

**Martin-Dietrich Glessgen, *Lingvistică romanică. Domenii și metode în lingvistică franceză și romanică*, Cuvînt înainte și traducere de Alexandru Gafton, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași, 2014, 652 p.**

Cosmin Căprioară\*

Faculty of Letters, “Ovidius” University of Constanța, Aleea Universității 1, 900472 Constanța, Romania

The first edition of Martin-Dietrich Glessgen’s work, *Linguistique romane. Domaines et méthodes en linguistique française et romane*, appeared in 2007; five years later, in 2012, a second, revised edition was published by the prestigious Armand Colin Publishing House in Paris. We owe it to the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University Press of Iași to have a Romanian version of the book (2014), a welcomed and necessary publication, all the more so as no other important Western work in linguistics has been translated into Romanian for decades.

M.-D. Glessgen is an eminent contemporary Romance languages scholar, Professor of Romance Linguistics and French Historical Linguistics at Zürich University, director of the Institute of Romance Linguistics from the same city, secretary-administrator of Société de Linguistique Romane and editor in chief of *Revue de Linguistique Romane*. At the same time, he is one of the editors of the textbook *Histoire linguistique de la Romania* (3 vols., De Gruyter, Berlin/New York, between 2004 and 2008).

The translation was accomplished by Professor Alexandru Gafton from the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, a well-known personality of Romanian diachronic linguistics, who also signs the *Foreword*, in which he deplors the “decreasing interest in Romance linguistics and the study of language from a diachronic perspective, in general” (p. 13) in Romanian linguistics. Its value and significance do not pass unnoticed: the book may “serve as a model, and has all the qualities of a model” (p. 14). The translator, himself an academic specialist, fully understands the meaning of the hard work carried by the author and renders its subtleties and complexities in a fluent, coherent and elegant Romanian.

As the author states in the *Preface*, the book was born out of his lifetime conviction as to its neces-

sity and utility, which the discussions with his own students, and his own analysis of previous Romance linguistics textbooks—occasioned by a seminar convened at the University of Jena—only helped to strengthen. He too notes that “the text is rather dense and challenging for an introduction to linguistics, demanding of the reader intensive study, while still preserving the qualities of a one-volume text, as compared to other specialized multi-volume textbooks” (p. 23). The author modestly admits the complementarity of his textbook with those of C. Tagliavini (*Le origini delle lingue neolatine*) and P. Bec (*Manuel pratique de philologie romane*), and expresses his appreciation for the work of H. Lausberg in the field of phonetics and Romance historical morphology (*Romanische Sprachwissenschaft*), as well as his wish to urge readers to study other recent Romance textbooks: *Lexikon der Romanistischen Linguistik* (LRL; G. Holtus, M. Metzeltin, C. Schmitt editor, 12 vols., Niemeyer, Tübingen, 1988–2005), *Romanische Sprachgeschichte / Histoire linguistique de la Romania* (RSG; G. Ernst, M.-D. Glessgen, C. Schmitt, W. Schweickard editors, 3 vols., De Gruyter, Berlin/New York, 2003–2008) or *Cambridge History of Romance Languages* (CambrHist; M. Maiden, J.C. Smith, A. Ledgeway authors, Cambridge/New York, 2 vol., 2011–2013).

The textbook is structured in four chapters, preceded by an introduction and followed by a so-called fifth chapter, which includes abbreviations and an up-to-date bibliography of the domain.

In the introductory section, *Limbile romanice și lingvistică* [Romance Languages and Linguistics] (p. 35–69), Romance languages are placed in their proper context, by means of an illustrative table of the Indo-European Languages, after which, in a preliminary chapter, *Lingvistică romanică și structura*

\*Email address: [ct.caprioara@yahoo.fr](mailto:ct.caprioara@yahoo.fr).

