

Balcanistica hungarica rediviva

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“In the 30s and 40s of the past century there was the *Archivum Europae Centro Orientalis* – today there is nothing. There was the *Revue d’histoire* – today there is nothing” – said Ambrus MISKOLCZY at a recent book exhibition, describing the perspectives of institutional research on neighbouring cultures and nations in today’s Hungary. Indeed, we have had to wait more than a half-century for a Balkanistic monography to appear from the pen of a Hungarian author¹. It would be worth a separate study to show how, after a promising start – besides the periodicals mentioned above, the establishment of a Balkan Institute was also planned in the interwar period –, research into Balkanology, especially Albanology and Romanian linguistics, stopped short in 1945. Looking for an explanation in the domain of politics is a highly justifiable approach. Sadly, however, this fact resulted in professional careers coming to an end. István SCHÜTZ also bitterly experienced what it leads to if a renowned scholar enters into research by clambering on the battleships of politics. In 1950, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences trusted him to write an Albanian language book and dictionary. The dictionary came out in 1953, the language book, however, only appeared with a nearly half-century delay, in 2002, “due to the changed circumstances”. As the author writes,

The changed circumstances meant the freezing of Hungarian-Albanian relations, which the servile Hungarian party-leadership sanctioned by expelling the Albanian ambassador. Before long, it turned out that not only the books but also their authors have their own fate. Servility put an embargo on everything related to the Albanians overnight. In the academic year 1948/49, the party-representative of the major department of the Academy of Sciences carried out an ideological purge among the professors and students of the university of Budapest. As a start, he had the author [i.e. István SCHÜTZ] retake his candidate’s examination, which he had previously passed successfully. Later, he rejected his candidate’s dissertation and prohibited him from publishing, saying his research into Albanian language history offended the continuity nostalgia of the nationalistic Romanian Communist party².

It is the irony of fate that the party-representative in question wrote the best studies and monographies against the theory of the Daco-Roman continuity before 1945, although in a sarcastic and scoffing manner. And if you think the weirdness of this situation cannot be heightened any more, we can set you at ease. The works of the likes of this party-representative, who all belonged to the cream of the scientific elite in the interwar period, have been stigmatized as fascistic – albeit their scientific value has not been questioned – by those very foreign writers who are the fiercest critics of the Daco-Roman continuity in these days:

¹ SCHÜTZ, István (2002): *Fehér foltok a Balkánon. Bevezetés az albanológiába és Balkanisztikába*. [Blank spots on the Balkan. An introduction into Albanology and Balkanology], Budapest.

² SCHÜTZ, István (2002): *Albán nyelvkönyv* [Albanian language], Budapest, p. 9.

I am fully aware of the fact that the works published in Hungary during that period [before 1945] tried to underpin Hitler's peremptory decisions in a scientific manner, in consequence of which the Romanians put under Hungarian control far outnumbered the Hungarians liberated from the Romanians. In spite of this sombre political background, I have to admit that, all in all, this collective activity – which was surprisingly rich as compared to the relative shortness of the period – meant the pinnacle of the [continuity] debate, because of the weight of the arguments and a methodology that was not invalidated by political commitment. I have not seen any findings in later immigration theories that would supersede the statements published at that time. I only mention *en passant* that before I established my results, I had not contacted any Hungarian experts of the issue,

wrote Gottfried SCHRAMM³. Well, the above quotation makes it clear that even in today's international scientific life, it is not a good recommendation for anyone to refer to the above-mentioned Hungarian authors. Not to mention what the Western European proponents of the continuity theory thought of Hungarian writers in the inter-war period. It is also indicative that we can barely find references to Hungarian writers in one of the latest – and in my opinion best – books on Balkanology, while in the chapters discussing the history of Balkanology no Hungarian authors are quoted at all⁴. This is not surprising, since Balkanology has been so much driven back in Hungary that even the first study on Albanology, written in French by István Schütz in 1984, was only included in a birthday publication of the Institute of Romanian Language and Literature of ELTE⁵. Over-anxiety is also shown by the fact that, to avoid inconveniences, MTA (Hungarian Academy of Sciences) only dared to publish the author's study *The Albanian language as the key to the Romanian enigma in Romanian language* (an artificial version of Latin created by Zoltán MAGYAR).

