

Bartolomeus Kopitar and Josef Dobrovský on Romanians

RADU MÂRZA

Our paper intends to examine in detail the process of “discovering” (in a way, of inventing) the Romanians, as revealed by the correspondence on this matter between two scholars of that period, Slavicists Bartolomeus Kopitar and Josef Dobrovský.

Radu Mârza

Lecturer at the Faculty of History and Philosophy of Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. Author of the volume **The History of Romanian Slavic Studies: From the Beginnings until the First World War** (2008).

IN THE first decades of the nineteenth century, the cultivated European milieus were in a full process of “discovering” Eastern Europe (*Inventing Eastern Europe*, according to the American historian Larry Wolff):¹ Herder wrote an encomium to the Slavs, Goethe was concerned with the folklore of Balkan peoples, while linguistics, through the efforts of Friedrich Diez and of others, had placed the Romanian language among the Romance languages, despite the Cyrillic disguise it was wearing. Not just people and languages, but also regions were “discovered.” This is the case of the Balkans, which had an entire discipline dedicated to them, Balkan Studies, whose father is rightly considered to be Johann Thunmann, the author of the famous *Untersuchungen über die Geschichte der östlichen europäischen Völker* (Leipzig, 1774).²

Our paper intends to examine in detail the process of “discovering” (in a way, of inventing) the Romanians, as revealed by the correspondence on this matter between two scholars of that period, Slavicists Bartolomeus (Jernej) Kopitar and Josef Dobrovský. Thus, we

are interested in their perception of the Romanians, in their classification of this people, from a historical and linguistic point of view, and on their opinions on Romanian culture.

The instruments we have at our disposal and which we will use the most often are the letters written by the two scholars, published in St. Petersburg and Berlin by the Slavacist Vatroslav Jagić in 1885 and 1897,³ which have unfortunately remained unknown to Romanian historians. The only one to mention them, more than a century ago, was Ioan Bogdan.⁴ It must also be said that in the 1897 edition Vatroslav Jagić included other letters than those which Kopitar and Dobrovský had written to one another, that is, letters sent or received by them from other Slavic scholars of the time, like Jacob Supan, Georg (Juraj) Ribay, and Vuk Štefanović Karadžić. Some of them also contain references to Romanians, which we will use in the following analysis.⁵

First of all, who are Bartolomeus Kopitar and Josef Dobrovský? Their names are well known in Austrian and in Czech historiography. Not so in the Romanian one.

Bartolomeus Kopitar is not really completely unknown to Romanian historians, because of his polemic with Petru Maior concerning the origin of the Romanian language and people, the Viennese Slavacist having corrected several of the opinions expressed by the Romanian scholar. We believe that, because of this polemic exchange, approached in the older historiography from a militant national angle, Kopitar was regarded here with suspicion, as “the person who was engaged in a polemic with Petru Maior.” The latter was automatically considered to have been right, “as he is one of us.”⁶ It is certain that a critical look at this polemic, especially at the polemical texts written by Maior and Kopitar,⁷ is enough to place the statements and the positions of the two protagonists in the proper perspective: generally, the Transylvanian was far from being right in this polemic: not only had he gone well beyond the admissible ethical level of an academic debate, but a good measure of the observations and critical comments of Kopitar would prove well founded. We will return to some of the ideas which surfaced in this polemic.

In these circumstances, Bartolomeus Kopitar did not enjoy a very extensive reception in Romanian historiography. Around 1900, Lazăr Șăineanu underlined his merits in *Istoria filologiei române*⁸ (The history of Romanian philology), while Ioan Bogdan praised him in a meeting at the Romanian Academy as a “sympathetic foreign scholar.” The *Rumunica* books and manuscripts in Kopitar’s library were mentioned in 1894 by Ovid Densusianu.⁹ In the period between the two World Wars, Bartolomeus Kopitar was, in the best of cases, mentioned among other scholars who contributed to the history of the Romanian language. His polemic with Petru Maior was also mentioned in the period after the Second World War. Unfortunately, a synthesis such as *Istoria lingvisticii românești* (The

history of Romanian linguistics, 1978) only mentions his name in a footnote.¹⁰ The first re-evaluation of Kopitar appears in the already quoted edition of Maior's writings.¹¹

