# Old Germanisms in the Balkans and in Other Parts of Europe

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## 1. Divergent earlier views

I will start my presentation with references to Romanian, since the latter stands for a rather peculiar case in this discussion. The "total absence" of Old Germanic elements (OGEs) in Romanian is an academic assumption that already has its own tradition, notably among scholars – from Roesler (1871)[1] to Schramm (1997)[2] – who have used that assumption as argument in favor of a South-Danubian origin for *all* Romanians. As I have pointed out in several of my previous articles (see references below), the rather curious thing is that such a persistent view is still considered (at least among Western Romanists) to be a *communis opinio*,[3] which, in my opinion, goes against abundant lingual evidence and against ideas expressed by a series of outstanding scholars of various times (Hasdeu, Loewe, Puşcariu, Giuglea, Gamillscheg, Meyer-Lübke, Mihăescu and others)[4].

In Romania, a rigidly negative view on OGEs was adopted (without evident influence from Roesler) by Densusianu, in his *Histoire de la langue roumaine* (1901)[5]. After a passage in which he insists on the numerous elements that

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[1] See the main points of Roesler's vision (expressed in his *Romänische Studien*, Leipzig, 1871) as well as some Romanian critical reactions to it (expressed by outstanding historians such as Xenopol and Onciul), as presented in Murgescu 2001: 57-60.

[2] I refer to Schramm's views on the "fortunes" of Romanians as heirs of South-Danubian *Hirtenromanen*. In regard to Schramm's vision, my main reproach is not to his express acceptance of Roesler's idea of "total absence" of OEGs in Romanian, but rather to his curt dismissal (with no counterarguments whatsoever) of the pro-OGEs opinions expressed by Diculescu and Gamillscheg (cf. Schramm 1997: 295).

[3] Here I must mention that, as far as I know, Schlösser (2002: 311) is the only Romanist who published a critical opinion on an earlier article of mine (Poruciuc 1999), which had been included in the *Eurolinguistik* volume edited by Norbert Reiter. Schlösser (in his review of Reiter 1999) very briefly comments on some of my examples (presented by him as untenable), and he ends by observing that my views are in opposition to the *communis opinio* regarding OGEs in Romanian. I will find another opportunity to respond to Schlösser's criticism in detail.

[4] In the introductory part of the present article I can mention the main arguments of only a few of the many scholars who have dealt with the OGEs preserved in Romanian. More details (on authors and opinions in the field under discussion) are to be found especially in Poruciuc 2005 and 2008b.

[5] My quotations are from the 1961 edition of Densusianu's history of Romanian.



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Romanian has in common with the Romance dialects of northern Italy and of the Alps, Densusianu continues as follows (1961: 157):

> There is, however, one aspect which makes the Romanian language get totally away from Italian and Rhetic and which remains to be clarified. As it has often been observed, there are no Old Germanic elements in Romanian, and it is due to that feature that Romanian has a singular position within the Romance family of languages[6].

Densusianu goes on (loc.cit.) by assuming that the early interruption of direct contacts between Italian and Romanian prevented OGEs that had been borrowed into Italian (mainly during the 5th-6th centuries) from reaching Romanian too (as if Romanian could get OGEs mainly via Italian!). As for the possible effects of direct (historically attested) contacts between Old Germanic populations and the natives of Southeast Europe, Densusianu considers that Goths and Gepids simply „did not get into very close contact with the Roman population," such a situation accounting for „the complete absence of Old Germanic elements in Romanian" (loc.cit.)[7].

After Densusianu's time, whereas representatives of the Cluj school or philology, notably Puşcariu[8] and Giuglea,[9] pointed out cases of Romanian words that could be best explained as Old Germanisms,[10] important representatives of the schools of Bucharest (Rosetti)[11] and Iasi (Arvinte)[12] perpetuated an attitude of extreme skepticism in regard to OGEs, such an attitude actually being in keeping with a general one among European Romanists. Here I do not refer to a certain neo-Roeslerian hard line (as represented by Schramm's vision – see above), but rather to a peculiar reluctance to accept propositions of OGEs in Romance languages, as

[6] In the present article, all translations from Romanian and other languages into English are mine.

[7] The fact that Densusianu's vision remained influential for quite a long time is visible in Ciorănescu's rejection of previous propositions of Old Germanisms in Romanian (see, for instance the entries *bordei* and *fară* in Ciorănescu's the etymological dictionary, ed. 2001).

[8] I made use of Puşcariu's *Limba română*, ed. 1976. Puşcariu takes into consideration (1976: 269) Old Germanic populations – Marcomanni, Goths, Gepids, Vandals and Langobards – that played significant military-political roles in Dacia "beginning with the second century of our time." In a noteworthy statement, Puşcariu (loc.cit.) considers that "it would not be surprising at all, if the direct contacts between our ancestors and Old Germanic populations should have left, in our language, traces like the ones recorded in Dalmatia […]".

[9] Giuglea is worth mentioning here mainly for his methodological statements that reflect his strong belief in the existence of OGEs in Romanian. In a special paper (first published in 1922, then republished in Giuglea1983: 91), Giuglea brings credible arguments in favor of the following idea: "The earlier belief that an Old Germanic influence is to be excluded in the case of Romanian now appears to be a matter of wrong principle […]".