*manualului* [Romance Linguistics and the Structure of the Textbook], the scientific and methodological foundations of the textbook are laid, and the great truths of the discipline are reiterated. Starting from the well-known fact that Romance languages “emerged from the same basis, namely from variants of the Latin spoken in the Late Antiquity (*spoken Late Latin*), as a result of differentiation and divergence” (p. 35), he underlines the importance of studying them. The place the Romance languages family occupy within the family of Indo-European languages, is central, not so much because of its dimensions, but because researchers could substantially benefit from the unrivalled knowledge of Latin, their *common mother language*, their evolution well-documented by *written sources* throughout the second millennium; nowadays, when less than 10% of the world’s languages are satisfactorily described and very few of them are historically documented, they constitute an unique *observable laboratory*, an aspect which is by no means negligible. The great strength of Romance linguistics consists in the large amount of *historical, comparative and variational* thought it has generated, which could make “an invaluable contribution to the way we understand the functioning of linguistics, in general” (p. 36). Moreover, many of the observations on Romance languages are scientifically valid for other languages too. In this line of thought, one of the stated objectives of the textbook is to raise the “Romance consciousness” of students of French, Italian, Spanish or Romanian, who thus could acquaint themselves with neo-Latin idioms, and gain a better understanding of them.

The following four sections successively describe the main domains of contemporary Romance languages (phonetics / phonology, morphology, syntax and lexis) from a variational and pragmatic viewpoint, from the perspective of linguistic change, with direct reference to *Romania’s* history, to the sociolinguistic context, to some practical and theoretical aspects of Romance languages research, to its philological foundations, and to the history of Romance linguistics. To give the student a comprehensive view of the field, its fundamental concepts, such as *speech, language, linguistics*, the *functions* of language, according to K. Bühler and R. Jakobson, are presented, as well other problems that linguists are usually faced with. Linguistics is seen in its relations

with language and society, and its main branches—systematic and variational linguistics—find their applicability in the study of particular languages or in comparing different languages, either synchronically or diachronically. Professor Glessgen insists that the comparison of languages, from a typological perspective included, as well as their diachronic study are essential for the understanding of linguistic phenomena. He does not ignore the more recent developments in the study of creole languages, the language of dumb people, or in such border sciences as psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics.

Extremely useful for a textbook, in the tradition of Tagliavini, yet up to date and modern, is the insertion of a subchapter on *Lucrările de referință în lingvistica romanică* [Reference Works in Romance Linguistics]: the great textbooks and introductory studies, Romance encyclopædias (no reference however is made to *Enciclopedia limbilor romanice* [The Encyclopædia of Romance Languages], București, 1989, published under the supervision of M. Sala). The great working bibliographies of Romance studies, such as *Romanische Bibliographie, Bibliographie romane, Romance Bibliography* (RB), published annually since 1878, as well as an online version of it, are all effectively signalled.

\*

The first of the four sections, entitled *Limbile și varietățile romanice actuale* [Today’s Romance Languages and Their Varieties] (p. 71–185), provides readers with relevant and accurate information, in a highly legible manner (*Prezentarea limbilor romanice* [An Introduction to Romance Languages]). So do all the other introductory units, in which M.-D. Glessgen does his best to facilitate our thorough understanding of the topics explored. The terminology used—*language, dialect, idiom, variety*—is carefully defined and explained, within the Romance context. Worth retaining is the typology of Romance languages, developed by the author, depending on the presence or absence of internal criteria (such as *distance* – differentiation between one variety and another) and external ones (linguistic *elaboration*), in line with the terminology used by H. Kloss (*Abstandssprache* – ‘*language through distantiation*’, and *Ausbausprache* – ‘*language through elaboration*’, respectively). Thus, in *Romania*, one may distinguish: languages through distantiation and elaboration (French, Italian, Romanian), distanced languages, with no systematic

elaboration (Franco-Provençal), dialectal varieties, lacking a high degree of elaboration and distantiation (such as the Venetian dialect) and languages or varieties resulting from ‘pure’ elaboration, with weak internal autonomy (such as Corsican and Spanish in America).

