relating to marital status, occupational and professional training;
- ✓ *16 PF Personality Questionnaire* (developed by R. B. Cattell), consisting of 187 items (issues or questions) aimed at highlighting 16 personality traits
- ✓ *HAD rating scale* for anxiety and depression (Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, Zigmond & Snaith, 1983);
- ✓ *Perceived Stress Scale* (Perceived Stress Scale, Cohen & Williamson, 1988).
- ✓ *Questionnaire* for the identification of ethno-cultural values
- ✓ Anthropometric Measuring Kit;
- ✓ Camera for photographic shooting of subjects of Aromanian ethnicity;

### **Working procedure**

The gathered data were subject to complex and various processing, being used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The research has an interdisciplinary character and research tools have been applied to the study participants, directly and personally, thus avoiding non-answers. The gathered data were subject to statistical processing using specific social-sciences programs (Microsoft Office Excel, SPSS version 19).

## **2.3. Anthropological Research on the Aromanian Population from Dobrogea**

### *2.3.1. Anthropometric and Constitutional Characteristics of the Adult Population*

"The Phenomenon of Man" as it is called by Rainer, is an inseparable dual bio-cultural entity. For the understanding of this phenomenon in its complexity it must be approached from the perspective of biological anthropology because "... we live in a reality in which we construct or create, think or relax, produce or consume, we are what we are and what we do with and through our body (Laura Grümberg „Introducere în

sociologia corpului – Cuvânt introductiv”, Polirom Publishing House, 2010).

Romanian anthropology is characterized by this bio-cultural approach of the human being, reflecting its' founder concept that "any conception about life which emerges only from biology is subhuman, but no conception of life must be inconsistent with biology" (I. Th. Riga , Gheorghe Calin, "Dr. Francis I. Rainer", Științifică Publishing House, 1966, p 148).

Anthropometry is both science and research method in biological anthropology.

As a science, it studies the quantitative and conformation variability of the human species, and based on these researches are determined cephalic-facial and body anthropological typologies.

Anthropometry as a research method establishes measurements and benchmarks between which they are made. Depending on the purpose, measurements that are going to be taken are established.

In the present research, I study the research of morpho-dimensional characteristics of Aromanians ethnic subjects from Dobrogea in comparison to Romanian subjects in the area.

In doing so, we considered samples of population on gender for the ethnic groups: Romanian and Aromanian. In order to grasp the specific biological substance of each ethnicity, in the samples were included only adult subjects (ranging from 20-60 years), descendants of at least three generations of Aromanians families or Romanian families.

There were investigated a number of 200 subjects, 100 of Aromanians (50 men, 50 women) and 100 of Romanians (50 men, 50 women), who made up four samples and to which were analysed the cephalic-facial and body features, according to the atlas sheet (Annexes 2-5). Each subject's personal and genealogical data have been noted, thus ensuring the ethnicity of their grandparents and parents.

For an anthropological characterization of the population we used the "Atlas" type measurements, which allowed us to make a typological quantitative and conformation analysis of individuals from the studied population.

When taking anthropometric measurements and assessment of morphological-dimensional characteristics of the subjects included in the research group (100 Aromanians, 100 Romanians), we used the following tools and methods: *Anthropological research tip sheet; anthropometric method; the taxonomic morphogram method*, for the cephalic-facial typology; *The anthropo-metrographic method L. Brian*, for the body typology; *statistical information methods* - for calculating indices and basic statistical indicators for cephalic-facial and body dimensions; *methods for determining typology (the constitutional phenotype: corporal indices; constitutional Antropo-metergram)*.

We analyzed the individual determinations of both age and gender for nine cephalic-facial variables (G-OP, EU-EU, ZY-ZY, GO-GO-GO N, N-SN, AL-AL, TV, FT -FT), 12 corporal variables (weight, stature, sitting, AC-AC, IC, IC, dap.tor, circ.tor, circ.abd, circ.coapsei, m.inf.dedus, circ.şold, d.t.toracic) and were calculated: index conformation of brain pan, face and nose of each subject, respectively body index conformation. Scales of classification were used for the size and cephalic-facial and somatic conformation index.