[10] Significantly, although Meyer-Lübke, like many other outstanding Romanists, appears to be quite cautious about the very idea of OEGs in Romanian, in his REW he includes (without any criticism) several of the Old Germanisms propounded by Puşcariu (rum. *râncaciu* 'halbkastriert' – s.v. 7044. *rank*; rum. *rapăn* 'Räude', *rapură* 'eine Fußkrankheit' – s.v. 7059. *rappe* 'Grind') and by Giuglea (rum. *strungă* 'Melkhürde' – s.v. *stanga* 'Stange'; rum. *stinghe* 'dünne Stange' – s.v. ***stingils* 'Stengel'; rum. *tapă* 'Spund' – s.v. *tappa* 'Spund', 'Zapfen'). In regard to Meyer-Lübke's vision of OEGs, see also Poruciuc 2009b.

[11] See especially the minute presentation of quite many opinions (on the issue of OGRs in Romanian) in the chapter "Germanica" included in Rosetti's *Istoria limbii române* (1986: 220−224).

[12] Arvinte's many doubts about the issue of OGRs in Romanian are manifest in his volume of 2002 (see especially pages 9−10).



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visible, for instance, in a bird's-eye-view article by Meier (1977), or in certain subchapters of Tagliavini's synthetic volume on Romance languages (1977 – see also below). In a special passage, Gamillscheg (1935: 247) directly – and rather harshly – refers to the reason why "the Romanist" either overlooks or rejects the very idea of OEGs in Romanian:

> Daß diese germanische Lehnwörter des Ostromanischen nicht schon früher festgestellt worden sind, erklärt sich daraus, daß die etymologische Forschung auf dem Gebiete des Rumänischen, in dem neben den vorlateinischen und lateinischen Elementen Lehnwörter aus den verschiedensten Sprachen eingedrungen sind […], so weitgehende Kenntnisse verlangt, wie sie der Romanist im Allgemeinen nicht besitzt.

## 2. The *fara* lexical family and its problems

To return to Rosetti, as major representative of a peculiar Romanian skepticism in regard to OGEs (1986: 220), several of his objections to opinions of earlier specialists are worthy of consideration – see especially his insistence on necessary observance of "phonetic chronology" and on grouping of Old Germanic loans in keeping with "precise features of civilization". Also, in a special passage that I will render in translation, Rosetti provides a constructive general perspective that deserves all attention:

> The settling down of Germanic populations north of the Danube and their living side by side with local Romanized populations are […] well established facts. Therefore, Romanized populations north of the Danube may very well have borrowed words from Germanic populations in Dacia. But we must also admit that such words could be borrowed, at the same time, by other populations in the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula. Methodologically, we may therefore expect that Germanic terms should not be detected in Romanian only.

In connection with the methodological line suggested by Rosetti, I consider that nothing can be more evidently Germanic-based and, at the same time, more divergently interpreted than the series of loans based on the Old Germanic term *fara*. I have already published an article, in Romanian, on the main etymological aspects implied by the *fara* lexical family (Poruciuc 2009a); here I will make only a concise review of the main arguments I used in that article (plus some supplementary items).

In his presentation of the Langobard conquest of Northern Italy (AD 568), Paulus Diaconus[13] mentions a demand expressed by Gisulf (a close relative of King Alboin) when the king asked him to become the ruler of Forum Iulii:

> But Gisulf answered that he would not accept to rule that city and its inhabitants, unless he was first granted the Langobard *faras* – that is, clans or sibs – of his own choice[14].

The Old Germanic *faras*, as specific associations of people on the move, are quite well known to historians who have dealt with the period of *Völker-wanderungen*: in speaking of the passage from earlier Germanic clan-like

[13] I made use of the 2011 bilingual (Latin-Romanian) edition of Paulus Diaconus's history of the Langobards.

[14] In the original: *Qui Gisulf non prius se regimen eiusdem civitatis et populi suscepturum edixit, nisi ei quas ipse eligere voluisset Langobardorum faras, hoc est generationes vel lineas, tribueret.*



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communities (*Abstammungsgemeinschaften*) to interest-associations (*Interessen-gemeinschaften*), Wolfram (1995: 69) presents the latter as being of the kind best represented by the Langobard *fara*, interpreted as *Fahrtgemeinschaft*; and, in his turn, Rosen (2006: 94) interprets the Langobard *farae* as *Fahrtverbände*.

No Germanist would find reasons to doubt the etymological connection between Langobard *fara* and the Old Germanic verb *faran* (cf. German *fahren*, English *fare*). In that respect, I could suggest only a correction of the **fara* entry in Köbler's dictionary of Gothic (1989). Köbler considers that Gothic *fara* – which occurs in onomastic compounds such as *Sendefara Thurdifara, Wilifara* – meant 'journey' as well as 'female driver' (!). In my opinion the three compounds quite clearly indicate (1) that the *-fara* component indicated (at least originally) the belonging of the name-bearer to a certain *Fahrtgemeinschaft*, and (2) that *fara*, as designation of a peculiar Old Germanic type of community, was not used exclusively by the Langobards, but also by other Old Germanic populations, such as the Goths of the sixth century (when the three above-mentioned names were recorded). If the origin and the historical-linguistic implications of *fara* are clear enough on Germanic soil, not the same thing can be said about *fara* as borrowed into non-Germanic languages.