Well, considering – and in spite of – all these aspects, we can say with good reason that István Schütz wrote a stop-gap work, which, as we will see, is in no way inferior to the international standard from a scientific point of view. In fact, it even surpasses it in certain respects. This is owing to the fact that István Schütz tried to avoid the ideological and methodological traps that are laid for Balkanologists, who fall into them quite frequently:

Whichever work written by an author from a Balkan nation I took in hand, I found that they are highly preoccupied, confining these broad correlations within their own rigid boundaries. [...] Unfortunately, little and rare solace is to be found in the works of scientists living and working outside the countries of this area, too. Due to their deficient knowledge on Balkanology as well as the superficial knowledge of the most essential Balkan languages, many writers only extracted passages from works by Balkan authors,

³ Gottfried SCHRAMM (1997): *Korai román történelem. Nyolc tézis a dél-kelet európai latin kontinuitás helyének meghatározásához*. [Early Romanian history. Eight theses concerning the place of south-east European continuity], Debrecen, pp. 87–88.

⁴ See: *Handbuch der Südosteuropa-Linguistik*, publ. by Uwe HINRICHS, Uwe BÜTTNER, Wiesbaden 1999 (Slavistische Studienbücher Neue Folge, 10). Hereafter: *Handbuch*.

⁵ *A propos de quelques éléments communs du lexique roumain et du lexique albanais = Magyar-román filológiai tanulmányok* [Hungarian-Romanian philological studies], Budapest, 1984, pp. 522–537.

complementing their findings and conclusions with their own, scarcely supportable views (p. 8).

István Schütz wanted to protect himself against possible accusations saying his handbook on Albanology and Balkanology had only been pamphlets written against the Daco-Roman continuity with a sordid political meaning and a nationalistic prepossession. Therefore, as a cover of the book he chose a picture from *Képes Krónika* showing the battle of Posada (1330), the Romanian troops from Havaselv stoning the soldiers of the Hungarian King ROBERT CHARLES to death. “When a friend of mine heard this picture would be on the cover”, – explains István Schütz in an interview he gave to *Népszabadság* –

he asked me if I was out of my senses to use this picture as an opening; a picture which is included in every Romanian textbook as an evidence of their national glory. And I said: Why not? Not only the Romanians and the Serbs but also we have to swallow the bitter pill. Not to mention the fact that this is the first known picture showing Romanians. This is another approach to history. They won a battle against us in 1330, but we were the first to picture them⁶.

The book consists of three parts: the first part covers Albanian-Romanian linguistic parallels, the second outlines the history of the Balkan Peninsula until the beginning of the Turkish occupation, while the third deals with Albanian and Romanian origination theories. There is no denying that this is not a synthetic, comprehensive and elaborate Balkanistic work – such a work could hardly be compiled by a single author –, but it is one based on research on Albanian and Romanian language history. That, however, does not detract from the value of the book, as the writer, along with Carlo TAGLIAVINI, is convinced that “no research into Romanian language history is possible without the findings of Albanology. Learn Albanian, and you will realize how many other Balkan languages you will have to learn to find your way in the linguistic, historical, ethnographic and other problems of the Balkan” (p. 7).

In the first part of the book, a separate chapter is devoted to the question of the Balkan Language Union (Balkanischer Sprachbund, Union Linguistique Balkanique, Lega Linguistica). The idea of the Language Union was conceived in the initial heroic age of Balkanology, in the 1930s. It became a popular conception, although it also had its opponents from the very start, while today’s Balkanologists treat it with increasing reservations. Its success was mainly due to the fact that with the help of this idea, Albanian-Romanian parallels can easily be explained in a way that the theory of Daco-Roman continuity does not become dubious either. The concept of the Language Union was first worked out by N. TRUBETZKOY and Roman JAKOBSON (the respect of the public for them was probably another contributor to the success of the idea). Trubetzkoy and Jakobson approached language history from a structuralist point of view, which in itself meant that the Language Union was a potential problem for the diachronic approach. The main concern of the latter was the question what causes the phonetic, morphological and syntactical similarities among languages belonging to different language families. They found numerous examples in the fam-