To assess the obtained values, the results were compared with the data published in the Anthropological Atlas of Dobrogea and the Anthropological Atlas of Romania, Volume 1.

## RESULTS

**Differences in the male sample:** Differences between the two male subpopulations in cerebrospinal as far as cephalic-facial dimensions are concerned, are statistically insignificant. The variability of parameters for both samples is summarized between common maximum and minimum levels. Variability coefficients (value under 10%) indicate the homogeneity of the samples for all measurements studied.

**Brain pan:** With the Aromanians, were more prevalent individuals with long brain pans (the median indicates this), but also with shorter brain pans, the range of values being higher (168-203 mm) than that of the Romanians (172-200 mm). If there are no significant dimensional differences, as far as the conformation is concerned, however, the sample

shows that even if Aromanians have an average brain pan, they have a wide forehead which is longer and slightly wider and taller than that of the Romanians. Both samples have brain pan values ranging within medium to the large category and very big space.

**Face:** The trail of the morphograms is similar in both samples with the location of the width of the inferior level in the large category, the width of the medium level in the small to medium category and the length of the face in the middle category of international scales. Both samples have a similar morph of the face.

**Nose:** In both samples:  $al-al < n-sn$ ; but the Romanian sample presents an average longer nose ( $n-sn$  towards the high limit on the international scale) and thinner ( $al-al$  to the low limit on the international scale) in comparison to the Aromanian sample, whose length is at the high limit and whose width is at the medium limit.

**Weight:** Body weight in both samples of men reaches minimum 50 kilos and the maximum values are ranging from 110 kilos for Aromanians up to 114 kilos for Romanians. For this parameter, the samples no longer present the homogeneity found in the genetically conditioned high parameters, the high variability being given by the multitude of mezologic factors that appear due to a genetic conditioning of about 50%. In these circumstances, statistically speaking, for weight and for other parameters with high component of adipose tissue (body circumferences) are allowed, higher values of the variability coefficient (up to the amount of 20) for the purpose of judging the homogeneity of the sample. In terms of average body weight (83.0 kilos for Aromanians and 75.4 kilos for Romanians) the two samples differ significantly.

In both male samples there are obese people of Grade I and II, but in different proportions. From our observations, the subjects in the Aromanian sample are significantly more corpulent than those in the Romanian sample (48% vs. 22%), and obesity is installed in 30% of Aromanian subjects compared to 14% in Romanian subjects.

According to the statistics taken from the Anthropological Atlas of Romania, volume I (Romanian Academy, Institute "Fr. Rainer", Bucharest, 2011), in comparison with the results of the current anthropological



research, it can be observed that the intermediate hair colour is three times more common in the male population of ethnic Aromanians from Dobrogea (62.00%) compared to the Romanian population (22.55%), still, within the statistical values of the people of Dobrogea (55.83%).

Dark hair is twice less frequent in the male population of Aromanian ethnics in Dobrogea, compared to the Romania population, but within the values of the statistical values of the population of Dobrogea. Light hair occurs in 8% of the Aromanian ethnic population in Dobrogea, compared to the Romanian population, where only 4.20% have light hair pigmentation.

#### **Differences in the female sample:**

At the Aromanian ethnic female population, the massive facial and nasal describe a long face, large for its maximum cross-sectional diameter, a minimum front wide diameter, a middle vertigo-auricular height and a middle large mandible (at the extreme upper limit of the class). With regards to the conformation, the facial dimensions are mainly leptoprosopic and the mandible is of middle conformation.

The nose is medium long and large, of ample conformation.

Regarding the body weight in the female samples the same orientation can be found, but the tendency to overweight and obesity is much reduced between the two samples. Body weight of female samples ranges between 47 and 88 kilos, with an average of 64 kilos in the sample of Aromanians and 40-90 kilos and an average of 60 kilos in the context of Romanian sample. The international scale distribution in body mass index indicates, as in the male series, a higher concentration of overweight and obese subjects in the sample of Aromanian females (52%) than in that of the Romanian females (26%). In the samples of both female ethnicities, the number of obese subjects is reduced to half in comparison to the male samples. The percentage of female subjects with weight insufficiency in the current researched series (4.5%) is similar to that encountered in the national female population with ages ranging between 20-29 years (4.59%).