Sufficiently clear is the situation of *fara* (as loan) in Italian, due not only to the precious attestation in Paulus Diaconus's *Historia Langobardorum*[15], but also to other clues about the way in which the term *fara* (which originally designated family associations of the Langobards who settled, as *Herrenvolk*, in various North-Central Italian regions) shifted to the meaning of 'piece of land (occupied by a Langobard kin-based association)'. The material given under *fara* in the Battisti/ Alessio dictionary of Italian (ed. 1950-1957) indicates that the meaning of the term in the 9th century still was "gruppo famigliare di origine barbarica" and that *Fara* occurred in a series of place names in northern and central Italy. An outstanding Romanist, Tagliavini (1977: 231−232 – with my brackets) presents the fortune of Langobard *fara* as follows:

> The Langobard state was conceived […] as a union of all free men able to go to war […]; it was a military state, but the military organization was based on a series of groupings of families or *farae* […]. Besides military functions, the chiefs of such *farae* also had juridical and civil functions […]. This term [*fara*], whose etymon is being strongly debated, frequently occurs in place names, together with genitive forms of personal names: *Fara Ademari, Fara Authari* etc. [which should be referred to the Gothic *Sendefara Thurdifara* and *Wilifara* given above]. The Italian toponyms that contain fa*ra* very clearly ouline the area occupied by the Langobards […]. But it is exactly the wider extension to the south that allows us to explain the presence of continuators of *fara* – not as a toponym, but as an appellative – in Neo-Greek (*φάρα*), in Albanian (*far(r)ë*) and in Aromanian, with its original meaning of 'kin' […].

I really do not see why the etymology of *fara* should be "strongly debated"[16]. Tagliavini's presentation is quite credible as long as it refers to the evolution of *fara*

[15] In fact, much earlier than Paulus Diaconus, the one who first mentioned *fara* on Italian soil was sixth-century Marius Aventinus (cf. Battisti/ Alessio dictionary, ed. 1950-1957, s.v. *fara*).

[16] Among other things, the Old Germanic origin of both Italian *fara* and Albanian *farë* is so clear, that the attempts of some linguists to clarify the etymology of Albanian *farë* 'seed, clan' by resorting



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in Italy; but it becomes hardly credible in the end, when he suggests not only that *fara* moved from Italy to the Balkans, but also that, in migrating to the Balkans, *fara* somehow returned to its original Old Germanic meaning. However, in regard to the debate on *fara*, the most confusing conclusions have been drawn not by Tagliavini, but by specialists who have dealt with Balkan languages.

Before referring to Albanian *farë* ('seed, clan') as probably inherited from Proto-Indo-European, Huld (1983: 63) mentions that Gustav Meyer "hesitatingly suggested that this word and Bulgarian *fara* 'race' may come from Germanic." True enough, the author of the first etymological dictionary of Albanian, Gustav Meyer (1891, s.v. *farɛ* 'Stamm, Geschlecht, Art, Nachkommenschaft, Same, Frucht')[17] cautiously mentions the possibility of a Germanic origin for Albanian *farë* („Man hält das Wort für ein germanisches"). Meyer also refers the Albanian word to Langobard *fara* ('Nachkommenschaft, Familie, Geschlecht'), to North Italian *fara* ('kleines Landgut'), as well as to three Balkan terms, namely Bulgarian *fara*, Neo-Greek *φάρα*[18] and "Macedo-Romanian" (Aromanian) *fară*, without any mention of the existence of *fară* in dialectal Daco-Romanian too.

Papahagi (1974, s.v. *fară* "neam, trib") simply refers Aromanian *fară* to Neo-Greek *φάρα*, Albanian *farë*, and Daco-Romanian *fară* (without further comments). But things are quite complicated as regards etymological interpretations of the Daco-Romanian term. Rather radically, Rosetti (1976: 255) – in joining Weigand's influential views – includes *fară* ('Geschlecht') among "the few Transylvanian dialectal terms that may be borrowings from Albanian". In his turn, Ivănescu (2000: 287) considers that the origin of the dialectal Daco-Romanian term *fară* "is Albanian […] rather than Germanic" and that the term under discussion "could be borrowed only south of the Danube." Other specialists considered that a Neo-Greek origin for Romanian *fară* would be more credible, as we can see in both Ciorănescu 2001 (s.v. *fară*) and MDA-II (2002, s.v. *fară*).

For all that multitude of divergent views, there were some scholarly voices that presented Daco-Romanian *fară* simply as a borrowing from Old Germanic, not from one or another neighboring Balkan language. First (in 1922) there was Giuglea[19], who propounded not only a Langobard origin for Romanian *fară*, but also

directly to Indo-European roots **(**such as the ones that could account for Greek *σπορά* 'planted seed' – cf. Huld 1983: 63-64) are superfluous.