⁶ HOVANYEZ, László: *Mi festettük meg őket először*. [We were the first to picture them], *Népszabadság*, 12 December 2002.

ily of Balkan languages as well, such as the enclitic articles, the analytic formation of future tenses, or the lack of infinitives. These phenomena can be found in such – classification-wise unrelated – languages as Romanian, Albanian and Bulgarian. According to Trubetzkoy and Jakobson's explanation, these languages went through a convergent structural development in a certain period (at *langue* level, using SAUSSURE'S terminology). This is a truly structuralist approach, claiming that linguistic changes take place at an abstract structural level, i.e. independently of the speakers. The only flaw of the theory is that the meaning of the expression *convergent development* has not been cleared up to this day, let alone the fact that it is the speakers of languages that can establish a union, rather than the languages themselves. Thus, as Klaus STEINKE smartly put it, the Balkan Language Union is nothing but a beautiful metaphor of multilingualism, without any scientific relevance⁷. Later it was Kristian SANDFELD who attempted to put Trubetzkoy and Jakobson's ideas into practice. He divided the Balkan languages into two groups: the outer layer of the Balkan Language Union is constituted by Serbo-Croatian and Greek, which developed together with the other languages only for a short period during the convergence process, while the inner core is built up by Romanian, Albanian, Macedonian and Bulgarian⁸.

Sadly, we do not know about any Hungarian linguists showing an interest in the question of the Language Union. This is another reason why this part of István Schütz's book is of special interest. He comes up with two fundamental arguments against the Language Union. One of them is of a chronological nature:

The developers and later proponents of the concept have not been able to answer the basic question *when the convergent development might have taken place*. Perhaps, as many believe, in the age of Hellenism? But at that time only Albanian, Old Greek, and the Hellenising variety of Macedonian existed! Or rather in the centuries of Romanization, as claimed by other researchers? But Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, and even today's Macedonian only came into existence after the Romanizing process had been completed! And one more remarkable comment: the hypothesis of the Balkan Union ignores the fact that besides Romanian *there was at least one more Romanized language on the Balkan Peninsula* – if not two –, namely the Dalmatian language(s), which died out by the end of the 15th century (p. 13).

Later, this chronological dilemma resulted in the substratum theory of the advocates of the Union (S. B. BERNŠTEIN, A. VRACIU, M. PAVLOVIĆ, V. GEORGIEV), which was given an enthusiastic reception by Romanian linguists. This theory suggests that the explanation for the cited linguistic parallels can be found in the existence of a common Balkan mother tongue, the *substratum*. Accepting this, we could spare the torture of chronological considerations, however, linguists have been unable to agree on which ancient Balkan language might have been the common *substratum*. Here are some examples of designations, to show the confusion of ideas: Thracian-Dacian, Ghetto-Dacian, Dacian, Thracian, Daco-Moesian, Illyrian, Thracian-Illyrian etc. More importantly, as István Schütz points out,

⁷ Klaus STEINKE: *Zur theoretischen Grundlegung der Südosteuropa-Linguistik = Handbuch*, pp. 82–83.

⁸ Kristian SANDFELD (1930): *Linguistique Balkanique. Problèmes et résultats*, Paris.

we can only use the term “linguistic substratum” in the case of Romanian, Bulgarian, Macedonian and Dalmatian because only these languages were born in a way that their ancient linguistic basis (substratum) was complemented by another language – the one spoken by the conquerors (or in some cases the conquered nations). As a result of this linguistic-ethnic process, a new language came into existence, which bore hardly any resemblance to the ancient base-language. So *the substratum concept inherently assumes language exchange or language shift*. As we saw, Romanian was built on a Thracian substratum, Dalmatian on an Illyrian one, Turk provided a basis for Bulgarian, whereas hellenized Macedonian underlay Macedonian. [...] If the languages spoken today reached their present form during a long and continuous evolution, we cannot use the term “substratum” (e.g. with Albanian, Greek or Serbo-Croatian) (p. 14).

