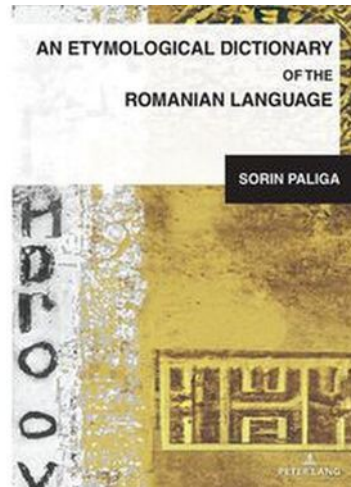


DIANA CÂRLIGEANU INTERVIEW WITH PROF.DR. SORIN PALIGA ABOUT “An Etymological Dictionary of the Romanian Language”



DC: Dear Dr. Paliga, you are a linguist of great competence, with a career spanning decades in both linguistics and translation. Can you tell us a bit about your professional activities?

SP: Thank you for the compliment, I'm not sure if it is deserved...

It is true that I've had two great passions: initially Polish among all Slavic languages, and the cultures of South-East Europe. The path to Polish ended, in fact, in Prague! It's a story going back to my high school years, circa 1974. In accordance with the Cultural Revolution occurring after July 1971, Romanian cinemas started showing an increasing number of films from the “Communist camp” (good name), Polish ones included. I was impressed by Andrzej Wajda's *The Wedding*, which I watched several times. Also by *Ashes and Diamonds*, by the same director. Halfway through the penultimate year in high school, I made up my mind: I'd study Polish. For this reason I transferred to a humanities class for the last year of high school (up until then I'd been in a science class), I took the university entrance exam selecting Polish and ranked first on the admissions list, with a grade of 9.31 [out of 10]. I went into the Army (such were the times), I got hepatitis (a slight form, luckily), and stayed home for a year to recover. In the following year I went to university to enroll, and was informed that Polish wasn't offered that year, and I could stay home for another year or else choose among Czech, Slovak and Serbo-Croatian. None of the proposed languages meant anything to me, and staying home an extra year seemed terrible. So I prepared three slips of paper marked Czech, Slovak, and Serbian, folded and mixed them up, and picked one without looking: Czech it was.

Thus I enrolled in the Czech course and did not regret it: it was the winning lot! I studied Polish too, and also Slovenian: the latter started being offered in 1978, with Petar Pal as the first lecturer. So I oriented myself toward the Western Slavic languages, keeping a foot in the Balkan languages, though Slovenian is not a Balkan idiom. It is, in fact, an idiom linking the Serbo-Croatian group to Czech and Slovak.

While convalescing I taught myself Spanish. I had a hardcover textbook, *Learn Spanish without a Teacher*. Later on I enrolled in the Portuguese course at university. This was shortly after the Carnation Revolution of April 1974 (I began my university classes in 1976). The University of

Bucharest had just begun offering Portuguese, I was among the first students. Maria Theban was the teacher, while João Battencourt Gonçalves was the first Portuguese lecturer.

This linguistic universe made up of Slavic languages (Czech, Slovak, Polish, Slovenian—I also knew Cyrillic, learned after a Russian textbook from the 1960s), Romance languages (I knew French from high school), and English (which I mostly learned on my own), was of great help in my etymological enterprise. I also took a private Latin course with Gheorghe Mușu, another great scholar who's been unjustly forgotten, and some Old Greek. Mușu was an important influence for me, being an author of works on the great Mediterranean cultures, particularly the Greek one, and the South-East European cultures. He taught the classical languages—Greek, Latin, Biblical Hebrew—at the Theological Institute in Bucharest.

I have translated a good deal, initially from English and later on, increasingly and ultimately exclusively, from Czech. 'The greats', as they say: Václav Havel (*Long-Distance Interrogation*, two editions), Bohumil Hrabal (*Too Loud a Solitude*, *Harlequin's Millions*), Vladimír Holan (three volumes that contain his main poetry—*Pain*, *Tuscany*, *A Night with Hamlet and A Night with Ophelia*), etc. From English I translated three books on old civilizations: two about the South-East Neolithic (Marija Gimbutas) and one about the Etruscan civilization (Larissa Bonfante, coordinator). In the early 1990s I even translated a political dictionary! In those days Romania's political terminology was trying to discard Communist terminology and adapt to the new one. Looking at it today, around 30 years later, I think it is valuable and worthy of re-printing.