In what concerns Kopitar's biography (1780–1844), this Slovene studied at the University of Vienna, where he made a name for himself as an employee of the Library of the Imperial Court (*Hofbibliothek*) (1810–1844) while acting as both a censor and an editor of Slavic, Greek and Romanian books (1811–1844). These responsibilities gave him an opportunity to know a great part of the Slavic publications and those of the other people from the empire and beyond, especially those from the East. They allowed him to have an adequate perspective on their cultural life, on the issues their national identity was confronted with, on their endeavors to build national literatures and corpora of historical documents, on the definition of literary languages, on the establishment of orthography. His main purpose was to enhance the culture of the Slavs from the empire and to obtain the recognition of their identity as a distinct group and of their rights. He himself wished “to be for the history of the Slavs what Muratori had been for the Italians.”¹² For his political opinions, quite relevant is the article “The Patriotic Fantasies of a Slav” (1810), which became famous at the time and which deals with Austro-Slavism, a concept which he had promoted and which opposed the pan-Slavism promoted by Russia and its supporters.¹³

One of his best known theories is “the Pannonian theory” according to which the old Slavic language (Old Church Slavonic) had originated in the historical region of Pannonia and Carantania (Carinthia). Kopitar was contradicted by other Slavacists—even by Dobrovský—who demonstrated the definite Macedonian origin of Old Church Slavonic.¹⁴

Like all the great Slavic scholars of the time, he felt the need to endow the culture of the Slavic people with basic instruments, such as dictionaries and grammar books. From this point of view, his work is inferior to that of his contemporaries Dobrovský and Vuk Karadžić. Kopitar only published the *Grammatik der slavischen Sprache in Krain, Kärnten und Steyermark* (Laibach/Ljubljana, 1808). However, he was an important editor of Old Church Slavonic documents. These are best known for their critical commentaries: *Glagolita Clozianus* (Vienna, 1836), *Psalters von St. Florian* (Vienna, 1834) and the historical prolegomena to the famous *Slavic Gospel Book from Reims* (1834).¹⁵ In parallel he achieved a lot as a bibliographer, a work facilitated by his position at the court. He published numerous reviews and book presentations in the almanacs and periodicals of the time. He thus contributed to the popularization of these books, disseminating information, ideas and views on the major topics in the field of Slavonic studies.¹⁶

He was familiar with the European academic trends, not just through books but also through the journeys he had undertaken (Germany, France, England,

Italy) and through the connections he maintained; the resulting correspondence, of monumental dimensions (it comprises around 650 people) includes the great names of contemporary culture and science, starting with Jakob Grimm, Barthold Georg Niebuhr, Friedrich Adelung, Leopold von Ranke, Pavol Jozef Šafárik, Ján Kollár, Vuk Štefanović Karadžić, etc.¹⁷

This is the context in which Kopitar came into contact with Romanian issues. The precise moment in which he “discovered” the Romanians is not known, but we do have some clues at our disposal. As a milestone we would suggest the year 1810, when in his correspondence with Josef Dobrovský we find frequent references to Romanians (1810–1814). On the other hand, in 1812 Petru Maior had just published *Istoria pentru începuturile românilor în Dacia* (The history of the beginnings of the Romanians in Dacia), reviewed by Kopitar in 1813, which led to the polemic which would last until 1816.

The connection between Kopitar, the Romanians, and the Romanian language was not a purely literary one, because in 1812 he was studying Piuariu-Molnar’s grammar with a Romanian.¹⁸ In the same year he wrote to his correspondent and compatriot Jacob Supan about “meinem augenkranken Eleven Gika” (“aus dem Hause der wlachischen Gospodare Gika”), to whom he was giving mythology lessons and to whom he was reading from the *History* of Engel,¹⁹ from whom (or from whose entourage) he had certainly obtained at least basic information concerning the Romanians. On the other hand, it is more than probable that in his position as censor, Kopitar would have come into contact with some Romanian scholars, students and merchants who were in Vienna at the time; further research could shed some light on this issue. Walter Lukan has recently shown that “although he had intensely collected *Valachica* and had manifested great interest for the Romanian language and history, he [Kopitar] had lacked contact with Romanian personalities,” the only certain link being Petru Maior.²⁰

An instructive aspect from this point of view is the reconstruction of Kopitar’s library. Here, the presence of Romanian books was noted already at the beginning of the nineteenth century.²¹ Alongside names that one would expect²² we find around 15 titles of old Romanian books (Psalms, *menaia*, lives of saints and other religious books from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), next to grammars and treatises on logic.²³ In this sense, Walter Lukan added a few things in the catalogue to an exhibition dedicated to Kopitar’s library, where he mentions a volume of poetry signed by Gheorghe Asaki (which had come to be in the possession of the scholar through the mediation of Vasilie Popp)²⁴ and “all that was important” at that time on the Romanian language (the grammars of Șincai, Văcărescu, Molnar, Tempea, Körösi, Alexi, Marcell, the dictionary of Bob and the *Lexicon of Buda* of 1825).²⁵ This is a direction of research which merits further attention in order to determine exactly the Romanian books

from the library of the great scholar, as well as their place in the ensemble of the collection and of his scholarly concerns.

