

Thede Kahl, Peter Mario Kreuter & Christina Vogel (eds), *Vergessen, verdrängt, verschwunden. Aufgegebene Kulturen, Beziehungen und Orientierungen in der Balkanromania*, Frank & Timme, Berlin, 2018, 360 p.

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This volume of the series “Forum: Rumänien” brings together the Balkan Romance Studies conference’s works with the same title, held in Münster between 29 and 31 of May 2014 (p. 11). The Balkan Romanian identity has been under the constant pressure of other cultures, a phenomenon reflected by almost all Romance communities’ precarious identity status, including the Romanian ones outside the Romanian borders. The contributions included in this volume depict the Balkan Romance languages and cultures that run the risk of either disappearing altogether or being assimilated by other cultures and the efforts to revive their identities within the dynamics of the cultural and linguistic influences in the area. The studies are organized into three sections, according to the debated issue: culture, literature, language.

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Rudolf Windisch, a well-known specialist in Romanian studies and a disciple of Eugenio Coseriu, opens the first section, *Kulturwissenschaft* (p. 15–173). In *Aufgegebene Kulturen, Beziehungen und Orientierungen in der Balkanromania* (p. 15–34), the author focuses on the self-determination of the *băieși* (*țigani aurari* “the goldsmith gypsies”, also known as *rudari*, described by Dimitrie Cantemir in *Descriptio Moldaviae*) and the *caravlahi* (the “Northern Wallachians” in relation to those from Greece) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. From the very beginning, the author establishes the meaning of “ethnic identity”, which he defines through the lens of self-determination, namely the ethnic group the individuals of these communities believe they belong to in relation to their origin and appurtenance to a group according to a language, culture and social structure. Five types of self-determination are employed in this respect. However, linguistic self-determination does not always mirror the ethnic

one. Some groups of *băieși* regard themselves as belonging to the Roma ethnicity (most probably by the ethnonym *țigani* “gypsies”, as those who live in traditional communities identify themselves, unaffected by the “so-called political correctness”), yet they speak *românește* or *țigănește*; however, there are *caravlahi*, who identify themselves as *băieși* (p. 23). The topic is further developed by discussing the ethnic awareness in the Republic of Moldova, where the ethnic identity of “Moldavian”, namely the membership to one of the three Romanian historical provinces (the Romanians in the Republic of Moldova, including the Moldavian Region in Eastern Romania) is assumed as a different ethnic identity from “Romanians”, and by analogy, the Romanian language is called “Moldavian”. Using statistical data and considering the factors that can influence linguistic self-identification, of which a significant one is the political propaganda, the author provides a brief analysis of the linguistic criterion as a factor of ethnic identity in the Republic of Moldova.

In the next study, *Erforschung und Dokumentation schwindender Sprachen und Kulturen. Romanisches Feldmaterial aus Südosteuropa in den Projekten VLACH und LAZAR* (p. 35–58), Thede Kahl, an expert in Romanian minorities (and not only) in the Balkans, uses the direct investigation to provide a brief presentation of the stages leading to the disappearance of a language (the diminishing of the community that speaks the respective language, followed by the social stigmatization of that language and the subsequent reduction of its vocabulary), completed by an overview over the present situation of the Romance languages and dialects in the area. There follows a presentation of the initiatives undertaken so far concerning the documenting and archiving the languages/dialects that run the risk of

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extinction. The two projects announced in the title are recent initiatives that include the Balkan region, which is of great importance in conserving Balkan Romania's data. The LAZAR project (*Langzeitarchivierung regionalwissenschaftlicher Forschungsdaten; lazar.gbv.de*), due to its approaches, namely the processing and archiving of ethnologic and linguistic data collected by researchers from various regions, also gathers data on the regional languages/ dialects on the verge of extinction. The other project, VLACH (*Vanishing languages and cultural heritage; oeaw.ac.at/vlach*), uses a part of the data resulting from the first project to investigate the language's disappearance with the help of a commission of renowned specialists. Thede Kahl, who has a significant contribution in both projects, presents the outcomes and steps to be taken concerning the Balkan Romance communities within the VLACH project.