DC: You worked on the current book, “An Etymological Dictionary of the Romanian Language” (in English, abbreviated EDR from here on), over the course of four decades. It is a substantial volume, 600 pages in length, composed of three parts. Could you give us an overview of these three parts?

SP: Yes, I worked on this dictionary for 40 years, even longer if I am to include the hesitant beginnings, when I didn't yet know exactly what I'd be doing in linguistics—my second passion, which ultimately took first place among my occupations. As I said above, I did parallel work in translating literary and scientific books. I came to be a linguist by pure chance: in the third year at university, my then-teacher, Anca Irina Ionescu, later my colleague in the Czech Department, suggested that I participate in the scientific student conference. I thought it over and said to myself “Why not?” while wondering what I might write about. Something pertaining to Slavic studies, I thought: I knew Czech fairly well by then. A voice from above suddenly instructed me to write about *ban*, *jupân* and *stăpân* (n.tr. terms denoting various types of rulers in the Medieval Ages). So I got myself a permit for the library of the Romanian Academy and began to study those three terms (which marked my initiation into linguistics). As I kept reading I realized that those words are not of Slavic origin. Sufficiently confused, I no longer attended the scientific conference: I did not have a coherent and satisfying paper. But, as I kept studying, I wrote some pages on *zâne* (n.tr. fairies) and *Sânziene* (n.tr. 'holy women', discussed below). The article appeared, some 10 years later, in *Limba română*. It was a rare case when a study of mine was published in Romania. This was happening in 1989.

Now let me go back in time. Around 1982 I had prepared a substantial volume of etymological studies titled *Byzantion*. I had no guide, it was entirely my work, and included was an analysis of many Romanian toponyms. I took it to Editura Științifică [n.tr. publisher], it stayed there for about two years, it got a good evaluation—and some observations—from Ariton Vraciu (a good linguist from Iași, he too forgotten). Around 1984 the volume, with additions, was ready for print... As you might guess, it wasn't published. I won't go into details, *de mortuis nihil nisi bene*. I still have the typewritten manuscript, as it was then.

Given this context, I began to 'tear out' of *Byzantion* articles that I might publish in specialized journals: if the volume couldn't be published *in toto*, perhaps some studies could come out of it. The one which waited longest was the above-mentioned study on *zâne*, which got a positive evaluation from Grigore Brâncuș. Two other studies, the one about *ban*, *jupân* and *stâpân* and another, on terms referring to urban settlements in Dacia and Thracia, and on *gând* (n.tr. thought), kept waiting... At some point I got tired of waiting, translated two of them into English, and sent them to foreign editors. They were published in the same year, 1987: one in the UK, in *World Archaeology* (the study with terms pertaining to urban settlements), and the other one in *Linguistica* of Ljubljana. Happy to finally be published, I sent two other studies to Slovenia: one appeared in *Linguistica*, and the other in *Slavistična Revija*—both coming out in 1988, which is very fast for a scientific publication. Three other studies came out in 1989: the one on *zâne*, in *Limba română*; another one in *Linguistica* (I had a collaboration of several years with them); and the third in the prestigious *Journal of Indo-European Studies*. At that time Marija Gimbutas was among the editors at the last one, and I ended up having a substantial correspondence with her. In 1989 Editura Meridiane published a translation of mine which comprised 6 Gimbutas studies on prehistoric cultures. Then came a second translation, after the manuscript sent to me by Gimbutas. It was published by Editura Lucretius and sold out fast (it was already after December 1989).

At that moment, after years of waiting, I'd begun to publish frequently. Halfway through the 1980s the idea came to me of authoring an etymological dictionary. The nucleus already existed, in the form of *Byzantion*, so I started preparing cards. That was the working method then: each title-word was jotted down on a card and, if longer explanations were required, on multiple cards. By 1985 I had typewritten over 100 cards. My father had bought me a Consul portable Czech typewriter that was like a laptop. That kept me company until 1994, when I could get a PC.