We must add a remark by AL. ROSETTI, the renowned Romanian linguist, who said it is unwise to put down every linguistic parallel of the Balkan to the substratum, instead, we have to consider the economic and social peculiarities of the Balkan Peninsula, primarily the bilingual and multilingual environments created by nomadic shepherding⁹. In later chapters, István Schütz’s claims that our best bet is to look for the explanation of linguistic similarities somewhere at the level of language mixing and multilingualism, rather than using unfounded, abstract theories. In the following chapters, the author presents Albanian-Romanian linguistic parallels with this consideration in mind. We can deservedly describe these chapters as stopgaps, not only from the point of view of Hungarian Albanology, but also in an international perspective. This is mainly due to the fact that no one has ever written such a detailed and systematic summary of Albanian-Romanian language parallels. Those who have gone into the question more deeply (H. MIHĂESCU, Gr. BRÂNCUȘ, C. VĂTĂȘESCU, I. I. RUSU) have confined their investigations to common lexical elements. However, it is not the mobile words – which are able to wander unbelievable distances at times – that give convincing evidence of a linguistic link, “but the more stable morphological paradigms. The latter can not flow from one language into another, not even in the case of close proximity, so their borrowing is only possible if two ethnic groups cohabit and mix with each other, mutually learning each other’s language” (p. 26).

We might think there is not much more to say about the common lexis of Albanian and Romanian. Reading István Schütz’s book, however, we realize this is far from being true. First, the number of common words is continuously changing, seemingly in a positive rather than negative direction. According to Gr. BRÂNCUȘ, the most practised and creditable Romanian expert of the issue, we know 90 such words¹⁰. István Schütz, however, lists 125 common lexemes, implying that this number is likely to grow in the future. He refers to Günter REICHENKRON, who found 1500 Romanian words of unknown origin in the unabridged dictionary, published by the Romanian Academy of Sciences. It is István Schütz’s special merit that he proves numerous words – believed to be of Dacian, Latin or Slavic origin so far – to have come into Romanian from the Albanian language. Some examples: Romanian linguists have believed the word *crivăț* (a north-easterly dry and cold eddy-wind) is of

⁹ AL. ROSETTI: *Balcanica. Considerații asupra ,uniunii lingvistice’ balcanice*, Studii și Cercetări de Lingvistică, 1958, pp. 303–308.

¹⁰ Gr. BRÂNCUȘ: *Das Rumänische = Handbuch*, p. 265.

Slavic origin¹¹. But István Schütz shows that – although it can really be traced back to the Old Slav word *kriva* (slanting, bent, insidious) – it arrived in Romanian through Albanian, since “the Slavic suffix *-ec* was only productive in Albanian, whereas in Romanian there is no other appearance of it” (p. 15). Since this word was widely used amongst Albanians living near Tetovo and also as a vernacular word in Moldavia, we can draw certain conclusions about the dwelling place of Moldavian Romanians prior to their transmigration. Another Romanian vernacular word is *dandur* (stranger) in the Transylvanian dialect, of which no mention has been made so far and whose Albanian origin is also proved by István Schütz. This word also provides important data concerning the length of the Albanian-Romanian symbiosis and the assumption that the Romanians wandered from the Balkan Peninsula to the north in several waves, rather than all at once. The meaning of the Albanian base word *dhëndër* (in the northern dialect *dhänder*) is son-in-law. We could ask with good reason: how could such a great semantic change take place? Here is the way István Schütz argues:

We can only understand this semantic transformation if we know the unwritten marital laws that are still alive in the villages of Albanian uplands. [...] According to these rules, the boy *brought* his wife to the paternal home, but the girl was *taken* to her groom’s father house, irrespective of whether he had won her by marital agreement or simply robbed her from her parents. [...] The wedding proposal and the redemption of the blood-revenge sworn for the robbery were arranged by either the fiancé’s father or the appointed mediators. Also, a host of mediators collected the bride and accompanied her to the groom’s house. Once, this was the first time the boy had seen the face of his future wife. Three days after the wedding, the young wife visited her parents, accompanied by her friends. However, the husband did not enter his father-in-law’s house. Thus, he remained a *stranger* in the eye of the girl’s family. The fact that the Albanian word was borrowed in the meaning ‘stranger’ clearly shows that the ancestors of today’s Transylvanian Romanians once lived in the neighbourhood of or mingled with Albanian highlanders, and also knew their local customs (p. 21).