Such initiatives targeted at conserving endangered languages and cultures require a great effort and can only be admired. However, what is to become of this treasure? Another such treasure of incontestable greater value, namely the Latin language, seems to be far from enjoying a favourable treatment in a prestigious university from the same area, as the University of Salzburg leaders intend to withdraw the only position reserved for Latin in this prestigious institution which will soon celebrate its 400th anniversary (1622).

Edda Binder-Iijima resumes in its study, *Present in absentia: Die Idee der Balkanunion* (p. 59–73), the much-discussed and contested topic of establishing a Balkan union. In the context of a possible political-administrative cohesion of the Balkan area by the accession of all the states to the European Union, the author discusses the ideas on this topic that have circulated from the end of the eighteenth century until today. The *ad quem* moment is represented by the political writings of Rigas Velestinlis, who points out that the lack of unity in the Balkan area is caused not only by ethnic and religious diversity but, above all, by the instability of authority, the lack of equal rights, violence and the lack of legislation during the Ottoman rule, which left a deep imprint on the common consciousness. Rigas' scepticism, the division of authority on this area by the surrounding powers, as the Polish Prince Adam Czartoryski imagined, the national impulse of 1848, completed by the idea of a transnational unity in the detriment

of the great powers in the vicinity of the area, the socialist ideas that followed the First World War, the communist plans that followed the Second World War are presented in chronological order to render a synoptic perspective over the Balkan area in the past two centuries and a better understanding of a Balkan union through the European Union. However, we cannot fail to note that this "room for manoeuvre" between the three great powers (the Ottoman, the Russian and the German) has not yet gained total independence from two of the current representations of the three powers in order to enter without certain sacrifices under the authority of the third. The independence of this area and the establishment of a proper Balkan union indeed remain utopian.

There follow two articles signed by Horst Fassel, this volume being dedicated to his memory. In the first article (p. 75–125), the author emphasizes the cultural contribution of "Regele Carol" Publishing House in Bucharest in a period in which the historical provinces Wallachia and Transylvania were under German occupation (1917–1918). The reader discovers this publishing house's history, the editorial context of that period, the fields of study targeted by the publications and the translations into German from folk and classic literature, with a repertoire of these works at the end of the article. The annexe includes translations of four poems written by Mihai Eminescu. The second article, *Vasile Alecsandri – ein Vergessener? Kann man Kleintheater von anno 1843-1870 wieder auf die Bühne bringen?* (p. 127–149), attempts to rehabilitate the theatrical works of Vasile Alecsandri. Horst Fassel emphasizes the significance of Alecsandri's comedies in depicting the image of Moldavia and its capital in a period dominated by a certain mentality, by the attempt to emancipate certain social classes, by the intercultural dialogue marked by Alecsandri, a fine connoisseur of the language, with foreign linguistic insertions from Greek, French, Turkish, Russian, Armenian and Romani. The author of the article perceives Alecsandri's theatrical creation as a model of peaceful coexistence and tolerance in a multiethnic society (without excluding specific means for comedy, among which the caricature), a model that should inspire our contemporary society. A repertoire of Alecsandri's theatrical works is played in Romanian regularly. However, a significant part of his dramatic work unfairly slips into oblivion, an aspect which

Horst Fassel emphasizes in his article, pointing out that it applies to the entire creation of Alecsandri, whose importance in the Romanian literature's evolution is generally ignored or even underestimated.

Jürgen Kristophson addresses the Romance identity's difficult topic in Dalmatia: *Im slawischen Meer verschwindende Dalmatiner und auftauchende Rumänen* (p. 151–162). This area's Romance language is associated with is the Dalmatian, documented by Bartoli, who wrote about the Vegliot dialect. A re-evaluation of the Dalmatian language based on the existing data appears as a challenging process. The language's possible reminiscences underwent deep transformations for which no historical documents are available; to these, the possibility of misinterpretation of non-Dalmatian Romance elements is also added. A similar situation applies to the latter elements. Thus, besides the two Dalmatian dialects, namely Ragusan and Vegliot, the Romance equation in this area also includes the Venetian and Istro-Romanian, and Romanian elements that are borrowings from Serbo-Croatian or toponymic remnants. The author reaches a series of conclusions regarding phonetic evolutions (non-alteration of the consonants *p, t, k, s* in inter-vocalic positions, non-palatalization of guttural consonants followed by *e* or *i*). In the context of the meanings of the word *vlah* in Serbo-Croatian, Jürgen Kristophson brings into discussion the meaning of the ethnonym *caravlah* and the Greek version that evolved into *morlac*, yet with the limitation to the main meaning of the determinant (tc. *cara* 'black'), without considering the meaning 'north', taken from the Asian culture (cf. also the names tc. *Kara Deniz* "Black Sea" and *Ak Deniz* "White Sea" for the Mediterranean Sea—a name that also existed in the premodern Romanian—, colours that designate the cardinal points North and West in relation to the capital of the Ottoman Empire).