The starting point for the presentation of Romance languages in Europe and in the world is a cartographic representation provided by W. von Wartburg, in 1950, however modernized and corrected by M.-D. Glessgen (p. 78). The author then describes *Romania continua*, which the Romanian language used to belong to, *Romania submersa*, also known as *Romania perduta*, and the extra-European *Romania nova*. He insists that “Romance dialects are the true continuators of Latin, not the standard languages that emerged much later, through linguistic elaboration” (p. 77). Basically, all today’s Romance idioms are tributary to contemporary nations and to the ‘communicational spaces’ formed by these. The role of the dominant ‘proof-languages’ (= national, standardized languages) is now assumed by national languages: Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian, Romansch / Rhaeto-Romance and Romanian. Since the book was originally intended for a Francophone audience, the writer then gives an apt description of the geo-linguistic divisions of *Galo-Romania* and *Italo-Romania*, respectively, with a brief incursion into synchronic and diachronic dialectology. Using such criteria as the number of speakers, the contact languages, the elaboration of a written version of the language, and the importance of dialects, he proceeds to the external characteristic of French, Occitan, Gascon (which could eventually be taken for a dialect of *langue d’oc*), Franco-Provençal, Italian, Sardinian, Romansch, Ladin and Friulian, Spanish, Catalan, Valencian, the Balearic Islands idioms, Galician, Portuguese and Romanian, that is, the 14 Romance idioms he takes into consideration. Two great themes conclude the first chapter of this section. The former, details the linguistic typology proposed above, for each Romance idiom, which the scholar illustrates and comments upon, with reference to a fragment from *Pater Noster*, while taking a reflexive-critical stance against well-known classifications of Romance languages. Faced with the complexity of the problem, the author accepts, for practical reasons mainly, that it may be “acceptable to appeal to such already established labels as *Ibero-Romantic*, *Galo-Romantic*,

*Italo-Romantic*” (p. 122) and “*Daco-Romantic*” (for “*South-eastern Romania*”), today represented only by the Romanian language. The latter theme examines the implications of linguistic contact in *Romania*; this could lead, says the author, either to diglossia, or polyglossia, from which bilingualism or plurilingualism may emerge. The idea that Anglo-Norman and even Romanian may have resulted from the blending of Romance and non-Romance idioms is interesting, but we cannot entirely sympathize with it. The Romance character of the Romanian language would therefore be “the partial effect or re-Latinizations and Francizations, operated during its ‘elaboration’, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which would account for the presence of a small number of Slavonic elements in it” (p. 126). The fact that a language belongs to some linguistic group largely depends on its morphology, and the morphology of Romanian is almost entirely of Latin origin.

The next chapter, *Studiul limbilor romanice sub aspect variațional* [The Variational Study of Romance Languages], connects the field of Romance languages with that of variational linguistics, whose foundations were laid by L. Flydal, and re-elaborated by E. Coșeriu in 1966. As usual, a dense, methodical and theoretical preamble opens the chapter, and clearly delineates linguistic variation and its limits due to the principles of *comprehensibility*, *grammaticality* and *accessibility* that govern human communication. A first variational type is the diatopic one, that is, the variation in space of spoken Latin, which favoured the appearance of some primary dialects—the origin of Romance idioms—that afterwards developed, in turn, their own territorial varieties—in other words, secondary dialects. Professor Glessgen uses the occasion to introduce us to the methods of linguistic geography, to the tools of the dialectologist, and to the results of dialectal research, such as linguistic atlases, which the study of Romance languages fully benefited from. Regrettably, no reference is made to Romanian linguistic atlases (ALR and ALRR / NALR), highly professional works, much appreciated by specialists.

The complexity of linguistic variations involves, in addition to diatopic variations, differences amongst social categories of speakers (diastratic variations) and amongst ‘textual genres’ (diaphazic variations); they are interdependent within the variational chain that manifests itself throughout the

various compartments of the dia-system of Romance languages, which increases the difficulty, but at the same time facilitates, comparative linguistic research. Diatopic variations are the predilect object of study of dialectology, while sociolinguistics deals with diastratic variations, in close connection with the diaphasic ones, for which we must underline the importance of *linguistic prestige* in their organization. Prestige can be related to linguistic *closeness* and *distance*, both in their oral aspect and in the written one, since distance is considerably strengthened through writing.

The last chapter of the first section is devoted to textual linguistics and pragmatics, with direct reference to the Romance domain. This is essentially a qualified introduction to the theory of textual genres and to pragmatics, together with an accurate description of the way in which they interrelate.