In the common Albanian-Romanian vocabulary, a separate group is constituted by those Romanian words which are usually derived from a supposed Vulgar Latin form by Romanian linguists. Let us then see one of István Schütz’s most effective proofs showing that the Romanian verb *a spăla* (wash) does not originate in the hypothetical form **experlavare*, but it is of Albanian origin. First and foremost, “the existence of such a monster word in Vulgar Latin, which became more and more simplified”, is most improbable (p. 16). It seems easier to use the Albanian word *shpëlaj* (I rinse) as a starting point – the author says. In all likelihood, this can be traced back to the Indo-European root **pleu*. This provided a basis for Greek *plinó* (I wash), Latin *lavo* (id.), Serbo-Croatian *plivati* (swim), and Bulgarian *plavam* (id.). The Illyrian name (Splaunon, Splanum, Splanistae) of the town Split (‘Spalato’ in Italian) – which probably meant ‘town washed by the sea’ – verifies that another variant of the root word **pleu* was once **spleu*, as shown – besides Romanian and Albanian – in the German word *spülen* (rinse). Thus, Romanian was enriched through a word of Illyrian origin, via Albanian (pp. 16–17).

¹¹ See e.g.: H. MIHĂESCU (1993): *La romanité dans le sud-est de l’Europe*, București, p. 327.

However, as mentioned before, more important than Albanian–Romanian common vocabulary are morphological and phraseological parallelisms. To my knowledge, no one has ever revealed these as thoroughly as István Schütz. Earlier Balkanistic works have regarded these morphological and phraseological similarities as mere Balkanisms, characteristic of languages belonging to the inner core of the Balkan Union¹² (enclitic articles, the partial or total lack of infinitives, the merger of the genitive and the dative, the formation of numerals between 11–19, the periphrastic – analytic – comparison of adjectives, the analytic formation of future tenses), and disregarded the fact that in addition to these Balkanisms, categorized into primary and secondary ones, there are numerous other morphological and phraseological analogies in the Albanian and Romanian languages. Below we would like to list a few of these, especially the ones that are either left out or just mentioned peripherally in the Balkanistic monographies I know. 1. Only the Albanian and Romanian languages use enclitic articles with proper nouns; 2. only the Albanian and Romanian languages have developed a secondary – copulative – system of articles; 3. this is the only example when a pronoun paradigm of Latin origin, namely that of the Romanian language, mixed with the Albanian system; 4. only in Albanian and Romanian do we use relative pronouns as interrogative pronouns; 5. only Albanian and Romanian form a large number of compound pronouns in a similar way.

The part examining Albanian–Romanian linguistic parallels is closed by a chapter that can be regarded, almost entirely, as *terra incognita*, in which the author describes the analogous features present in the folk-poetry and popular beliefs of both ethnic groups. Here again, he is able to come up with some historical surprises. For instance, linguists have derived the Romanian word *zână* (fairy) from the name of the Roman Goddess *Diana* so far. However, István Schütz shows that, according to the prevailing phonetic laws, *Diana* should have been transferred into Romanian in the form **ziana*, rather than *zână*, just like in the case of the benign fairy *Sânziana* < SANCTA DIANA. Therefore, says Schütz, Romanian *zână* must be the adoption of Albanian *zanë* (with the same meaning), which is, however, of Illyrian origin (*Thana* – the name of a nymph or fairy), rather than Latin (*Diana*), as MIHĂESCU believes. (The unvoiced Illyrian fricative *th* is analogous with *z* in Albanian) (p. 55).