The last article of the first section, *Înrudirea formelor urbane: Cvartaluri realist-socialiste în Braşov. Hof-uri vieneze / Remembering Lessons of Communal Housing: The Vienese Hof and the Stalinist Kvartal* (p. 163–173), Miruna Stroe performs a comparative analysis of two architectural styles of different origins, yet based on similar principles, aimed at creating a living space that ensured the necessary facilities for the less privileged. The renewal of Stalin's city that is Braşov, under

this new name, by imposing the new architecture of kvartals in 1952 and the first years of the following decades, proved to be a fortunate initiative despite lacking monumentality. The author mentions the facilities provided by this architectural style related to the Viennese Hof's that could also be found in the city and the contrast with the socialist architecture that still marks all Romanian cities. The architectural plans and the photos provide the readers with further information in this respect.

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The second section of this volume (p. 175–287) comprises six studies dedicated to a series of authors or particular topics related to Balkan literature which, despite their value and specificity, are currently left in the background or even ignored.

In the study *Vergessen und vergessen werden im Leben und Werk von Matila C. Ghyka* (p. 177–196), the first in the *Literaturwissenschaft* section, Iliana Gregori revives the image of an unjustly forgotten personality, Matila C. Ghyka, great-grandson of the last ruler of Moldavia, Grigore Alexandru Ghica. Matila C. Ghyka, a complex personality—studies completed at "École Navale" of Brest, "École Supérieure d'Électricité" in Paris and PhD in law at "Université Libre" of Bruxelles, marine officer, diplomat and professor of esthetics, semantics and philosophy at the University of South Carolina—, also had a great activity as a memoirist, theorist of esthetics and novelist. As he was mainly known as an aesthetician by his work *Le nombre d'or. Rites et rythmes pythagoriciens dans le développement de la civilisation occidentale* (1931), prefaced by a letter written by Paul Valéry referring to a previous work in the same field (*Esthétique des proportions dans la nature et dans les arts*, 1927), Iliana Gregori dedicates a few pages at the beginning of her study to this particular topic, where the reader gains access to a brief synthesis of Matila C. Ghyka's perspective on the esthetics of proportions. There follows a brief presentation of his diplomatic career in Vienna, mandatory for an accurate appreciation of the novel *Ploaie de stele* [*Again one day*], translated into Romanian in 2007; the presentation of this novel round-up the attempt to restore the memory of an unjustly forgotten author. Iliana Gregori emphasizes the means by which Matila C. Ghyka builds a psycho-social image of Europe in the political-historical context following the First World War, in contrast with

the “old” Europe before the war. The old aristocracy stars are falling and a new society rises, in search of a new identity; this society is depicted from multiple perspectives, ranging from behaviors, dressing styles and traditions to its spiritual components and artistic tastes. Matila C. Ghyka’s complex personality can be discovered in the monography *Păstrat în uitare? Matila Ghyka. Numărul și Verbul* [*Remembered in oblivion? Matila Ghyka. The Number and the Verb*] (2018), announced by Iliana Gregori’s studies in the past years.