Regarding the pigmentation, it was found that the intermediate hair colour is three times more common at female population of Aromanian ethnicity in Dobrogea (70.00%) in comparison to the Romanian female population (24.60%), still, within the statistical values of the people of Dobrogea (64.92%).

The dark hair is three times less frequently in Aromanian ethnic population in Dobrogea (27.00%) in comparison to the Romanian female population (71.14%), still, within the statistical values of the people of Dobrogea (26 , 41%).

Light hair occurs in 6% of Aromanian ethnic population in Dobrogea, value close to the national average.

Light iris pigmentation can be found at about 1/3 of the population of Dobrogea, namely, male Aromanians from this geographical region and only one fifth of the Romanian population; the intermediate iris pigmentation is found in similar proportions in the general population of Romanians from Dobrogea and in the Aromanian group from the present study; dark iris pigmentation is found in similar proportions in the general population of Romanians and in the group of Aromanians from the present study, noting that the population in Dobrogea has a much lower percentage of dark colour of the iris (12.28%).

The Aromanian female population from the study group has more frequently an intermediate colour pigmentation of the iris (62.00%), followed as frequency by light colour (26%) and only 12% have a dark colour of the iris; also, it is considered that similar values were obtained on the iris colour of the female Aromanian population from the study group and Romanian females in Dobrogea.

At the Aromanian population from the study group, both at male and female series, the light and intermediate iris frequency is higher than the dark iris frequency and higher than its frequency at the national level.

#### *2.2.1. Psychobehavioral features*

Essential for the cultural identity, which is one of the prerequisites for a healthy life is the symbolic capital, for example values, attitudes, behaviours and beliefs shared by the members of the community.

The influence of these factors is generally analysed in all researches aimed at identifying risk factors for health or at highlighting psychosomatic specific features to specific at certain population groups (Berry, J. W., Kim, U., 1988). Health is dependent on a particular human behaviour or lifestyle. Certainly, the life style adopted by each of us affects our health in a decisive manner (Glanz, K. et al., 2002 S. Cohen, 1983, Bar-Tal, Y. et al. 1988), by adopted risk behaviours (alcohol, tobacco, drugs, etc.), alimentation features, physical exercises or sedentary style, leisure time and stress limitation, behaviours of prevention against various diseases (Cohen, S., et al ., 1983 WHO, Carver, CS).

## **RESULTS**

Regarding the personologic size poles, although the investigated group is not statistically significant in order to extrapolate the results and to achieve a personality profile of the Aromanian, it can be concluded that the main psychological characteristics identified were: responsibility, emotional stability, self-confidence and independent character, realism and ability to offer morale support to others, boldness, spontaneity and sociability - features described in various biographies and which seem to have survived throughout time.

According to the presented results, we conclude that the Aromanians from the investigated group had lower scores on scales regarding the assessment of anxiety and depression compared with Romanians, so, the cultural factor and the legacy of strong personality profile, as it was mentioned in literature, appear to favourably influence the resistance to anxiety or depression of an individual.

The degree of anxiety, depression and perceived stress were correlated with gender and area of residence, in the same proportion at the two ethnic groups. According to the research results, the level of perceived stress is not correlated with ethnicity, being rather in relation to dependent behaviours.

There were also observed differences in health risk behaviours in the two investigated ethnic groups. Thus, for Aromanians, diet is more frequently rich in fat foods (declarative), most of them having a relatively

regular feeding program, lower alcohol consumption than the Romanian population, characteristics that can eventually explain the cases of increased longevity. People aged over 35 are more cautious about health risk behaviours, regardless of ethnicity, although young people are more concerned about these risks.

### *2.2.2. Issues that Lead to the Preservation of Cultural Identity*

In this chapter we aim at identifying customs and cultural traditions of the Aromanian ethnic population from Dobrogea and at making a comparative research between urban and rural population. In this sense the following assumptions were made:

- It is assumed that environmental and cultural identity is deeply rooted in Aromanian rural population compared to the Aromanian urban population.
- It is assumed that cultural heritage is conserved better among young people from rural areas compared to those from urban ones.