In the second part of the book, the author outlines the history of the Balkan Peninsula from the beginnings to the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Considering the eventful history and ethnic diversity of the Balkan, such a long period is impossible to cover in its completeness, and, accordingly, István Schütz did not strive for that. Instead, he grouped the events around three significant topics: the language and history of three ancient nations (Illyrians, Thracians, Dacians), the Romanization of the Balkan and the wanderings of Slavic and Turkic peoples (Bulgarians, Avars, Kumans, Pechenegs), as well as the Hungarian–Byzantine relations constitute the focus of the author's attention. The reader is led through the chaotic clutter of events with aplomb, dry data are every now and then broken by more readable passages of language or culture history. We learn, for instance, that *karácsony* and *crăciun* came into Hungarian and Romanian – albeit by Slavic intermediation – from Albanian, and the origin of the word is in connection with an ancient pagan custom called *dendrolatria*

¹² See e.g.: E. BANFI (1985): *Linguistica balcanica*, Bologna.

(worship of trees) (p. 61). In the same chapter, István Schütz denies the common belief that the name of the Carpathian Mountains originates in the name of a rather insignificant free Dacian tribe called *carps* (Latin: *carpi*), saying it is better to look for its root in Albanian *karpë* (cliff) and Basque *kar-be* (stone). Also, he provides interesting culture historical data about the date when the Romanians settled north of the Danube. In Byzantine sources from the 12–13th century, the name Havasalföld (Wallachia) was *Maurovlakhia*, while in the ancient Serbian heroic poems (*Junačke pesme*) it was *Karavlaška*. Both mean *Black Land of Vlachs*. We come to understand this denomination if we consider the fact that “peoples living in the steppes used to be in the custom of assigning the epithet *white* to those territories where full-right inhabitants of an ethnic group were living (even if that ethnic group did not have a country with exactly defined borders), whereas the Turkish-occupied territories with a mixed population were considered as *Black*.” (p. 122) On the basis of this logic it is obvious that ‘Havaselve’ denoted this area, which was settled by the Romanians only later, whereas the attribute ‘black’ (*Kara*) is likely to have been given to the territory by the Kumans.

Besides the part describing Albanian-Romanian linguistic parallels, the most heated debates will probably be aroused by the final chapter called *Origination theories*. In this part, Schütz reviews hypotheses about the Albanian and Romanian ethnogeneses. It goes without saying that the ‘official’ versions accepted in Albania and Romania are diametrically opposed to each other, and do not give a satisfactory explanation for Albanian-Romanian linguistic parallels. Albanian researchers usually accept the theories claiming Illyrian origin as authoritative, but it must be said to their credit that they give place to other views as well. E.g. besides the Illyrian theory, Xhevat LLOSHI lists the following alternatives: 1. the Pelasg hypothesis (represented by G. VON HAHN in the 19th century), 2. the Thracio-Dacian hypothesis (mainly advocated by Romanists and Romanian linguists, because it makes their continuity theory tenable), 3. the Daco-Moesian hypothesis (developed by Vladimir GEORGIEV), 4. the Illyrian-Thracian hypothesis (credited to Norbert JOKL), and 5. the hypothesis of an independent Indo-European language (Eqrem ÇABEJ)¹³. From the above, István Schütz deals only with the Thracian and Illyrian hypotheses in more detail. Although the author apparently endeavours to avoid committing himself to either party, it can be gathered from his words that he is for the Illyrian origin: “The hypothesis of the Illyrian origin is not void of problems either; however, these problems can be unriddled as soon as we start searching for the cradle of Albanians and their language in the geographical area which was determined by the Austrian linguist Georg STADTMÜLLER in his study *Forschungen zur albanischen Frühgeschichte* as early as half a century ago. Interestingly enough, neither party has wanted (or been able) to contradict this concept. The geographical environment determined by Stadtmüller is the *dry-forest* zone on the Balkan, starting at a height of 600 meters above sea level, whose characteristic trees and bushes are designated by typical Albanian words. In this area, no botanical terms of Old Greek, Latin or Slavic origin can be found!” (p. 140). István Schütz convincingly denies arguments against the Illyrian origin, he is at fault only for one explanation: What is the origin of the

¹³ Xhevat LLOSHI: *Albanian = Handbuch*, pp. 281–282.