\*

The second section of the work, much larger than the first, focuses on *Structurile și istoria internă a limbilor romanice* [The Structures and the Internal History of Romance Languages] (p. 187–429). Firstly, the author divides the Romance linguistic material into four main domains of language that are fundamental for the descriptive framework of each language, and for a better understanding of its internal history: phonetics and phonology, flexional morphology and word formation, syntax, and lexis—proper names included (onomastic and toponomastic)—, devoting a chapter to each of them. Interesting epistemological observations are made about these domains, as well as about the relationships between them. Detailed specifications are laid down for the concept of “grammar”, especially from a generative and constructivist viewpoint. The discussion, included in an interdisciplinary sub-chapter, about the contributions of neuropsychology to linguistic theory, proves to be more than necessary for Romance studies. The coming-together of phonetics and phonology, the separation of syntax from morphology and the joint treatment of lexical forms and concepts are based on the structures of language. Readers are familiarized with such terms as *Broca’s area*, *Wernicke’s area*, *centres* governing phonetic, phonological, morphological and syntactic, lexical and conceptual ‘modules’, *declarative memory*, *procedural memory*, etc. Then, the relations of interdependence between the different domains or modules of language are shown, as

well the phenomenon of ‘grammaticalization’, which connects morphology and syntax, and by means of which a *lexeme* turns into a *grammeme* (as it happened with *ille* of Late Latin, which became a marker of definiteness). Linguistic phenomena cannot be discussed in the absence of a periodization of Romance languages, and, in order to do this, the author brings into play ‘external’ history, to which he devotes special space. The ‘external’ periodization is marked by three great ‘turning-points’: the fall of the Roman Empire in 476, the progress of the Western Europe in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and the Renaissance, extra-European geographical discoveries included. Internal periodization is more difficult to achieve, but one may willingly accept the idea that an essential internal mutation took place around the year 700 (between 650 and 750), which marked the transition from Latin to Romance languages; the second one took place much later, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and indicates the shift of medieval Romance languages to their modern counterparts (see p. 197–200). Illustrative is the periodization of French, based on text production, that the author provides. It is worth mentioning, in this context, the rejection of the term *Vulgar Latin* as inadequate; instead, the German scholar suggests we use *proto-Roman* / *proto-Romanic* (*protoromane*, in French), or *spoken Latin* for “any form of oral Latin that underwent *hereditary evolution* (author’s emphasis) in its passage to a Romance language” (p. 200), i.e., that inherited features of the former.

As we have already shown, the various domains of language are treated by the author in separate chapters. We welcome the manner in which he connects phonetics and phonology with graphematics and orthography: the presentation is so clear and easy to follow that even readers unfamiliar with linguistics can understand it. It is a good opportunity for the researcher to underline how important it is for those who study a language diachronically to be familiar with some problems related to graphemes and orthography, particularly when their sources are written texts only. In an orderly and concise manner, the reader is introduced to minimal pairs, to the relation between sound phonemes and allophones, to the typology of sounds, to Romance phonemes respectively, to stressed and unstressed Romance languages, to Romance vocalism and consonantism, to diphthongations and monophthongations, to regular

and accidental transformations, to the importance of Latinizations and re-Latinizations for Western *Romania*. Also useful is the part dedicated to the types of syllables and the role of prosody in the evolution of Romance languages.

Morphology is presented as a science that studies the “internal structure of words (...), concentrating on flexion and words formation” in particular (p. 253). Naturally, the textbook under discussion accurately defines and describes in detail the main concepts of the field (*lexeme, grammeme, grammatical form, simple lexeme, built lexeme, phraseme, phrase*, etc.). The morphological structure, the German scholar argues, can no longer be reduced to the mere “concatenation of atomic morphemes” (p. 260), that is why more recent approaches are based on *lexeme* and *grammeme*.