[17] It is worth observing that a more recent dictionary of Albanian, Duro/ Hysa 1995, gives the meanings of *farë* in another order (paractically the reverse of the one used by Meyer): "1. seed, 2. pip (of fruits), 3 leaven (for yoghurt etc.), 4 (fam.) race, birth" – obviously the authors of the 1995 dictionary started from the most recently developed senses of the word, whereas the senses that reflect the ones of the Old Germanic source-word are placed at the end. A remarkable fact is the inclusion of Albanian *farë* in a pronominal compound, *çfarë* 'what, which, whatever', which is similar (in structure and meaning) to Italian *che cosa*.

[18] In Hionides 1988, Neo-Greek *φάρα* is given with the meanings 'race, progeny, breed, crew'; the first three are close to the original Old Germanic semantic sphere, whereas the last one appears to reflect a semantic shift on Neo-Greek soil. It would be quite difficult to establish whether modern Greeks received their *φάρα* via Aromanian or via Albanian.

[19] Giuglea's study of 1922, in which he expressed his opinions on the Old Germanic origin of Romanian *fară* was much later included in a posthumous volume (cf. Giuglea 1983: 105−106). It is worth mentioning that 1922 was also the year in which Diculescu, an outstanding Romanian historian of the Cluj school, published his book *Die Gepiden*, in which he not only pointed out the important role



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a status of Balkanism for the term under discussion, as visible in the following passage (my brackets):

> A Balkanic word, whose Langobard origin has been established by several specialists […], deserves to be mentioned here. It occurs as Albanian *farɛ*, Aromanian *fară*, Bulgarian *fara*, Neo-Greek *φάρα,* and (in Haţeg, Transylvania) as Daco-Romanian *fară*, with the meaning of "neam" ['people, nation, descent, kin']. Mr Densusianu [in his Graiul din *Ţara Haţegului*, 1915] says that we cannot establish wherefrom the word came into Daco-Romanian, and that it cannot be considered to come from Bulgarian, but, probably, to have been brought to the north of the Danube by Aromanian colonists. According to Mr Densusianu's data […], the word is used "especially with a negative sense" (in phrases such as *še fară!* ['what a breed!'], and *rea fară de om* ['a bad breed of a man']), which proves that *fară* had had to compete with other terms and, in being defeated by the latter, it had to limit its use and to reduce the area that it must have covered originally.

It was then Gamillscheg (1935: 261) who took over Giuglea's view on f*ară* and reinforced it, also by including *fară* among other Romanian terms that appear to have a Langobard origin[20]. Finally, an outstanding Romanian classicist and Romanist, Mihăescu (1993: 322), included *fară* in a list of Romanian words that he regarded as « mots d'origine certaine ou fort probable germanique » (Mihăescu's list also including Romanian *bulcă* 'cruche', *filmă* 'fée', *targă* 'pièces de bois bordant un lit ; litière', *turea(t)că* 'tige de la botte', *rapăn* 'crasse').

Notwithstanding the diminished importance and the semantic degradation that were apparent in the status of dialectal Romanian *fară* at the time when it was recorded by Densusianu, an earlier stronger position is to be deduced from the quite visible transfer of *fară* onto the plane of Romanian personal names: suffice it to say that I could extract 11 family names *Fara* from the telephone directory of Timişoara and 9 from the one of Sibiu. As for the usage of the appellative *fară*, several more observations are worth making. I will first observe that – at least by the negative senses manifest in the *fară*-based phrases recorded in Haţeg – Daco-Romanian *fară* appears to be semantically closer not to Aromanian *fară*, but rather to Albanian *farë*, as included in the negative phrase *farë e keqe* 'bad race', or in the condescendent one *një farë zoti A* 'a certain mister A' (as given in Duro/ Hysa 1995, s.v. *farë*). By contrast, practically all the Aromanian illustrative examples given in Papahagi 1974, s.v. *fară*, have quite positive senses: *tută fara-aţea di celniţi* 'all that kindred of chiefs'; *de, bre, de! ţe fară-aleaptă!* 'oh my, what a wise kin'; *fara a Hristolui* 'Christ's kinsfolk'. In the same respect, it is remarkable that among the Aromanians (and especially the ones of Albania) *fară armănească* is used as a formula that designates the very identity of the Aromanian ethnos, as indicated by Kahl (2006: 287).

played by the Middle-Danubian kingdom of the Gepids during fifth-sixth centuries, but he also suggested Old Germanic origins for quite many Romanian words. Other scholars subsequently criticized and rejected most of Diculescu's etymologies, but several of the latter remain valid.

[20] Gamillscheg (loc.cit.) formulated his view on Daco-Romanian *fară* as follows: „rum. *fară* 'Geschlecht, Stamm' lebt in Siebenbürgen, also dem Grenzgebiet gegen die Langobarden, dann im Aromunischen, Albanesischen, Bulgarischen, Neugriechischen. Es ist das der langobardischen Niederlassung zugrunde liegenden lgb. *fâra* 'Sippe', das im ganzen langobardischen Siedlungsgebiet erhalten ist [....]; *fara* und *barda* sind ostromanische Kulturwörter des 6. Jhdts; Giuglea, Dacorom. II, 396".