Considered to be a “patriarch of Slavonic studies,” Josef Dobrovský (1753–1829) is a typical product of the Enlightenment and the Josephine era. He studied philosophy and theology at the University of Prague, joined the Jesuit order until its dissolution by Joseph II, taught in the theological seminary of Olomouc (Olmütz) and as a private tutor for the family of Count Nostitz.²⁶ Like other scholars at the time, he started his career with Oriental studies and Biblical exegeses. He was one of the scholars concerned with the endowment of Czech culture with dictionaries (*Ausführliches und vollständiges deutsch-böhmisches Wörterbuch*, Prague, 1802–1821), grammars (*Ausführliches Lehrgebäude der böhmischen Sprache*, Prague, 1809), and histories of the language (*Geschichte der böhmischen Sprache und Literatur*, Prague, 1792). The grammar which he published would become a model for similar works in other Slavic languages.²⁷

His research included diverse fields (paleography, philology, literature, history, archaeology, and natural sciences); they are characterized by the critical spirit specific to rationalism, giving special attention to documents (the chronicle of Nestor, *The Lay of Igor’s Campaign*), which he studied rather as a philologist than as a historian. He also became involved in the debates concerning the “Czech manuscripts” from Králové Dvůr and Zelená Hora.²⁸ The Biblical studies and the recourse to primary sources led him towards the elements of the future discipline of Slavonic studies: Slavonic language (Old Church Slavonic) and the old literary monuments of the Slavs. His comparative analysis of Slavic languages (Dobrovský was one of the first to do such a thing) from an etymological and grammatical point of view, in direct relation to the Indo-European languages, situates him among the pioneers of comparative philology.²⁹

In this sense, we have to mention the monumental opus *Institutiones linguae slavicae dialecti veteris* (Vienna, 1822), published at the insistence of Bartolomeus Kopitar. This is, as Miloš Weingart remarked, more than a grammar of the Old Church Slavonic language: in agreement with the notions that he professed, Dobrovský saw language not just as an instrument of communication, but also as a civilizing factor, Slavonic being the language that had united East and Southeast European peoples for several centuries.³⁰ The Slavonic language and the Cyrillic script were automatically associated with the figures of the two “apostles of the Slavs,” the Byzantine missionaries Constantine and Methodius, who had played an important role in the definition of the national identities of the Slavs, especially with the Czechs and Slovaks, becoming true “historiographical myths.” The *Institutiones linguae slavicae dialecti veteris* appears all the more important, printed as it was at a time when Slavic peoples were endeavoring to establish their linguistic and cultural identity, as they had to respond

to a number of challenges: the construction of the literary language on the basis of the ecclesiastical language or on the basis of popular dialects, the affiliation to an area of eastern (Byzantine and Slavic) or western (Latin and Catholic) civilization, the relationship between a Slavic people and the rest of the Slavic family of peoples, the relation with the state (the Habsburg Empire, Russia).

In contrast to Bartolomeus Kopitar, in Dobrovský's case the relations with the Romanians are restricted, at least as far as we know at this point, to the realm of books and ideas. As we will see later, Dobrovský was very well informed as regards the most diverse aspects of the history and languages of European peoples, his information concerning the Romanians being in agreement with the general perception of that time, although he had not benefited from the stimulating environment in which Kopitar had been active as a librarian and as a censor and editor in Vienna.

IN WHAT follows, we will try to direct our attention to the Romanian references in the correspondence between Bartolomeus Kopitar and Josef Dobrovský. We are dealing here with an exchange of letters which lasted for 12 years (1810–1822). The letters, which sometimes seem true dissertations, cover various subjects: mundane information, references to other characters from the cultural or political circles that the two frequented, and long pages with comments concerning the history of the Slavs and Slavic languages in general, concerning the contemporary cultural movement of the Slavs, elements of comparative linguistics and etymology. There is an almost obsessive interest in categorizing and defining Slavic nationalities and languages, in finding some common points in the languages, echoing the debates of that time regarding the transition from the Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet among some of the Slavs, comments about various theories propounded by contemporaries (for instance, the theory concerning the Thracian origin of the Slavs), critical opinions on some historical sources (the chronicle of Nestor and Byzantine chronicles).