As far as morphology is concerned, after dealing with flexion and its main characteristics, with grammatical categories (“morphological and syntactic features”) and flexional classes, the author passes on to the practical description of the main transformations that the nominal flexion, the adjective, the pronominal system and, partially, the verbal paradigms (French, Italian and Spanish preserving the present, the imperfect, and the future indicative) underwent during the transition from Latin to the Romance languages. As far as word-formation is concerned, generous space is allotted to derivation (pre-fixation and suffixation) as the chief means of forming new lexical units in the Romance space, to compounding, but also to other means of enriching the vocabulary, such as abbreviations and acronyms, de-locative, blending, and voluntary formal disfigurements (as in *verlang*, from French *à l'envers*). However, some remarks on the terminology used in the textbook may prove useful for its Romanian readers. Thus, by *conversion* the author understands either derivation with a flexional affix (It. *pianta* → It. *piantare*), or regressive derivation (It. *arrivare* → It. *arrivo*); *improper derivation*, also called “zero derivation”, is conversion proper (It. *il fare* “the act of doing something”); *gender change* refers to derivation by means of motional suffixes, and *para-synthesis* stands for para-synthetic derivation (p. 290).

The chapter on syntax is rich in details of both an epistemological and a methodological nature that make the transition to the description, from a modern perspective, of the Noun Phrase (NP), of the Verb

Phrase (VP), and of clauses in Romance languages. The data on the Verb Phrase substantially complete those from the previous chapter. On page 322, a summary of Latino-Romance transformations of the verbal system is inserted. As regards the Romance clause, the author starts from the premise that, in spite of a common assertive content, the linear forms of expression may be different even within the same language. The rendition of a semantic-pragmatic hierarchy through linear structures (in time, in writing, and in space) can be done in diverse ways. However, the common figuration (distribution) of the component elements, and the grammatical marking impose certain restrictions that diminish the possibilities of expressing assertive content. Four fundamental ensembles for the (diachronic) study of the clause in Romance languages are dealt with: the constituent order (from SOV in Latin to a less rigid SVO in Romance languages), the actantial functions (four actantial functions prove to be more frequent: *agent, patient, receiver, and beneficiary*, followed by others, such as *experient, instrumental, and locative*, and rarely by such roles as *modal, temporal, and resultative*), the informational structure (the *theme-rheme* order dominates contemporary Romance languages), and subordination (usually marked conjunctionally and strengthened by the development of writing). A handy summary of the Latino-Romance changes in morphology and syntax appears on p. 350 sqq., followed by a review of the foremost Western grammars.

Lexicology is thoroughly presented in the homonymous chapter. Its fundamentals are precisely defined by the author, as are the various aspects of the semiotic theory (see, for instance, p. 363–367, for *semiotic triangle, trapezes, pentagon, and square*, corresponding to various theories on the nature of the linguistic sign). Next, he analyses the connections between Romance changes and semantic relations in the evolution of Latin lexemes, particularly the role of synecdoche, metonymy, and metaphor, all these subsumed to the need of expressiveness. Modifications due to formal motifs, such as popular etymology or ellipsis, are not forgotten either (It. *borsa di studi* → It. *borsa*). Familiar with inter- and transdisciplinary approaches, M.-D. Glessgen examines semantic change from a historical and anthropological viewpoint (p. 388 sqq.), and historical onomasiology is also not ignored (p. 389

sqq.). Phraseology is treated in strong connection with the context, and Romance linguistic borrowings are given the required attention. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the section is practically a small treatise on linguistic borrowings, since it includes extensive data about linguistic contacts from the time of the Roman Empire to later periods, it develops a typology of borrowings, and carefully traces their path and the modifications they underwent in the process, their quantitative importance, the difficulties one has to surmount in order to establish their correct origin, etc. Romance onomastics and de-onomastics rarely figure in textbooks on Romance languages, yet Professor Glessgen also finds room for these in his manual. It is impossible to overstate the enormous heuristic potential of lexicology and etymology for diachronic study: interested readers are introduced to the most useful and recent instruments, to historical and etymological dictionaries of French and other Romance languages. The following are mentioned for Romanian: *Dicționarul etimologic* by Al. Ciorănescu, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch* by S. Pușcariu, and *Rumänisch-deutsches Wörterbuch* by H. Tiktin, re-edited by P. Miron.

