

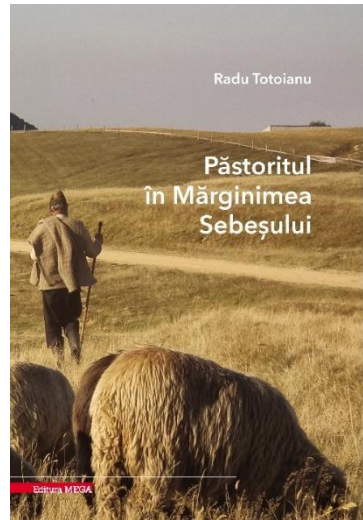
Lucrarea se încheie cu o bogată bibliografie (p. 185-191), urmată de un indice de nume (p. 193-209), un indice de arhive, biblioteci, colecții muzeale din Roma, amintite de Angelo Maria Bandini în jurnal (p. 211).

Lectura jurnalului-roman al lui Antonio Maria Bandini ne aduce în față o societate la fel de activă pe plan social și cultural ca cea descrisă de Imre Dániel (1754-1804), bibliotecarul episcopului transilvan, Ignác Batthyány (1741-1798). Diferența dintre cei doi bibliotecari a fost însă una vizibilă: A. M. Bandini (1726-1803), în călătoria sa, a cercetat arhivele și bibliotecile, menționate în jurnal, în folosul său științific, în schimb I. Dániel le-a cercetat și s-a documentat în folosul științific al protectorului său care dorea să lase în urmă o bogată activitate științifică. După cum afirma în *Prefață* Roberto Balzani, volumul analizează „«geografia» instituțiilor culturale romane, atât publice, cât și private, în jurul anului 1780”. Sunt aduse în discuție conținutul lor, dar și accesibilitatea la colecțiile adăpostite, iar protagonistul jurnalului relatează întâmplări, oferă nume, descrie evenimente, toate acestea deschizând noi orizonturi de cercetare.

Andreea MÂRZA*

Radu Totoianu, *Păstoritul în Mărginimea Sebeșului* [Shepherding in the Mărginimea Sebeșului], Mega Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2021, 466 p.

Shepherding in the Mărginimea Sebeșului, Transylvania, Romania, has attracted far less attention from specialists than the Mărginimea Sibiului region itself. This book draws on material collected when Radu Totoianu was researching this area in 2000–2009, and uses material gathered from people directly involved in the practice. The author also draws on a vast array of written sources, not only on the shepherding phenomena but also on history, archaeology, linguistics, folk medicine and so on. His research has taken him to the archives in Hunedoara, Alba, Șugag and the Sebeș Historical Museum, as well as to the Josephine maps (1763–1785) and historical journal and newspaper articles, in order to compare shepherding practices in the past with those of the present.



The structure of the book follows the monographic model founded by Dimitrie Gusti, the well-known Romanian sociologist. Radu Totoianu begins with a chapter on the geography of the region and continues with two chapters on the

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historical background, five chapters on shepherding, one chapter on social life, another one on spirituality, and the last on folk beliefs, old traditions and customs related to pastoral life. After giving us his conclusions, he provides an abstract of the book in English. This is followed by lists of abbreviations, details of the 36 informants who helped him, a glossary of the specific terms used in the region, an index of names and places and, finally, seven maps, 12 drawings and 104 figures.

His research area lies between the Sebeș River to the east and the Pianu Valley to the west. It covers a great variety of reliefs – mountains, hills and depressions – many with their own specific climate, vegetation and fauna. The Parâng and Șureanu Mountains have the largest alpine pastures in the Carpathian Mountains. Radu Totoianu finds archaeological evidence of human habitation in these places dating back to the Neolithic (at Șugag, Loman, La Cărări). The topography of this area allowed prehistoric communities to practise a mixed economy, based mainly on agriculture and animal breeding. During the Bronze Age, large numbers of bovine bones found in Noua-type settlements indicate that these communities preferred large cattle, which indicates that the people did not move around very much. It is worth mentioning that the author shares Professor Corneliu Bucur's opinion that transhumance on the current territory of Romania dates only from the fourteenth century and not from the Dacian period, as Constantin Daicoviciu and John Nandriș have claimed.