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It is also Kahl (2007: 176) who used the transparent compound *Mehrfamilien-haushalt* in order to define the kind of "brotherhood" designated by Albanian *farë* and by Aromanian *fară*. It is quite obvious that the survival of such a term with such a meaning (which is quite close to the one of the Old Germanic source-word *fara*) appears as normal in the case of two Balkan populations for which pastoral mobility has represented a way of life for quite many centuries.[21] Also obvious is that the rich semantic spheres of both Albanian *farë* and Aromanian *fară* exclude the idea that (1) such an Old Germanic loan could be first implanted by the Langobards in Italy – where it suffered a peculiar (but historically justified) semantic shift, from *Fahrtverband* to *Landgut* – and that (2) the same Old Germanic loan *only subsequently* moved from Italy to the Balkans. Such a move would imply (if we were to adopt Tagliavini's view) not only a rather strange backward shift from toponym to appellative, but also an even stranger return (of Balkan loans based on *fara*) to the original Old Germanic meaning, namely, 'kin-based association of people on the move'.

As I have already suggested, with a sufficient amount of arguments (in Poruciuc 2009a), *fara* must have moved from north to south not only into Italy, but also into Southeast Europe, even earlier than the sixth-century migration of the Langobards from Pannonia and Gepidia to Italy (together with whatever Germanic and non-Germanic associates)[22]. The remarkable fact is that, quite obviously before the migration under discussion, certain Southeast European populations (be they proto-Albanians and/or proto-Romanians) had already borrowed not only the word *fara* proper, but also the type of social structure designated by the Old Germanic term under discussion.

I insisted more on *fara* first of all because what I have published on it (Poruciuc 2009a) was in Romanian and thus it could hardly become known to a sufficient number of specialists abroad. I can afford to make a more succinct presentation of *gard* and *ban* (and their lexical families), since the comprehensive articles I have published on each of them (Poruciuc 2009 and 2008, respectively) were published abroad, in English. Whereas Romanian *fară* was rightly presented (by Giuglea – see above) not only as an Old Germanism (due to its origin), but also a Balkanism, Romanian *gard* and *ban* are words that can be presented as true "Europeisms" (or "Europeanisms"?) of Old Germanic origin, since they have cognates in East-Southeast-Central European languages as well as in non-Germanic (mainly Romance) languages of the West.

[21] In my opinion it is exactly the fact the Daco-Romanians (unlike Aromanians) have a dominantly sedentary-agricultural way of life that accounts for the gradually restricted use of Daco-Romanian *fară*. The latter should not, however, be automatically regarded as a borrowing from either Albanian or Aromanian, but rather as an Old Germanic loan that may reflect direct contact, or it may even reflect assimilation of lingering Old Germanic communities within the Carpathian-Danubian space.

[22] „Alboin (560/61−572) war der Langobardenkönig, der mit awarischer Hilfe das gepidische Königreich zerschlug, wenig später aber im Jahre 568 eine riesige Völkerlawine, bestehend aus Langobarden, Gepiden, Sarmaten, Sueben, Sachsen, ja selbst einheimischen Romanen, nach Italien führte" (Wolfram 1995: 103).



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### 3. Romanian *gard*, Albanian *gardh* and Slavic *grad* as Old Germanic loans

In a longer article (Poruciuc 2009), I aimed to clarify the etymology of a much discussed Romanian term, namely *gard* ('fence, garden, weir). Three main etymological explanations have been formulated in course of time for the word under discussion: (1) earliest of all, Diez, in his *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der romanischen Sprachen*,[23] considered that Gothic *gards* ('house, household, family, courtyard') could account for both Romanian *gard* and Albanian *gardh* ('hedge, palisade, dam'); later on, Gamillscheg was definitely in favour of an Old Germanic origin for Rm. *gard* too (cf. (1935: 252); (2) most other scholars followed Miklosich's authoritative opinion (cf. Ciorănescu 2001, s.v. *gard*) according to which the Rm. *gard* simply derived from Old Slavic *gradъ* (with the main meaning of 'city'); (3) several specialists – notably Russu (1981: 313) – considered Rm. *gard* to be a substratal (Thraco-Dacian) term closely related to Albanian *gardh*.