\*

The third section deals with *Istoria externă a limbilor și a varietăților române* [The External History of Languages and Romance Language Varieties] (p. 431–538). First of all, in the *Introduction*, the author underlies the indissoluble connection between the internal history of a language and the external one, as well as between the societies to which the speakers of a language belong to: “External history is the indispensable counterpart of internal history (...) the two views are interdependent.” (p. 433). Historical linguistics finds support in the history of *standard languages*, normally established through writing, in time. The methodological importance of *Romania’s* external history goes beyond Romance studies. Professor Glessgen traces the fragmentation of *Romania*, that is, the passage from Latin to Romance languages, which he places around the year 700, the appearance of writing, and the standardization of Romance languages, which began in the Middle Ages and ended with the emergence of complex linguistic diasystems. Determinant for external isotropy are, in the author’s opinion, four factors (in the description of each of the phases in the evolution of Romance languages, he focuses on these in particular), namely,

space and demography, linguistic contact, infrastructure and the socio-cultural, political, and economic organization, and last but not least, the culture of writing, linguistic reflection, and the diasystem—the last two representing extremely complex factors. Each stage in the evolution of Romance societies is treated in a separate section. The earliest phase, the Roman Age, from the beginnings to the 5<sup>th</sup> century, familiarizes us with the Roman expansion and the complex aspects of the Romanizing process (“Latinization”), through which the new subjects “adapted themselves to Latin, at first as a *language of circulation / interchange* (author’s emphasis), then as a language of current communication, and finally as a maternal tongue” (p. 446), with linguistic contact (substrate, adstrate and superstrate) and the role it played in the fragmentation of *Romania*, with a discussion of the causes that led to the regionalization of Latin, an otherwise relatively homogeneous language. The next chapter traces the genesis of *Romania*, that is, the period between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. A number of factors furthered the transition from Latin to Romance languages, the most significant being the fall of the Roman Empire, the disintegration of its infrastructure (roads, administration, schools, jurisdiction) and troubles inside the diasystem, especially the interruption of ‘vertical communication’ (a term taken over from M. Banniard), i.e., the illiterates were no longer able to understand spoken or written Latin. The critical period, when most of the innovative linguistic particularities restructured into new systems, when linguistic transformations seem to have accelerated, operating on three successive generations, and when orality restructured as a result of the weakening of the old written norms (a factor added by Glessgen), could be the one hundred years period from 650 to 750 (v. RSG art. 51). In any case, about the year 1000, contemporaries were aware of a cleavage between the “*erudite language*, written and spoken in narrow circles (and used in public, on formal occasions), and the maternal, daily, almost exclusively spoken *communication language* (author’s emphasis)” (p. 455). In fact, in writing, three different types of “linguistic elaboration” were used, namely “Standard or Normed Latin, Rustic Latin, and Romance” (p. 470), a situation which could be termed as a conscious triglossia. As regards the new geography of the Romance space, *Romania* benefits from a well-balanced treatment (p. 458–460)—due

perhaps to the articles published in RSG by such reputed scholars as I. Fischer and St. Dumistrăcel (see the considerations, worthy of attention, in the *Foreword*, on the treatment of the Romanian language in the textbook, p. 17–20)—, which serves as a valuable counterexample to the contiguous space of Central and Western *Romania*, since it is the only isolated Romance language, it is spoken by an Orthodox population, and underwent direct Slavonic influence.