The Saxon colonisation, which was managed by the Saxon Chair in Sebeș, exerted a remarkable influence on the communities in the Sebeș area. Records kept by the administrative unit provide a great deal of information about the Romanian population involved in shepherding. From the seventeenth century, shepherds from the Sebeș Saxon Chair rented most of the 61 mountains owned by the Hunedoara estate. Later, starting with the second half of the nineteenth century and the agrarian reforms of 1921, the shepherds became the owners of the same mountains. This success came at the end of struggles over land ownership which began in the 1500s with a series of long-running court cases between the Sebeș Chair and the area's shepherds. Radu Totoianu considers these cases to be proof of the shepherds' need to acquire their own land so as to protect their grazing rights. With some exceptions, these mountains are still used as pastures today, just as they were between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Radu Totoianu notes that at the end of the sixteenth century, when the territory came under the Ottoman domination, sheep breeding became less popular because of the High Porte's monopoly over prices. However, he concludes that the raising of "small cattle" was still profitable.

Transhumance in the Sebeș area had its apogee during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Documents kept at border crossings show that huge numbers of sheep were taken from these communities to Walachia and back. Shepherds and their livestock went south to "winter" in Walachia from November to May and returned to Transylvania in summer. Compared to the other villages, the inhabitants of Pianu village sent the largest number of sheep. Throughout the nineteenth century, the shepherds of Șugag and Căpâlna passed back and forth. Their routes took them over the Șureanu Mountains, through the Căineni Pass, and into the

Counties of Gorj and Dolj, to their final destinations which were the Bărăgan plains of Dobrogea and the Danube area of Muntenia, both in Walachia and both areas rich in vegetation. Documents kept between 1831 and 1855 prove that the shepherds came from Cacova, Căpâlna, Deal, Lancrăm, Loman, Pianu, Răchita, Săsciori, Șebeșel and Șugag. Their journeys could be dangerous and difficult, and the author cites a number of cases in which shepherds were injured and had their flocks stolen.

Because of the large animals these communities own, transhumance has continued into the present today. In the middle of the last century, before the communist regime introduced cooperative farming, the shepherds of Șugag owned about 14,000–15,000 sheep, which were divided into 30 herds. After Șugag, Loman had the largest flock, with about 13,000 sheep, then Căpâlna, Sebeșel, Răchita, Strungari and Purcăreți. These figures come from official town hall records, but Radu Totoianu points out that they may well be unreliable, as people would often not declare all their animals so as to avoid paying taxes. The shepherds often used to hide their animals in the forest. This situation persisted until Romania joined the European Union. EU subsidies have encouraged shepherds to declare the real number of animals they own.

Rural society in the Sebeș area has preserved the ancient agricultural practices, customs and habits of individual and community life. But the author notes that in the second half of the nineteenth century, certain kinds of modernization began to creep in. This included new financial institutions, comradeships and the foundation of the journal *Stâna* which supported local farming activities.

After the First World War, shepherding declined in some villages (Sebeșel, Deal, Cacova, Răchita and Strungari), but has survived in others (Pianu de Sus, Purcăreți, Loman and Șugag). Article 12 of The Agrarian Reform Law of 1921 awarded tracts of pasture to mountain farmers. In the Sebeș Valley, the shepherds who had rented grazing in the past now become the owners of that land.

During communism, people from Sebeș found that they were losing their hard-won mountains and pastures. They had to adapt to the new system, signing contracts with the state. This brought its own abuses, but in spite of all their problems, the farmers found solutions and survived.

The author augments his commentaries on shepherding life with detailed descriptions of places and the natural environment, the care of animals (including healing practices), shepherds' households and their outbuildings, people's spiritual lives, and unfavourable events such as conflicts over land, violence during the *nedei* (traditional feasts in the mountains), and disputes between the shepherds and the forestry authorities.

Totoianu proposes a typology of shepherds' households, illustrating his ideas with planimetry and looking for practical explanations. A circular plan is the most efficient, because it minimises materials while maximising space. In the southeast part of the building, the householders dig holes for storing potatoes. During the winter, they store their hay in a loft above the stable, because it is more accessible there and keeps the animals warm. They plant trees (fir trees and ash) for protection against the winds. And they preferred round courtyards to rectangular ones, especially in the past.

The author describes practices and beliefs of pre-Christian pagan origin which have become mixed with Christian elements. These archaic beliefs are the expression of a need for protection against the forces of nature, and many of them are specific to transhumance. The shepherds often practised apotropaic and magic rituals connected to the individual, to family and community life, and to the care of animals. Some of these mystical beliefs are still alive. For example, shepherds forbid sexual relations in the mountains during summer, believing that if they engage in such activities then wild animals will attack the sheep.