Thracian glosses which found their way into Albanian, such as Thracian *pinom* (drink) = Albanian *pi* (I drink); Thracian *drizu* (thorn) = Albanian *drizë* (thorny bush) etc. Undoubtedly, this question is rather chaotic, but István Schütz tries to set it in order. He reacts ironically to overstatements claiming that the Albanians originate from the aforementioned Dacian tribe called the Carps. It is the irony of fate that – besides certain Romanian researchers, such as I. I. RUSSU or Gheorghe BICHIR – a Hungarian scholar also adopted this wild theory, making it out to be his own concept.

In the maze of origination theories, István Schütz always uses Albanian-Romanian linguistic parallels as Ariadne's clew. He comes to the conclusion that "today's Albanian has probably developed from the mixture of a language spoken by a strongly Romanized, flatland or highland Illyrian group and one spoken by another highland group, closely related to the Illyrians and only superficially Romanized" (pp. 146–147).

István Schütz starts the review of Romanian origination theories by presenting the history of the continuity concepts. For some reason, two mistakes crept in this part of the text: the memorial known as *Suplex Libellus Valachorum* was written in 1791, not 1798, and was covered by the Transylvanian legislation in the same year. Also, what is said about the work *Hronica românilor și a mai multor neamuri* is all true, however, the author of the book is Gheorghe ȘINCAI, rather than Petru MAIOR (p. 151). Nevertheless, István Schütz plausibly presents how the continuity theory has become almost a religious dogma in Romania in the past fifty years. He also emphasizes that Western-European scholars still describe controversies over the continuity theory as a Hungarian-Romanian squabble, although the first counter-arguments were brought up by German historians (Franz Joseph SULZER, Johann Christian ENGEL, B. KOPITAR), which were later topped off by Robert ROESLER, a professor from Graz, who published his book *Rumänische Studien* in 1871. Interestingly enough, the Hungarians draw straws in the continuity debate, especially among historians from countries speaking neo-Latin languages, because "for some emotional reason" they treat the theory of continuity as an accomplished fact. An affair described by István Schütz clearly illustrates this: When he asked the author of the voluminous monography *Histoire des Roumains*, Paris, 1995, Catherine Durandin about the continuity theory, she simply answered the Daco-Roman origin and the continuity of the Romanians were unquestionable for her. This is a clear indication of the fact that Hungarian Balkanology is no longer impeded by politics, rather by the unfavourable scientific climate and disinterest. Another story for the illustration of the situation is the following: István Schütz's review about a small monographic study by G. SCHRAMM (*Frühe Schicksale der Rumänen. Acht Thesen zur Lokalisierung der lateinischen Kontinuität in Südosteuropa*. Zeitschrift für Balkanologie, 1985, 223–241, 1986, 104–125, 1987, 78–94) was turned down by the editor in chief of the journal *Revue de Linguistique Romane*, who said "the readers could hardly join in the discussion". But the story goes on: the review was finally published in *Travaux de Linguistique et de Philologie* (1992, 417–430), followed by a short recital of István Schütz's review, written by the editor in chief of the latter journal, in *Revue de Linguistique Romane*. O tempora, o mores!

Considering all these, István Schütz's book is highly recommended, also to foreign experts, seeing that there is a substantial English, French and German summary at the end of the book. We could as well recommend it as a discussion-opener, since the author does not evade burning questions; what is more, he pronouncedly deals with them as indicated in the title, even if – in some cases – he is unable to answer them. At the same time, István Schütz is fully aware of the fact that “this activity is like bell-founding: the fewer bells are needed, the fewer bell-founders there will be. The more new sprits there will be on the tree of linguistic sciences, the fewer people will take the trouble to closely inspect 8–10 living and dead languages and deal with the white spots of Balkanology. In addition, whatever new results will be achieved after many years of research, they will inevitably offend the pride or nostalgia of the nations concerned” (p. 164). As far as I can judge, annoying “the nations concerned” is not the purpose of István Schütz's book. No, because if we read it attentively, we will realize that it is primarily aimed at us, Hungarian readers, drawing our attention to the fact that every now and then we are also haunted by some nostalgic wool-gathering over the mythic past of our nation.