In the above-mentioned article on *gard*, I brought new arguments in favour of the Old Germanic etymology susteained by both Diez and Gamillscheg (1935: 252). One of the main arguments I took into account is that Old Slavic *gradъ* itself is best explained as a very early Germanic loan, that idea being archaeologically supported by the numerous traces of Old Germanic "enclosures" that have been found in now Slavic territories north of the Carpathians (cf. Kokowski 1995 and Kozak 1999). From the standpoint Proto-Slavic (a *satem* language, like Thracian, for that matter) a word that etymologically corresponds to Latin *hortus* and Gothic *gards* should have an initial *z*[24]. And, in fact, Russian does contain such an inherited word, namely *zorod* 'enclosure for haystacks', which is also a clear cognate not only of Old Prussian *sardis* 'fence', but also of inherited Baltic terms such as Latvian *zards* 'hurdle work' and Lithuanian *žardas* 'hurdle work, pen'. The same Russian *zorod* can be presented as a remote relative (on an Indo-European plane) of Russian *gorod* 'city', which appears to be based on an Old Germanic term of the *gard* family.[25] The family under discussion is richly illustrated by the examples given in de Vries's dictionary of Old Norse (1961, s.v. *garðr* 'fence, courtyard, garden'): Gothic *garda* 'yard, fold' and *gards* 'house, family', Old English *geard* (> English *yard*), Old High German *garto* 'garden', etc., to which the same author adds a series of Old Germanic loans (of the *gard* type) in languages such as Old Irish, Welsh, French and Finnish. It is also de Vries (1986, s.v. *gorod*) who mentions Stender-Petersen's proposition that Old Church Slavonic *gradъ* ('city, fortress, garden') as well as Lithuanian *gardas* ('enclosure') should be regarded as Old Germanic loans.

I consider that, even before East-Scandinavian Varangians came to control East-Slavic territories that they called *Gardar* (on the Dniepr), and before the same Varangians came to refer to Constantinople as *Miklagard* 'Great City', earlier Slavs

[23] As mentioned in Russu 1981: 313 (with a quotion from the1869 edition of Diez'd dictionary), the founder of Romance linguistics considered that "Romanian *gard* is literally Gothic *gards*, from which it may have derived by borrowing, together with Albanian *garth* [= *gardh*]".

[24] I refer to the fricative which (most probably under the influence of German spelling) was transcribed as *s* in the case of Old Prussian *sardis* 'fence' (a clear Indo-European cognate of both Latin *hortus* and Gothic *gards*).

[25] Actually, earlier scholars – such as Uhlenbeck, Hirt and Fick – had assumed an Old Germanic origin for Russian *gorod*, but the idea was subsequently rejected by Vasmer (1986, s.v. *gorod*).



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had come into touch with Old Germanic "enclosures" (as power-centres, and nuclei of cities to-be), of the kind designated by Gothic *gards*. Such a term also became known to proto-Romanians as well as to proto-Albanians in Central-Southeast European regions controlled by one or another Old Germanic *Heervolk* (or *Herrenvolk*). Such a type of contact, which must have preceded the Slavic expansion of the $6^{th} – 7^{th}$ centuries, can account for the fact that Romanians have preserved the term *gard* with archaic-rural meanings, and (in form) without the specific Slavic metathesis, *gar* > *gra* (a feature that is manifest, for instance, in the Romanian term *grădină* 'garden', as demonstrable Slavic loan). Romanian *gard* may very well come even from pre-Roman substratal idioms (as several important scholars have assumed), but in those idioms such a term must have been an Old Germanic loan too, a fact that is indicated by both its initial consonant *g*, and its vowel *a* (as regular Germanic development from an Indo-European *o* – cf. Lat. *hortus*). From the language of earliest Slavs (*Sklavenoi*) who moved south, early Romanians subsequently borrowed the lexical family that includes *grădină* 'garden', *grădişte* '(ruins of an) old city' and *ogradă* 'courtyard' (themselves based on Old Germanic loans in Old Slavic), but they did not also borrow an appellative such as *grad* 'city'.

In regard to the exceptional success of Germanic "enclosures" in the West, it would be enough to mention the examples given by Meyer-Lübke in REW, s.v. 3683b. *gardhr* 'Gehege' and 3684. *gardo* 'Garten'. In the latter entry, Meyer-Lübke gives examples of Old Germanic loans such as Old French *jart, jardin* (> Italian *giardino*, Spanish *jardin*, Portuguese *jardim*) and Provençal *gardí,* to which he, rather curiously, adds just that "Romanian *grădină* is Slavic", without mentioning the basic term, namely Romanian *gard* (~ Aromanian *gardu*). Certainly, the origin of the Romanian term cannot possibly have been Frankish (as in the case of most West Romance terms given above), but another, earlier source from among the idioms spoken by Old Germanic intruders/settlers of East-Southeast Europe. Remarkable about Romanian *gard* and Albanian *gardh* is that both their forms and their semantic spheres remained close to the ones of a Proto-Germanic basic term, namely the one best preserved in today's Scandinavian (Swedish, Danish) *gård* 'yard, farm'.

### 4. From Old Germanic *bann-* and *band-* to juridical terms in European non-Germanic languages

In Poruciuc 2008, I first pointed out how Germanic *bann* terms developed from primitive Indo-European ones that referred to very archaic religious-juridical notions. Such terms were specific to times in which commandments and laws were believed to be transmitted by divinities to humans, through the voice of exceptional (or professional) individuals. In course of time, such individuals were (in turn) medicine men, prophets, priest-kings and tribal magistrates. I consider that the last two stages approximately represent the times during which the Germanic *Völkerwanderungen* began. When mere destruction and plunder were replaced by profitable conquest and occupation, Germanic tribal magistrates (probably still having some religious prestige too) came to dominate not only the life of their own tribes, but also the life of non-Germanic populations that came under Germanic



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control. Such was the period in which non-Germanic natives of East-Central Europe became familiar with Germanic juridical terms of the *bann* family (with basic meanings such as 'proclamation, prohibition, decree').