As an intermediary step I published, in 2006, *An Etymological Lexicon of the Indigenous (Thracian) Elements in Romanian*, as well as other works, including a new edition of my PhD thesis, *Influențe romane și preromane în limbile slave de sud* (n.tr. *Roman and Pre-Roman Influences in the Southern Slavic Languages*). Notice that that reflects my second passion, for Balkan languages and cultures. Other books were published at that time, including a volume comprising studies that appeared in journals in the 1987-2005 interval.

Now you or the readers might ask: why would such a dictionary be written in English? The answer is neither easy nor convenient. Initially all works of this sort were written in Romanian. However, given that publications and publishers in Romania have largely been unwilling to accept my works, I've resorted to translating my studies into English and ultimately writing them directly in English. This is why many of my studies don't have a Romanian version, but only an English one and—in a few cases,—a French version.

While I was working on *An Etymological Lexicon of the Indigenous (Thracian) Elements in Romanian*, it was easier, meaning faster, to prepare an English version than to translate everything into Romanian. Besides, English-language studies circulate better and faster than those in Romanian. It is a fact of our days. The present dictionary, EDR, which came out in January 2024 at Peter Lang, comprises many of the title-words already included in the 2006 dictionary, with some corrections, plus many other words from all strata of the language. EDR has some 5100 title-words, many with their derivations, given as such. The volume has appeared in a series dedicated to the history of South-East Europe that is supervised by the young historical researcher Mihai Dragnea, also president of the Balkan History Association. So there are some young Romanians who do and promote serious science. I'll use this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Dragnea.

This is a compact volume, initially projected as 3 volumes: an ample introduction of some 250 pages, with 50 pages of references; a dictionary proper of about 400 pages; and finally, addenda of 50

pages.

I felt the need to have an ample introduction for this EDR. In fact, that is a volume in itself that could be titled *Introduction to the Etymological Study of Romanian*. It is not customary for such a dictionary to have such a long introduction, and you probably won't find a comparable one in any etymological dictionary of another European language. Nevertheless, it seemed necessary to me: Romanian etymology is complicated, with many issues hard to resolve through simple analysis by comparison to Romance or Slavic languages. The substrate is the key to the problem, as I have insisted on a number of occasions. Of course, some have rushed to accuse me of 'dacomania'. I firmly reject this accusation: I'm not a dacomaniac at all, I only affirm that the Thraco-Dacian substrate heritage of the Romanian language is MUCH GREATER than generally accepted. This being the claim, I had to bring arguments to support it.

DC: Four main elements have gone into the formation of Romanian: the Thracian substrate, the Latin element, the Slavic influences, and other influences. You also mention, in EDR, a re-Latinization process that began in the 19th century. Can you explain how the understanding and the study of the Thracian substrate have evolved? Can you give us some words that belong to the Thracian heritage? I saw that the musical term *doină*, important for Romanians, originates from the substrate and even from its Pre-Indo-European legacy—meaning that the term is of considerable antiquity. Until when did the Thracian language 'live'?

SP: Sure, the list of autochthonous elements is long, there are probably close to one thousand words. Some are not clearly autochthonous, but others—some hundreds—are doubtlessly from the substrate. We can cite *abur* (n.tr. steam), *bală* ~ *balaur* (n.tr. dragon), *mal* (n.tr. shore, riverbank), and of course *doină* (dialectally *daină* – a word analyzed as such by Hașdeu), then *zână* and *Sânziene*. The last one is a composite: Latin element + autochthonous element. **Sanctae zenae* 'the holy women', for this is the original meaning of *zână*, 'woman'. Through tabooing, typical in a traditional society, we reached 'holy women' = 'zâne'. Tabooing, with the original meaning lost, continues in Romanian in the form *iele*, which is merely a phonetic rendering of *ele*, meaning 'they, the women (holy, sacred)'.