In *Sprachmischung als kulturelle Überlebensstrategie: romanische Minderheitensprachen und Literatur in Istrien* (p. 197–214), Robert Lukenda draws attention upon a relatively new phenomenon in literature, the multilingualism. In the multicultural, multiethnic and multilingual context of Istria, the phenomenon of multilingualism in literature cannot be regarded as a means of expressing stylistic and aesthetic values or of rendering a particular local flavour, but as an almost “natural” reflection of this reality, which, in addition to the other aspects mentioned, is also related to identity, cultural and political conflicts. Although Istro-Venetian has a *lingua franca* status in the peninsula, the whole area is identified by bilingualism and trilingualism. Exploiting this aspect in literature—favouring multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual dialogue, and opposing the tendencies of uniformity promoted especially through political means—points out to the other path towards identity, by refusing globalization and maintaining a dialogue between minorities and the respect for the traditional values of each minority.

Anita Andreea Széll (p. 215–236) announces an entirely new approach on the volume *Száz fabula* [*One hundred fables*] of Heltai Gáspár, a great scholar of the Fortress of Cluj in the sixteenth century and a writer in Hungarian who was a Transylvanian Saxon by origin (Caspar Helth). The author begins by focusing on the German-Hungarian duality of the writer. Then, based mainly on three critical works, attempts to synthesize the traditional perception upon his fables and the place they held in the Hungarian literature. The author announces a new interpretation method of *One Hundred Fables*, with different results regarding this literary species: identifying the villages’ ethnographic features “hidden in Transylvania’s mountains and hills” (p. 226)

at that time. However, this new perspective’s entire preparation is only continued with a few possible interpretations of only one fable, *The wolf, the hunter and the shepherd*. This analysis is not conducted in the announced direction, but rather augmenting the possibility of examining the fable from a narrative perspective (the narrative voice, the narrator), specifying the roles in the fable, identifying types of communication and the symbolic value of the depicted realities. Nevertheless, these “new” methods of analysis are limited to a general level or mere proposals, exposed on a few lines, without an analysis; therefore, there are no mentions on these aspects in conclusions, which refer strictly to the first part of the article.

The study of Laura Eugenia Tudoras, *La narrativa francófona del siglo XX: un escenario para la memoria del exilio* (p. 237–250), proposes an analysis of Vintilă Horia’s novel, *Dieu est né en exil*. *Journal d’Ovide à Tomes*. The author points out the novel’s main topics: an imaginary diary of the artist’s self who, through exile, discovers new dimensions of his existence. The exile places him into a new reality, whereas his former reality is transformed through distanced perception, being fixed at the memory level. On both plans functions an acknowledged perception that is subject to deep transformations that the author emphasizes through analytical reading of the novel.

There follows a well-balanced analysis of *Poveștilor Peleşului* [*Peles Tales*] (p. 251–275), written by Carmen Sylva, alias Queen Elisabeta of Romania. The study *Die „rumänischen Märchen” der „deutschen Königin” Rumäniens: Elisabeth zu Wied – Carmen Sylva (1843-1916). Aspekte rumänischer Volkskultur, deutsch-rumänische Kulturvermittlung und politische Symbolik in Carmen Sylvas Märchen* of Silvia Irina Zimmerman begins by providing details about Carmen Sylva, followed by a brief history of the reception of Carmen Sylva’s tales in Germany. The author underlines the information rendered between inverted commas in the first part of the title, namely the cultivated character of the tales, despite the frequent, almost programmed occurrence of Romanian elements, to which formulas specific to Romanian fairy tales are added. There follows a thorough analysis of the symbiosis between Romanian and German motives and the cultural-political impact of the literary creation of Romania’s

first queen.

In the last article included in this section, *Vergessen – verdrängt – verschwunden? Vom Kakanier aus der Bukowina zum zweisprachigen Dichter in Israel: Manfred Winkler* (p. 277–287), Renate Windisch-Middendorf discuss the sinuous path of the Jewish poet Manfred Winkler (1922–2014). The Education received in his multiethnic and multicultural home town, Chernivtsi, the war and its outcomes on his family and himself, the time spent in Romania, his emigration to Israel, along with the particularities of his poetic creation are revealed to the reader not only through accurate historical information and critical and comparative analysis of his poems but also through quotes from the poet's diary and poems inserted in the text (or just the beginning of a poem, in an instance), perfectly harmonized with the author's discourse layout.