A territory with the name of *Banat* (< Medieval Latin *banatus*) survived through the Middle Ages into modern times exactly in the Middle-Danubian area once covered by the kingdom of the Gepids. Therefore one can assume that Latinized forms such as *banus* and *banatus* were already in use among speakers of Late Vulgar Latin (or, already, of Proto-Romance) in areas controlled by the Gepids. The ancestors of the Serbians and the Croatians, when they moved south, must have borrowed (from the pre-Slavic substratum of the Carpathian-Danubian area) Old Germanic terms based on *bann-* and *band-*, which subsequently became bases for peculiar medieval Serbian and Croatian juridical terms (that is, for the lexical family of *banta* 'molestia'), which have clear cognates in Romanian.

After having adopted a series of *bann-* and *band-* terms directly from Old Germanic intruders, the Italians also learned, most probably from their Croatian neighbors, about a title *ban* (cf. It. *bano*, included in the Battisti/ Alewio dictionary). The Hungarians did something similar, after the conquest of their new homeland; that is, they borrowed the source-words of their *bán* and *bánt* from their Slavic and Romance subjects and/or neighbors. Later, after Hungarian *bán* had developed meanings that reflected an advanced-feudal hierarchy, the Hungarian title under discussion could act as a reinforcement of *ban* terms in all the languages of the Hungarian-controlled part of Central-Southeast Europe. But, as demonstrated in the whole of Poruciuc 2008, the reinforcement under discussion could account neither for the archaic meanings of Romanian terms such as *bănat* 'accusation', *bănui* 'to suspect' and *bântui* 'to punish', nor for the mass of Romanian *Ban* and *Banu* family names, which reflect a pre-Hungarian situation, in which *ban* did not designate a feudal high rank, but just the position of a local magistrate.

Romanian material is dominant in Poruciuc 2008 not because the author knows *that* material better. The main reason is that, besides the abundant onomastic arguments, the unity of the Romanian terms belonging to the *ban-bănat-băni-bănui-bântui* lexical family is most coherent of all, as they all still reflect an archaic juridical system, which can be easily referred to the early medieval one reflected by German *Bann* and by English *ban* and *banns*, as well as a mass of Old Germanisms to be found in West Romance[26]. And it is quite obvious that those Romanian words (which cannot be explained as Hungarian loans, either phonetically or semantically) are closest to what Old Germanic *bann* stood for, before it came to refer to advanced-feudal realities in various Central-West European medieval states.

No doubt, several aspects of the complex relationship between the original meanings of the Old Germanic terms of the *bann* family and the meanings of Romanian words such as *bănat*, *bănui* and *bântui* (all three originally referring to notions such as "judgement" and "punishment") should be further clarified in the future. For the time being, I am sure of at least one major thing, namely of the Old

[26] Poruciuc 2008 gives a whole series of Old Germanisms recorded in West Romance languages. Here are only a few of those examples: Old French *ban* 'proclamation, judgement', *bannir* 'to sentence, to ban', *banal* 'communal'; Provençal *bandó* 'permission'; Spanish *bando* 'solemn edict'; Italian *bannire* (with a variant *bandire*) 'to make a solemn public announcement'.



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Germanic origin of the *ban-band* lexical family that has representatives in both West-Romance and East-Romance.

### 5. Conclusions and perspectives

I will mention, again (as in previous articles) that – no matter how many contrary views may have been expressed – Romanian contains an impressive amount of already verified lexical material of Old Germanic origin, including: (1) earlier authors' propositions, some of which I have re-checked and sustained (by supplementary arguments): e.g. *ateia* 'to dress up'; *bardă* 'broad-ax'; *bordei* 'hut'; *borţ* 'womb of a pregnant woman'; *burtă* 'belly'; *filmă* 'an evil fairy'; *gard* 'fence, garden, weir'; *rânc* 'half-castrated'; *rudă* 'pole, long stick'; *ştimă* 'ghost, fairy'; *targă* 'stretcher'; *tureac* 'boot leg'; (2) my own list Old Germanic loans, which I have discussed in articles published during the last fifteen years or so: e.g. the *ban* lexical family – see above; *brânduşă* 'crocus'; *budă* 'seasonal dwelling in the woods'; *cioareci* 'peasant trousers'; *găman* 'cowherd, glutton'; *holm* 'steep bank, hill'; *holtei* 'bachelor'; *râncă* 'horse's penis, a fish'; *rânciog* 'piece of the plough'; *scrânciob* 'swing'; *tală* 'noisy talk'; *teafăr* 'sane, wholesome'; (3) another series of such Old Germanic loans that I have checked (and partially prepared for publication), such as: *bundă* 'sleeveless fur-coat'; *căulă* 'small raft for fishing, float of a fishing net'; *cocon* 'child (of a noble family)'; *cotigă* 'two-wheeled cart, forepart of a plough'; *cotângan* 'youth, lad'; *gata* 'ready'; *ghiborţ* 'a fish'; *grindei* 'a piece of the plough'; *grindel* 'a fish', *grundeţ* 'a fish'; *hânsă* 'part of a whole'; *hânsar* 'horse soldier that fights only for boot'; *însăila* 'to tack'; *julfă* 'ritual cake that contains hemp seed'; *plug* 'plough' (an Old Germanism that did not necessarily reach Romanian via Slavic); *pungă* 'purse'; *scradă* 'a kind of grass'; *sprinţar* 'lively, playful'; *sturlubatic* 'giddy'; *troacă* 'trough'; *viscol* 'blizzard'[27].