### **RESULTS:**

The results showed significant differences in terms of the preservation of traditions and customs between the two areas, these ones being more respected by Aromanians in rural areas. The Aromanians in rural area behave much more in the sense of respect for the traditions and customs, of their retention in order to pass them on to future generations. Also, cultural symbols are invoked more frequently, displayed, people refer to them when they talk about themselves.

The rural community universe revolves around three essential elements, which appear in all the speeches: work, religion and unique customs.

An essential component of traditional culture is religious behaviour. Although modern elements have appeared in both environments, both of them are characterized by strong religiosity. Also, we can say that at the individual level (especially for the new generations), we meet, for example,

a certain attitude of detachment from rituals, and that there is a more pronounced negative image they have for the loss of the significance of religious holidays.

The last half of the century has brought many fundamental changes in the Dobrogea area, in the way of life of Aromanians. In the contemporary era, in some areas, due to the "modernization" and urbanization of the society, the traditional way of life could not be preserved, thus registering a diminishing of folklore, concern for customs and habits. In the Aromanian villages from Dobrogea, folk art lives a new moment in its long history. Thus, if in the past, the pieces of folk costume and the manner in which they were worn were a sign of ethnic identity, currently the Aromanian folk art has more than one "memorial" function bringing back to the memory of the ancient generations their places of origin and to the memory of the younger generation the consciousness of reunion with the great trunk of the Romanian people.

Although the investigated group is not statistically significant in order to extrapolate the results and only 42% of the subjects could be investigated for 2 or 3 generations, it can be observed that the characteristics of a community with traditional features are still preserved, but in a social context that has elements of modernity – the option for a small family and for individualistic values (which increases with education and income and decreases, obviously, with age).

Even if Aromanians in Dobrogea come from different geographical areas, that are part of many national states, among them, they affirm their solidarity, cultural and linguistic unity. Certain customs, songs and dances have survived to this day, thus keeping the distinction brought in the south of the Danube.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSIONS**

To characterize a population it is necessary to take into account many qualitative and quantitative aspects, starting with the anthropometric elements and continuing with the elements of folklore, customs and language.

Following the conducted anthropological research, which aimed at assessing the morpho-biological, pathological, demographic and ethno-cultural parameters, regarding the cultural traditions of the Aromanian population in the territory of Dobrogea, in order to identify the taxonomic and constitutional typologies of this population, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. In this geographical area, the Aromanian population, although representing a relatively small population, is represented by compact groups which have preserved a high degree of inbreeding, proved also by the fact that phenotypic (psycho-behavioural, somatic) have been established some features that have been passed from generation to generation, making a portrait of Aromanians, described by many experts over time that remains true today. This is explained by the fact that the common genetic background of a population living in a particular habitat, determines, in time, the higher frequency of specific cephalic-facial and body typologies and, in addition, is characterized by certain socio-cultural features (language, religion, customs) that during the phylogenetic are becoming increasingly important in structuring a population. Considering the degree of distance or closeness between groups one may also determine mutual interconnections and kinship relationships developed throughout time.
2. Somatic phenotypes (anthropometric analysis) studied on Aromanian and Romanian population in Dobrogea, is characterized by the following aspects:
  - i. Results regarding cephalic-facial dimensions, features that are strongly genetic (heritability of over 92%):
    - For the average size of brain pan and face there are not statistically significant differences between samples of both sexes, of Romanians and Aromanians. There is, however, a higher frequency of long and less wide brain pans in Aromanians in comparison to the Romanians studied. From the conformation point of view, these dimensions determine a mesocephalic towards dolichocephalous brain pan type in Aromanians in

comparison to the mesocephalic towards brachycephalic brain pan type in the Romanian samples we studied.