In the next chapter, *Romania în Evul Mediu timpuriu (secolele al XI-lea – al XV-lea)* [*Romania in the Middle Ages (11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries)*], readers are introduced to the Iberian Reconquista, the setting up of *Galo-Romania* and the Norman conquest of England. Copious references to the crusades and the Venetian domination over Dalmatia, to the role Italian and Iberian merchants played throughout the Mediterranean and the Atlantic space round up the picture. It was an age characterized by stability, fluctuations within the constituted spaces, with the Church playing a decisive role in the development of society and of the culture of writing. It was an “age of progress for Romance languages, when their European territorial bases were laid and it was also the time of the first ‘elaboration’, under the ægis of Latin, of course. (...) It was the age of non-dogmatic and weakly conflictual *plurilinguism* (author’s emphasis), based on the spoken and written regional varieties” (p. 498). Chapter 3.5 focuses on *Epoca modernă (1500 – sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea)* [*The Modern Age (1500 – end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century)*], when “*Standard Romance Languages* (author’s emphasis)” (p. 499) and the so-called ‘proof languages’ emerged. The period also saw the development of writing, stimulated by the invention of the printing press. It was a time when reflection on language flourished, linguistic legislation appeared, and academies were established, and when the Romanian language underwent partial elaboration. *Epoca contemporană (1880–2000)* [*The Contemporary Age (1880–2000)*] is the topic of the next chapter. This time, the problem the Romanist faces is the abundance of sources. The state power – state territory – national language triad was set up during this period. At that moment, the cohesion of standard languages increased (even if it actually involved *pluri-ethnic standardizations*, confronted with many *centrifugal tendencies* – p. 529), when the regional variants of

alloglot languages disappeared, and the “linguistics of the layman” developed, as well as some popular varieties, such as *youth or marginal / suburbs language*. In the last chapter, the author analyses the contributions to the discipline of external history: it is, in fact, a summary of the conclusions of the third part.

\*

The fourth part, entitled *Elemente de metodologie și de practică a cercetării* [*Elements of Methodology and Research Practice*] (p. 539–623), opens with a review of the main methodological domains, aimed at those who want to engage in linguistic research. The author then focuses on two great topics: philology, as an essential branch of linguistics, and the history of the discipline. In a preamble, the linguist expresses his regret that in the first edition of the textbook, given the narrow printing space and the complexity of the phenomena, he had not been able to deal, as intended, with the problem of oral sources for *Romania*.

The approach to philology is equally intricate. A classification of genres is made according to the great synthetic works, written sources are organized and described, the main modalities of material encoding and the transmission of old texts are presented (support, types of writing, prints), the theory and practice of editing texts—old texts in particular—are adequately described, as well as the connection between the editing process and the linguistic study. Those who have advanced IT competences may benefit from the author’s introduction to corpus linguistics, where they are acquainted with defining and coding textual data, with linguistic programming and analysis, and with reference databases.

The history of the discipline begins, in fact, with a history of linguistics and of the quality of the ‘linguist’. It continues with the historical-comparative paradigm that was the dominant approach for more than a century, and ends with the modern one, which governed the former half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in particular. Professor Glessgen’s book gives us a panoramic view of various linguistic disciplines, and introduces us to the founding works and personalities. As I. Iordan rightly observed in his *Linguistică romanică. Evoluție, curente, metode* [*Romance Linguistics. Evolution, Trends, Methods*], one can notice that Romance linguistics played a major role in the emergence and development of other linguistic discip-

lines. The pedagogical perspective on the discipline could not be absent from such an inclusive work (see Subchapter 4.2.4., *Teorie, practică și învățămîntul romanisticii* [Theory, Practice and Romance Studies], an aspect that demonstrates the author's preoccupation with the setting up of an epistemologically coherent domain), nor could the relations between linguistics and politics be absent either. The work concludes with an epilogue-subchapter, which turns into a passionate plea for linguistics.

\*

M.-D. Glessgen's *Romance Linguistics* is more than a textbook, it is *a textbook of textbooks*, useful not only to students in philology and Romance languages, but to anyone with a genuine interest in linguistics. Much like a chess player, the author carefully lays the foundations of future movements with a pedagogical impact. Even if, due to the lack of space, some aspects

are not treated or dealt with by the author, others are a highly illustrative in character and could be easily generalized. Like a knowledgeable Cicero, the German scholar carefully, yet firmly, guides us through the compartments of language and language sciences, though the times and spaces on which *Romania* has left its distinguishing mark, permanently blending, in the process, the creative and informative elements with the formative ones. This goes to show how true a remark made by Professor Alexandru Gafton in the *Foreword* is (p. 14): "...Romance studies is not only a science (with its own object of study, a number of specific instruments and methods of investigation, its own objectives, etc.), *it is a means of edifying the human being*, of integrating it into the living reality, of endowing it with evolutive dynamism" (emphasis added).

[Translated by Remus Bejan]