As demanded by constructive skeptics (such as Rosetti and Arvinte), for the words above we can demonstrate (a) that they phonetically reflect Old Germanic sources, (b) that they have undergone phonetic changes specific to the earliest period of Romanian, (c) that they do not show signs of passage through the filter of other non-Germanic languages (such as South and East Slavic),[28] and (d) that they can be grouped in keeping with a *Wörter-und-Sachen* vision. For instance, as I have already pointed out above, Romanian *gard* shows the Germanic order of sounds (without the "liquid metathesis" specific to Slavic) and it also shows the specific Proto-Germanic shift *o* > *a*; as regards *ban*, we should observe that the *nn* gemination of Old Norse *bann* and German *Bann* actually indicates why Romanian has *ban*, not **bân*, (cf. Latin *annus* > Romanian *an*, unlike Latin *lana* > Romanian *lână*); also, the initial *f* of *fără* indicates that the Romanian word cannot possibly have been a borrowing of Slavic (that is, Bulgarian) *fara*, simply because Proto-Slavic did not have a fricative

[27] Needless to say, for most of the words enumerated above Romanian dictionaries give either "unknown etymology," or they simply mention the existence of similar words in languages of historical neighbors of the Romanians.

[28] However, a systematic focus on Old Germanic words that were first borrowed into (Proto-) Slavic where from they also entered Romanian (see Romanian *cneaz, gomoni, gomot, gotovi, leac, pâlc, ploscă,* etc.) would represent a fascinating line of study too.



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*f* (cf. the turning of the Old Germanic term *flaska* into Old Slavic *ploska*, wherefrom Romanian has its *ploscă*). As for semantic aspects, it is quite obvious that most of the terms above can be grouped according to certain *Begriffskreise* (such as "farming," "human body," "clothing," "plants," "fishes," "social structures," "beliefs and superstitions," etc.). I cannot enter too many such details here; what I can say, finally, is that any minute discussion of practically each of the above-mentioned Old Germanisms would require an article at least as long as the present one. Therefore I will just return to the view suggested by the title of this article.

For the main aim of my presentation, the most important thing is that many of the above-mentioned Romanian words (e.g. *bardă, bordei, budă, bundă, gard, gata, hânsar, holm, holtei, plug, pungă, rânc, sprinţar, targă, tureac*) can be proved not only to be Old Germanic words borrowed into Romanian, but also to correspond to words of the same status in non-Germanic languages of practically all parts of Europe[29]. The three main illustrative examples of my choice – *fară*, *gard* and *ban* – as well as most of the OGEs presented above, in their Romanian shapes, can be regarded as true Balkanisms as well as members of pan-European families. I have previously pointed out such aspects, for instance in regard to *tureac* 'boot leg', as clear relative of Albanian *tirk* 'close fitting trousers' as well as of many West-Romance terms based on an Old Germanic compound meaning 'thigh-breeches' (cf. Poruciuc 2008a); also, I have demonstrated that Romanian *brânduşă* (which designates several species of plants with swordlike leaves) proves to reflect an Old Germanic term *brand* 'sword' that also occurs, as a loan, in practically all branches of West Romance (cf. Poruciuc 2011). Such cases are of interest not only for specialists in historical linguistics and contact linguistics, but also for historians, archaeologists and ethnologists.

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[29] In that respect, I even presume to suggest that the study of European Old Germanisms (including an impressive number of proper names) should stand next to the study of European terms of classical (Greek-Latin) extraction.



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## Abstract

Old Germanisms – that is, mainly, borrowings from Old Germanic idioms into non-Germanic ones (during the period between ca. 2nd century BC and 7th century AD) – have been detected and discussed all over Europe, from Spain to Russia, and from Finland to Italy. However, for various reasons and due to various academic or non-academic biases, the number and importance of those elements have been diminished or even utterly dismissed by certain philological schools, or by authoritarian scholars. This author – firstly as specialist in Germanic studies and secondly as Romanian linguist – has gathered, analyzed and published sufficient material that proves (1) that the already traditional (mainstream) idea that Romanian does not contain Old Germanisms is utterly wrong and (2) that the Old Germanic elements (OGEs) preserved in Southeast European languages – Romanian, Albanian and Greek, as well as South Slavic languages – deserve to be compared to cognates that have been recorded in non-Germanic languages of practically all parts of Europe.



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