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The third part of the volume, *Sprachwissenschaft* (p. 289–356), includes three studies: two about Romanian and one about the (Neo)Greek language.

The first study examines one of the grammatical categories inherited from Latin, yet not specific to all Romance languages, namely the neutral gender. The same as the supine, the Romanian neutral gender does not have a clear perception within the scientific community, neither concerning its status nor its history, although sufficient arguments favour its continuity in the Romance space and its survival in the Romanian language. These arguments, along with the issue of their reception, are investigated by Luminița Fassel in the study *Das Schicksal des lateinischen Neutrums in der Romania oder „neutru latin, soartă și destin”* (p. 291–302). The author presents a series of linguistic arguments insisting on the history of the neutral gender throughout Romania, with elements that can be identified up to the present date. A more significant aspect is, however, the lack of reception of the argumentation regarding the conservation of the neutral gender in Romanian (and also in older historical stages in Italian, French, Franco-Provençal and Spanish, with formal elements preserved until today) of some linguists regarded as experts in the field, starting with W. Meyer-Lübke. Furthermore, this was misunderstood by the scientific community, which was provided with the opposing arguments of its demonstration. The author draws attention to this artificial reception

phenomenon and its generalization by accepting a viewpoint without researching the primary sources.

An extensive study follows, *Das Schicksal der Turzismen und Gräzismen bei der Gestaltung des modernen Rumänischen* (p. 303–343). The author, Alexandru Cizek, begins by providing an excellent synoptic presentation of the historical and cultural framework, with sufficient details for even a less knowledgeable reader regarding the political, historical and linguistic complexity of the Romanian provinces starting with the medieval period and continuing, in relatively large areas, to this day (p. 303–310). Historical and cultural aspects are always followed by their linguistic effects, the author following the semantic changes of borrowed lexemes and their reflexes at the historical, dialectal (including the areas of Greek and Turkish influence), socio-cultural (including the inevitable “conflict” with French loans) and stylistic levels. He emphasizes the differentiation between loans that suffer semantic changes and loans that retain the meaning they entered the Romanian language: the former generally belong to the familiar register, those with primary meaning remaining in the general register, even if many became archaisms. There follows the analysis of borrowings, presented at the language level (archaisms, words that have undergone semantic changes, and words that have not undergone semantic changes), first those of Greek, and then those of Turkish origin, each organized in fields (terminology), using general and special lexicographic sources, of which the contributions of Lazăr Șăineanu.

The last study addresses an issue outside the topic of this volume, *Antikisierendes Griechisch (καθρέουσα) im 19. und 20. Jh.: Alte Sprachformen als Ingredienz des Nazionalismus* (p. 345–356). The author, Johannes Kramer, argues upon the relevance of the article within this volume by describing the historical conditions and political intentions, both necessary for the attempt to revive a language, and by establishing a parallel with the affirmation of the Latin character of Romanian and the attempts to consolidate the Latin character along with the expression of national identity, including the orthographic rule, issued in 1993, concerning the use of *â* for intervocalic *i* motivated in relation to the Latin language. The Greek language's historical stages are pointed out chronologically: the pre-Roman period, the Roman stage, the Byzantine Greek, the tenden-

cies of ancient Greek's reconstruction, the challenges in the Latin Empire period and those following the Constantinople's fall, the Phanariot era, marked by energetic actions to revitalize the language of the forerunners, tendencies that became even more obvious with the national liberation. The efforts to "antiquate" the language in this last stage are thoroughly examined in parallel with the political instability and social reality, the author highlighting the causes that led to the abandonment of "purified" language (*καθρεύουσα*) and the stages of the formalization of the *δημοτική* variant. Johannes Kramer underlines that a culture cannot be abandoned when it is a component of a nation, as is the case of Old Greek, which was reinvigorated in Greece with the national

revival at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The author considers that Romanian has followed a similar path in the past two centuries, through the affirmation of its Latin character and the abandonment of Cyrillic writing and opening towards the Romance cultures.

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In conclusion, this volume offers an image of the Romanians from the Balkan area from multiple perspectives. This image reflects the complexity of the political, cultural and linguistic background, and a continuity of a Romance identity in this area that has been under constant allogenic influences and pressures.