Community organisation in the mountain villages is rigorous and efficient. The shepherding cycle still continues much as it did hundreds of years ago. The shepherds form associations based on family, neighbours and friends. Families go to the same mountains for generations. The girl or woman who is responsible for milking the sheep wakes up around 3.30 a.m. Hygiene in preparing cheese is very important, as the informants explain. No matter how cold it is, the shepherds spend the night outside with the herds, sleeping in sheepskin cloaks. The men clean the pastures, repair the roads, mend the sheepfolds and restore the church. In the past, on cold evenings, women would meet at someone's house so that they could work together. If men were ever invited it would be purely for the pleasure of their company.

The chapter on folk remedies for sheep is particularly attractive – and useful. It explains the linguistic origins of many specific terms. Shepherds can cure 23 sheep diseases. They use plants, metals, surgical procedures and vaccination.

At present, shepherds in the villages of Mărginimea Sebeșului practise something called pendulation. This is where sheep graze local pastures at different altitudes according to the season. In spring, until around 1 May (St George's Day, Julian calendar), the sheep are kept close to the village. After this date, they are taken halfway up the mountains to the huts (*colibe*), where they stay until 24 June (midsummer celebration, Rom. *Sânziene*), after which they are taken even higher, to the alpine regions. On or around 8 September (the Nativity of the Theotokos) or 14 September (The Elevation of the Holy Cross), they make their way down again, spending a few weeks in the hayfields. On 26 October (St Demetrius of Thessaloniki's Day), they return to the village. The herds that are going to winter further afield in the lower plains (*la câmp*) or undertake transhumance start their journeys on 6 December (St Nicholas' Day).

Another tradition in the community involves weighing the cheese. This takes place on 29 August (Day of the Beheading of St John the Forerunner), a Christian holiday, and the cheese is weighed and divided according to the number of sheep belonging to each member of the pastoral association. In the Sebeș Valley they never measure milk and they mix sheep's and cows' milk together. When preparing *brânză de burduf* (fermented cheese stuffed into a sheep's stomach or bark case), they remove the cream. A salty cheese called *telemea* (a Turkish word) entered Mărginimea Sebeșului after the Second World War, introduced by shepherds from Jina and Poiana Sibiului in nearby Mărginimea Sibiului. *Telemea* became popular in the 1980s. The locals prefer to sell their cheese to traders, as this takes less time than selling to

individual customers. They often sell to people from Jina and Poiana, which are famous sheep farming villages.

Like their counterparts in Mărginimea Sibiului, shepherds in Mărginimea Sebeșului once practised transhumance across a wide area, stretching from Dobrogea in the east to western Romania. Since 1930s, the Sebeș Margin shepherds have tended to go to the west (Timișoara, Arad, Oradea). Most of the shepherds from Șugag no longer practice it, having bought land in the Banat region in western Romania. They keep their sheep in the Banat area and, while at home in the mountains, they raise cows for meat and milk. Transhumance continues, however, in Loman, Tonea, Purcăreți and Pîanu de Sus.

Another new form of sheep farming is what people call “localisation” (*localizări*). Shepherds practising this method bought land in nearby villages from the former communist CAP (Cooperative of Agricultural Production) and on it built shepherds’ farmsteads, as they once did in the mountains. Informants reported that it is easier to keep animals close to their main homes, instead of up in the mountains.

Radu Totoianu uses a hermeneutical and pragmatic approach, from a multitude of perspectives: geographic, ethnographic, ethnoarchaeologic, ethnohistoric, anthropologic, economic and sociologic, administrative, political and linguistic. Ethnohistoric and anthropologic views merge into each other across the pages. This field research is the result of a deep knowledge of the people and places involved, all of it enhanced by the author’s acute observations. Radu Totoianu is an excellent interviewer who, by gaining his informants’ trust, has given us a unique vision of life in a fascinating corner of Romania. Made all the better by the author’s human touch, this is a richly rewarding study for anyone interested in vanishing rural societies.

Sheep farming in Mărginimea Sebeșului has an uncertain future. The price of wool fell dramatically after 1989. If shepherds are lucky they can sell their fleeces to the Middle East but a lot of this precious material is simply thrown away because there is no market for it. When it comes to meat, Romanian lambs are more profitable and many go to Muslim countries.

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