- Average size of brain pan describes the same type of morphogram in both genders, both for Aromanians and for Romanian, indicating a common genetic background.
- On the face level there are no significant dimension and conformation differences of the samples studied, maintaining the trails of identical morphograms.
- On the nose level, the Aromanian samples present a less longer nose than the Romanians, but wider, aspects observed regardless of gender.

ii. With respect to body sizes, we conclude:

- Dimensions of length (stature, sitting - trunk length), lower limb (also genetically conditioned) distinguishes the two populations:
  - Lower-middle class in terms of height are more frequent in Aromanians, these ones being characterized by a long and well developed trunk in width in comparison to Romanians, which have a wide frequency of great and very great heights and a shorter trunk compared to the feet length, as well as less developed in width in both sexes.
- The weight and body circumferences - - subject to conditions mezologic factors - with higher values for Aromanians, causing them a greater corpulence, through the higher percentage of overweight and obese people, especially in men. From the conformation point of view, Aromanian samples are mezoline to breviline compared to the Romanian samples that are mezo-longilini.

The present research highlights the mezologic differentiation of the body mass index or the Quetelet index and of the main dimensions of body mass (depending on gender, age, native place), essential biological determinants for proper management of obesity. To develop coherent strategies to combat this complex problem, one must bear in mind that obesity is determined by cultural, behavioural factors, lifestyle and by the eating behaviour type. Therefore, prevention strategies should promote nutritional health (consumption of healthy food and appropriate control),

physical activity and adopting healthy/sanitary behaviours (avoiding risk factors / disturbing health nutrition) since childhood and adolescence.

We conclude that the results are statistically significant due to the homogeneity of the samples in the study ( $CV < 10$ ).

Therefore it appears that the Aromanian ethnic population, regardless of biological gender has the same body construction (lower stature, lower circumference of the thigh and shorter legs while the trunk is higher compared to that of Romanians in Dobrogea and compared to the national average), revealed by the similarity of morphogram routes explained by the common genetic background, preserved throughout time by their mountain origins.

Given that reference data from Atlases, reflecting anthropological data of generations from 1970 to 1995, together with measurements series made by us from 2011 to 2012, the growth in height recorded in comparison to the reference averages, as well as the decreases in percentage changes for small and medium categories can be explained by the phenomenon of microevolution of the human species. This is expressed in particular, by the reduction of the frequency of small and medium waist size and a growth of high and over medium waist size. Minimum values increase from one generation to another, while the maximum stature values remain relatively constant for the population.

3. Morphological differences between the ethnic groups studied (Romanians and Aromanians in Dobrogea) are not significant compared to ethno-cultural differences.

Considered as a minority in a world where the majority were other ethnicities, Aromanians have made an important contribution to economic, social and cultural levels, influencing the authenticity of these groups.

Although it is impossible to know the exact number of Aromanians currently living in Balkan countries (in some countries there are no census made, and in others, official figures are disputed) the Aromanian community of Romania, located mostly in Dobrogea is large.

They have preserved and perpetuated throughout time, a system of values, with emblematic functions for the definition of their group



specificity, having as identity marks: folklore, customs, port, cuisine, textile domestic arts and crafts, architecture - basic forms of communication and ways in which a human group reveal their specificity, traditional values.

Aromanians are very special, even unique historical and cultural phenomenon, as stated by Emilia Luchian ("Aromânii: pretutindeni – nicăieri", 2007, p. 134).

Yet this cultural originality is in danger and the Aromanian language extinction is inevitable - "Dying, they take their language with them" (Emilia Luchian " Aromânii: pretutindeni – nicăieri", 2007, p. 125). Economic progress, a broader framework of social life, the penetration of modernity in a traditional organization, all these factors impose gradually approaching of socio-cultural values by the other members of the community, leading to a characteristic pattern throughout Dobrogea.

However, it can be concluded that the Aromanians, so consistently thicken as biological substance through better conservation of the ancient Thracian-Illyrian-Greek synthesis, to which successively Latin pragmatism was added and, to a lower degree, something of a Slavonian reverie as well as through denationalized elements over the ages, in the entire Balkan area, will survive more, not through language but through their qualities (physical, intellectual, moral and so on; positive or negative) which are always outstanding.

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