As regards the Romanians, from the analysis of the correspondence one may conclude that the Czech Slavist Dobrovský was much better informed than Kopitar and had much better articulated opinions. When discussing the names of people and their integration within a particular family of peoples, Dobrovský focuses on the term *Wlach*, *Wlachen*, controversial at the time because of the ethnic and economic sense given to it. He knew that the term was used in the sense of “Gaul” and “Italian,” designating people of Latin origin, the Romanians among them, a Dacian/Thracian island (“Daher auch die Dacisch-thracischen Ueberbleinsel, die heutigen Wallachen”).³¹ Both agree on the multitude of meanings given to the term, including that of a Slavic ethnographic (and professional) group (formerly Romanian, but assimilated) from Moravia (*Mährischen*

Walachen).³² This idea was used by Kopitar in the first of the reviews to the writings of Petru Maior, that is, to *Istoria pentru inceputul românilor în Dacia*, a review published in 1813 under the title “Vallachische Literatur” in the journal *Wiener allgemeine Literaturzeitung*.³³

The term *Römer, Romanen* also generated authentic dissertations in the letters of Kopitar and Dobrovský. Unlike Dobrovský, the former avoided using it in the case of the Romanians: “Bey Rumuni denke man ja nicht an Römer (von Rom), sondern an Romanen (*ρωμαιοι* bey den Byzantinern) Leute . . .”³⁴ The latter drew attention to the fact that the Romanians are the ones who appropriate this name, that of *rumuni*, through which they wish to underline their nature as old subjects of the Romans, as indigenous populations. These are arguments which suggest, in Dobrovský’s case, a familiarity with certain Romanian texts, which have not yet been identified.³⁵

The exchange of ideas regarding the origin of peoples, of the names they bear, and the origin of languages, their integration within a family of people and of languages, respectively, is frequent in the period, being specific to the historical discourse of the Enlightenment and of its aftermath. It is not surprising that this is the time when Europe discovers the Sanskrit language and the Indo-European family of languages (Friedrich Schlegel, Franz Bopp, Rasmus Kristian Rask, Jakob Grimm, etc.), discoveries which marked the linguistic destiny of that time; even a reconstruction of the “common language” was attempted.³⁶ Regarding Kopitar, the editor of his correspondence (Vatroslav Jagić) indicated that the Slovene scholar “was uninspired by his muse” in the study of the Sanskrit and Lithuanian languages, although he had successfully (we might add) concentrated on the study of the Gothic, neo-Bulgarian, Albanian and Romanian languages.³⁷

In Romanian historiography, the most interesting work from this point of view is the dissertation of Ion Budai-Deleanu, *De originibus populorum Transylvaniae*,³⁸ which includes, as a curiosity, a chapter entitled “De Slavorum originibus,” initially prepared for publication as an independent work: *De Slavorum originibus: In qua varios populos Slavorum a diversis Thracum familiis ortorum habuisse deducitur*.

Under these circumstances, the obsessive reiteration of the various categories in the correspondence of the two Slavic scholars is understandable. As regards the Slavs, Dobrovský insists on their distinct character, rejecting older views which considered them Dacians, Getae, Thracians, Illyrians, or Pannonians, underlining that “Slawen sind Slawen und haben der Sprache nach die nächste Verwandtschaft mit den Lithauern . . .”³⁹ In the same context, the Latin poet Ovid is mentioned, about whom rumors circulated at the time concerning the fact that, as he had been exiled among the Getae, he may have been able to easily understand the language of the Slavs, as Latin was related to Lithuanian, and also to

the language of the Dacians and the Slavs (“Das Lithauische ist halb lateinisch, der Form und Wurzeln nach, so wie das Dacische, Getische es war . . .”).⁴⁰ Other “patriotic” Slavic opinions suggested that Ovid himself had written Slavic verses. Clearly distinguishing between Slavic, Thracian, Sarmatian, and Lithuanian, Dobrovský rejects these explanations and eventually accepts that the Latin poet may have written in the Getae or Sarmatian language: “Sarmatae non sunt Slavi, wäre eine meiner ersten Positionen ex ethnographia Slauici. Ergo Ouidius non scripsit carmina Slauica: jam didici getice Sarmaticeque loqui, kann nur eine Pohle aus Patriotismus dahin erklären, dass Sarmatisch hier Slawisch sey. Getice ist Dacisch, Thracisch, Mösisch, d.i. etwa Wallachisch, vel quod prope accedit.”⁴¹

In other words, the Czech Slavicist rejects the older theory concerning the Thracian origin of the Slavs (or concerning the identity between Thracians and Slavs), popularised by the famous writings of Johann Christoph Gatterer, *Dissertatio ad Russorum, Polonorum caeterorumque populorum Slavicorum originem, a Gethis sive Dacis liceat repetere* (1793), a work which had triggered lengthy debates in European scholarly circles and which has been known by Ion Budai-Deleanu, the contemporary of Kopitar and Dobrovský.⁴²

In addition, one must mention that the two slavacists support the idea of a Dacian branch of the Slavic family (the so-called Daco-Slavs),⁴³ an idea that both Slavic historians and linguists have accepted and developed, and which was later appropriated by the ideologists of pan-Slavism, but which has been a priori rejected by Romanian historiography.

Given the more or less declared interest of Slavic scholars, Kopitar and Dobrovský included, in highlighting the Slavs and their role in European history, the attention which they showed to the history of the Romanians is understandable. Just like all reputed Europe scholars of that time they did not contest that Romance character of the Romanian language. In his polemic with Petru Maior, Kopitar would draw attention to the error committed by Romanian linguists, who derived the grammatical structure of Romanian directly from that of the Latin vernacular. Although well informed from a bibliographical point of view, Kopitar acutely felt the lack of grammars and dictionaries, fundamental tools for the study of the Romanian language.⁴⁴ He contended that a correct analysis of the character of the Romanian language would be come possible only if the Romanian abandon the prejudice of being pure Romans (“wenn sie dem Vorurtheil, *reine Römer* zu sein, zurückgekommen seyn werden”).⁴⁵

But, beyond the undeniably Romance features, Kopitar highlighted numerous Slavic, Greek, Turkish, and Hungarian elements: “Was im Wlachischen nicht romanisch ist, ist wohl griechisch, slawisch, auch ungrisch, türkisch, und was nicht eines von diesen ist, mag wohl bulharisch seyn.”⁴⁶ This is more of an ob-

servation than a statement. Moreover, the argument is not taken to its logical conclusion. However, at least a part of these foreign elements (the Bulgarian ones, to be precise) are explained through the migration of the Romanians (*Wlachen*) from the Haemus region in Bulgaria and then over the Danube: “Vom Hämus zogen die Wlachen in die Bulgarey, wo sie sich vermehrten, von da erst über die Donau u.s.w.”⁴⁷

Quite interesting are the observations concerning the foreign elements present in the Romanian language: in particular, Kopitar highlighted the Thracian substratum, which would explain the similarities between Romanian and Albanian. The example that he had also given on other occasions (and which European scholarship had embraced) is the positioning of the article at the end rather than the beginning of a word in the Romanian language, which leads to the idea of a common ancestry for Romanian, Albanian and Bulgarian: “solche eigene Sprache,” a Thracian, Getae or Illyrian language, to which all the Romanian words which do not come from the Latin vocabulary or which have not been borrowed from other known languages must belong.⁴⁸

He has the merit of popularizing within European scholarship the above-mentioned ideas, which came to be adopted by linguistics in the second half of the nineteenth century. A coherent form of this theory of the substratum is owed to Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, the author of a famous work: “Stratu și substratu: Genealogia popoareloru balcanice” (Stratum and substratum: The genealogy of Balkan peoples).⁴⁹ Returning to the foreign elements in the Romanian language, European scholarship insisted on them on several occasions. Among the best known researchers involved in this one may mention Franz Miklosich, Kopitar’s disciple.

Another aspect which transpires from the correspondence of Kopitar and Dobrovský is their familiarity with contemporary Romanian publications or with those concerning the Romanians, and with the principal tendencies expressed by them. In this sense, Bartolomeus Kopitar proves superior to his Czech correspondent, most probably due to the opportunities which were available to him in his capacity as censor and librarian at the Court Library in Vienna. In his letters, he frequently quotes the works of Ioan Piuariu-Molnar, Gheorghe Șincai, Petru Maior, Ștefan Crișan (Körösi) or of Aromanians George Constantin Roja (Rosa) and M. G. Boiagi,⁵⁰ but he also mentions foreign authors who made references to Romanians: Johann Thunmann and Friedrich Schlegel, August Ludwig Schlözer, Franz Josef Sulzer and Johann Christian Engel.⁵¹ From these authors he borrowed many ideas, such as the claim that Albanian is very close or even identical to the Vlach language (Schlegel), the character of the Romanians and the Romanized or Slavicized Thracians (Sulzer). Engel’s hypothesis regarding the origin of the Vlachs as descendants of the Bulgarians (“Walachen-

hypothese”) seemed to him unacceptable. References to Petru Maior are not absent from the correspondence (in the letters of Bartolomeus Kopitar), but they are few in number.⁵²

In a letter from 27 November 1812, Bartolomeus Kopitar identified, given his new duties as a censor of Romanian, Slavic and Greek books, the manifestation of a true “orthographic crisis” with these peoples, mentioning the Romanians, the Serbs and—strangely enough, probably by mistake—the Hungarians. The representative book from this point of view, which he quoted from, is the 1804 *Gramatica daco-română* (Dacian-Romanian grammar) by Gheorghe Șincai. The conclusion is the necessity to improve the Latin alphabet, to which these languages could be adapted: “Die Serben, die Walachen, die Madjaren, alle diese cultursehrenden Völker torkeln im Finster umher . . .”⁵³

Although a Slav and therefore sympathetic to the Cyrillic alphabet (he praised its elasticity in one of his reviews to Petru Maior, where he suggested that the people who use Latin letters deserve compassion rather than envy or imitation),⁵⁴ Kopitar admitted that the Latin alphabet would be more suitable for the Romanians. However, he criticized the idea expressed by Gheorghe Șincai that the Romanians would not be able to engage in cultural pursuits while using the Cyrillic script: “шинкой zwar hat Unrecht, wenn er sagt, dass bei dem cyrillischwlachischen Alfabet keine Cultur möglich sei, weil niemand es recht lernen könne: aber wahr ist es, dass das lateinische, vermehrt, in vieler Hinsicht besser ware . . .”⁵⁵

Kopitar noted the efforts of the Romanian scholars from Transylvania to repudiate the Cyrillic script and to impose Latin letters, negatively commenting on their wish to eliminate the Slavic elements from the Romanian language: “Sinkai dicit Cyrilliano caractere non posse recte scribi Vlahicam: ergo latinum italicantem proponit! Falluntur boni viri et in hoc, quod slavicas voces repudiare student, sperantes puriore reddere linguam, cum tamen non sit amplius originalis, sed ad mistas pertineat in forma et in materia . . .”⁵⁶

As far as the Cyrillic alphabet is concerned, Kopitar and Dobrovský were also interested in the period when Romanians adopted the alphabet which they were presently eager to abandon. Quoting Buschning, Dobrovský stated that “Die Wlachen nahmen die cyrill. Lettern im 15 Jahrh. an,”⁵⁷ while Kopitar adopted, from Petru Maior, Dimitrie Cantemir’s theory concerning the imposition of Cyrillic letters by the “Romanian Bishop Theokritos,”⁵⁸ that is, the theory of the burning of the Latin books and the interdiction of using the Latin alphabet in the context of the Florentine Council.⁵⁹

AT THE end of these considerations, we see that the principal ideas which are espoused by Bartolomeus Kopitar and Josef Dobrovský concerning the Romanians come from a wider exchange of ideas, regarding the origin and the relations of peoples and languages, an exchange which entire-

ly corresponds to a topic frequently debated in the scholarly circles of Europe. The nuance which transpires—and which will later impose itself as a core component of the history of the Romanian language—is that of its Romance character, combined with other elements (Slavic, Thracian, Greek), which practically individuate the Romanian language, not only among the Romance languages, but also among the Southeast European (Balkan) languages. The interest of the two Slavic scholars, especially Kopitar's, in the Romanians comes from a broader concern with the origin of the Slavic people and languages, a context in which they came across the Romanian issue, especially at a time when a Latinist and Latinizing cultural offensive had been initiated by the Romanian scholars in Transylvania.

Another reason why the correspondence of Kopitar and Dobrovský deserves the attention of Romanian historiography is that it can serve as a “control instrument” for the polemic between Kopitar and Petru Maior: the Viennese Slavist reiterated in his polemic writings many of the ideas espoused in his letters to his Czech correspondent, in the same way that some of the arguments offered by the latter would also be found in Kopitar's polemic works. □

Translated from the Romanian by MARIA CRĂCIUN

Notes

1. Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, 1994).
2. Norbert Reiter, “Johann Thunmann in der Geschichte der Balkanologie,” in *Wegenetz europäischen Geistes: Wissenschaftszentren und geistige Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Mittel- und Südeuropa vom Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, eds. Richard Georg Plaschka and Karlheinz Mack (Vienna, 1983), 413–419; Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford, 1997). In Romanian historiography, the merits of J. Thunmann were mentioned for the first time by Lazăr Șăineanu, *Istoria filologiei române. Cu o privire retrospectivă asupra ultimelor decenii (1870–1895): Studii critice*, 2nd edition (Bucharest, 1895), 31–33.
3. *Briefwechsel zwischen Dobrovsky und Kopitar (1808–1828)*, ed. V. Jagić (Berlin, 1885); *Neue Briefe von Dobrovsky, Kopitar und anderen Süd- und Westslaven*, ed. V. Jagić (Berlin, 1897). Two of the letters published by Jagić are completed by L. Pintar, “Zwei Briefe Dobrovský's an Kopitar,” *Archiv für slavische Philologie* 22 (1900): 623–630. References to this correspondence are made in Miloš Weingart, “Joseph Dobrovský, the Patriarch of Slavonic Studies,” *Slavonic Review* 7 (1928–1929): 665–666.
4. Ioan Bogdan, “Bartolomei Kopitar: O pagină din istoria filologiei române,” in *Scieri alese*, edited with an introductory study and notes by G. Mihăilă (Bucharest, 1968), 579–583, first published in *Convorbiri literare* (Iași) 27, 12 (1894): 1062–1072.

5. See also *Korrespondence Josefa Dobrovského*, díl I–IV. K vydání upravil Adolf Patera, V. A. Francev. V Praze, 1895–1913, which contains the correspondence of the latter with other Slavic scholars of that time.
6. Petru Maior, *Scripta minora: Ars literaria. Animadversiones. Epistolarium. Ultimae*, ed. Ioan Chindriș (Bucharest, 1997), 9.
7. I. Chindriș, the editor of one of the works of Petru Maior, published them in Maior, *Scripta minora*, 70–109, 114–152 (Maior’s writings) and 372–393 (Kopitar’s reviews). The editor’s notes pp. 393–394. See also the remarks of the editor of Kopitar’s correspondence, Jagić, *Neue Briefe*, p. 337. Maria Protase, “Petru Maior polemist,” *Studii și cercetări științifice, Filologie* (Iași) 12, 2 (1961): 161–164; Maria Protase, *Petru Maior: un ctitor de conștiințe* (Bucharest, 1973), 253–257.
8. Șăineanu, 40–41, 185.
9. Ovid Densusianu, “Cărți și manuscrise vechi românești (în biblioteca lui B. Kopitar),” *Revista critică-literară* (Iași) 2 (1894): 258–259.
10. Iorgu Iordan, ed., *Istoria lingvisticii românești* (Bucharest, 1978), 20, n. 8.
11. Maior, 393–394.
12. Rudolf Jagoditsch, “Die Lehrkanzel für slavische Philologie an der Universität Wien 1849–1949,” *Wiener Slavistisches Jahrbuch* 1 (1950): 9.
13. Jože Pogačnik, “Jernej Kopitar and the Issue of Austro-Slavism,” in *Differenzen und Interferenzen: Studien zur literarhistorischen Komparativistik bei den Südslaven* (Munich, 1989), 93–105; Jagoditsch, 10–11.
14. Stanislaus Hafner, “Geschichte der österreichischen Slawistik,” in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Slawistik in nichtslawischen Ländern*, eds. Joseph Hamm and Günther Wytzens (Vienna, 1985), 30; Jan Skutil, “Dobrovského ‘Institutiones’ a Kopitarova ‘panonská teorie,’” in *Pocta Josefu Dobrovskému: K demokratickým a intenacionalistickým tradicím slavistiky* (Prague, 1982), 33–40.
15. Hafner, 30–31.
16. Jagoditsch, 9–10.
17. *Ibid.*, 7–8 (n. 10); Hafner, 31.
18. “. . . nunc cum Vlacho nato Molnarii Gramm. *peragro* [italics ours], lingua me valde interessat,” Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 307 (Vienna, 17 December 1812). The editor of the “minor writings” of Petru Maior, Ioan Chindriș provides a somewhat tortuous interpretation of the passage—probably adopted from the article of Ioan Bogdan (which is not even quoted) and claims that Kopitar “was learning Romanian” with a native Romanian “from the grammar of Ioan Molnar Piuaru.” Maior, 394 (n. 1).
19. Jagić, *Neue Briefe*, 237–239. This might refer to the same character who, a few months later, was helping Kopitar read Molnar’s grammar. Still, he was mentioned as a “Vlacho nato,” while Gika was a “Grieche”; this does not mean that the student Gika was not familiar with the Romanian language.
20. Walter Lukan, *Bartholomäus Kopitar (1780–1844) und die europäische Wissenschaft im Spiegel seiner Privatbibliothek* (Ljubljana, 2000), 26.
21. Densusianu, 258–259.
22. *Ibid.* The works of G. Șincai, Samuil Micu, Petru Maior, Ienăchiță Văcărescu, Radu Tempea, Ioan Piuaru-Molnar, Ioan Bob, Ioan Alexi, Eftimie Murgu are mentioned.

23. Ibid.
24. Lukan, 26.
25. Ibid., 37–38. The author mentions in a separate chapter (“Griechen und Aromunen”) the books of Aromanian scholars, such as Darbaris and Boiagi (Bojadschi, Bojadzi). In the summer of 1888, Ioan Bogdan had an opportunity to investigate in Ljubljana the Kopitar archive, where he found, among other notes, Romanian manuscripts and books, a reference to *Note românești și încercare de lexicon românesc* and the plan of a history of Moldavia by A. Hasdeu. See Bogdan, 583.
26. Weingart, 664–665. Briefly in Hafner, 28; Jagoditsch, 6.
27. Weingart, 669–672.
28. Ibid., 667–669; Věnceslava Bechyňová, “Josef Dobrovský a slovanské literatury,” in *Pocta Josefu Dobrovskému*, 42–44; Radu Mârza, “Istoria unui fals patriotic: ‘manuscrisele cehe’ ale lui Václav Hanka,” in *Identitate și alteritate*, 3, *Studii de istorie politică și culturală: Omagiu profesorului Liviu Maior*, eds. Nicolae Boșșan, Sorin Mitu, and Toader Nicoară (Cluj-Napoca, 2002), 334–338.
29. Jagoditsch, 6.
30. Weingart, 673.
31. Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 114–115, 122, 128, 367–368, 378–379. See also Maior, 388–389.
32. Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 122–123, 137, 378–379, 656. The term *Mährischen Walachen* (*Wallachen in Mähren*) created considerable confusion at the time, because some scholars used it to designate the Moravian Slavs from the ethnographic region of Valašsko, on the border with present-day Slovakia; see Miloslav Krbec and Věra Michálková, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Josef Dobrovský und Karl Gottlob von Anton* (Berlin, 1959), 13, 28.
33. Maior, 388–389.
34. Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 150.
35. Pintar, 629.
36. Alexandru Graur and Lucia Wald, *Scurtă istorie a lingvisticii*, 2nd edition (Bucharest, 1965), 19–21, 26–27, 36–38.
37. Jagić, *Neue Briefe*, 337.
38. Ion Budai-Deleanu, *De originibus populorum Transylvaniae. Despre originile popoarelor din Transilvania*, edited by Ladislau Gyémánt with an introduction by Ștefan Pascu and Ladislau Gyémánt, notes and translation by Ladislau Gyémánt, 2 vols. (Bucharest, 1991).
39. Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 119.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., 111, 119, 260.
42. See the “Introduction” to Budai-Deleanu, 1: XLVIII–XLIX.
43. Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 111, 377.
44. Maior, 387.
45. Ibid., 378, 388.
46. Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 371–372.
47. Ibid.
48. Maior, 378, 388, 392–393.

49. B. P. Hasdeu, “Stratu și substratu: Genealogia popoarelor balcanice,” *Revista Nouă* (Bucharest) 5, 1–2 (1892): 5–27, also in *Analele Academiei Române: Memoriile Secțiunii Literare* (Bucharest), 2nd ser., 14 (1892).
50. For the latter see Max Demeter Peyfuss, *Chestiunea aromânească: Evoluția ei de la origini până la pacea de la București (1913) și poziția Austro-Ungariei*, trans. Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca (Bucharest, 1994), 23–29. Kopitar’s reviews to Roja’s and Boiagi’s books are commented on by Bogdan, 581. Molnar’s grammar was mentioned to Dobrovský by his correspondent J. Ribay, in *Korrespondence Josefa Dobrovského* 4 (1913), 116, 120.
51. Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 137, 197, 215, 298–299, 307, 309, 344, 365, 367–370. Dobrovský also did not agree with Engel’s opinion, see Pintar, 626. Here Dobrovský also broadly outlines the “Bulgarisation” of the Romanians. Pintar, 627–628.
52. “Dixit se nachholare literaturam, et inter alia non sine scandalo videre, Valachum Majorem libatis vix literis superbire, et recensentem quem ante scivit ex me ipso me esse . . .” Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 367.
53. *Ibid.*, 298.
54. Maior, 389–390.
55. Jagić, *Briefwechsel*, 299.
56. *Ibid.*, 307.
57. *Ibid.*, 313.
58. Maior, 386.
59. Radu Mârza, “Rusia, slavii și slavonismul în viața și opera lui Dimitrie Cantemir,” *Apulum* (Alba Iulia) 41 (2004): 419–438.

Abstract

Bartolomeus Kopitar and Josef Dobrovský on Romanians

The paper discusses the references to Romanians found in the sizable correspondence between two Slavic scholars, Bartolomeus (Jernej) Kopitar (1780–1844) and Josef Dobrovský (1753–1829), otherwise little known in Romanian historiography. The former was an employee of the Library of the Imperial Court (*Hofbibliothek*) (1810–1844), acting as both censor and editor of Slavic, Greek and Romanian books (1811–1844). Dobrovský, considered to be a “patriarch of Slavonic studies,” studied philosophy and theology at the University of Prague, joined the Jesuit order until its dissolution by Joseph II, and taught in the theological seminary of Olomouc (Olmütz) and as a private tutor for the family of Count Nostitz. Their exchanges concerning the Romanians tackled issues ranging from the complex meaning of their ethnic name—in the general context of the increasing interest in the origin of peoples and languages—to the matter of the (purely) Latin character of the Romanian language.

Keywords

Slavic studies, Slavic scholars, correspondence, Romanian language, Slavic languages