The usual hypothesis, albeit one bearing the 'probable' label in DEX, is that the term comes from the Latin *Diana*. It is not a plausible hypothesis. The ancient divinities are not preserved in the Romance languages, save for the days of the week, Monday to Friday: *lunae dies* = *luni* (*lundi* in French), *Martis dies* = *marți* (the day of god Mars), etc. Here we have a persistent belief in astrology, not the perpetuation of some pre-Christian beliefs. Modern Greek doesn't preserve any ancient god's name, either.

Also autochthonous are many words in the flora and fauna classes, e.g. *arțar* (n.tr. maple), *zmeură* (n.tr. raspberry), *mușețel* (n.tr. chamomile)—a diminutive of the basic form *mușat* 'beautiful', also present in the name *Mușat*, which gives the name of a great ruling family of Moldavia. Also from the substrate are *rață* (n.tr. duck), *mistreț* (n.tr. wild boar), *viezure* (n.tr. weasel).

There are a good number of opponents of the idea that the pre-Roman autochthonous inheritance can be analyzed, invoking the 'argument' that we don't have old-enough texts. Thracian doesn't come with texts (save for, maybe, the short text on the famous Ezerovo ring). We have toponyms and surnames mentioned by ancient writers. So indeed, we don't have old texts. It is not a desirable situation, but we must proceed with whatever is available, not whine, like many no-good linguists. Their whining seeks to justify, as a rule, the incompetence and superficiality of those who have not analyzed this ancient inheritance. It is noteworthy that Albanian and Lithuanian are in a similar, even identical, situation—being languages with many common elements to Romanian. All three languages keep some ancient forms, while being 'young idioms', with late attestations that come after the 15th

century.

C'est la vie, c'est la réalité, mais c'est une réalité vivante.

It is harder to answer the other question, about the lifespan of the Thracian language. It was certainly a living language in the 3rd century CE, because some Roman emperors still added, to their imperial titles, the epithets *Dacicus Maximus* and *Carpicus Maximus*. Seven emperors used this description, with four of them being important and well-attested; they're mentioned on p. 19 of EDR.

I could stop here. Yet there is another angle to this discussion. As Haşdeu suggested, the Dacians did not die out, but migrated to the area south of the Danube, then toward the west, contributing to the Albanian ethnogenesis: they settled there, in the Romanized Illyrian space, whose initial structure they modified. Haşdeu's hypothesis was later taken on, refined and developed by the great Italian linguist Giuliano Bonfante, well versed in Romanian too (see his *Studii române*, n.tr. *Romanian Studies*) and by I.I. Russu, a specialist in Thracian inscriptions. We could call this 'the Haşdeu-Bonfante-Russu hypothesis'.

The hypothesis of the Bulgarian school of Thracology is not dissimilar: a Thracian influx originating from the mountains of current-day Bulgaria contributed to the Albanian ethnogenesis, as Thracian was still spoken in the early 6th century, when the Slavs began migrating from the north to the south.

The two hypotheses are not irreconcilable: it is possible that there were, in the 6th century, two Thracian nuclei that moved south, then west, at the same time as the migration of the Slavs. Using this reasoning, Thracian remains a living language, now called Albanian. Of course it isn't the Thracian from 2-3 millennia ago, it is a largely Romanized Thracian. The lexicon of contemporary Albanian is preponderantly Roman, descendant of the Romanized Illyrians, enriched with newer elements of Romanian and Italian origin. It is a natural process of 're-Latinization' which affects Romanian too, especially beginning in the 19th century, when we borrow many words from French, primarily, from Italian, secondarily, and we adapt some Latin words after the French or Italian model. This phenomenon of 're-Latinization' brings into Romanian about the same number of words as the old stratum kept at a colloquial level: around 1,450 words.

The statistical estimations follow the database of DEX, which Cătălin Frâncu—then administrator of the dexonline.ro website—kindly allowed me to use. DEX is not an etymological dictionary, but its database is very useful for exercises of statistical analysis. Details can be found in the *Introduction* to EDR.

DC: Another contemporary linguist who speaks about the origin of the Romanian language is Mr. Mihai Vinereanu. In which respects do you agree with him and in what ways do you disagree?

SP: I have known him personally, we exchanged some words years ago. I did suggest a collaboration at one point, I think it was about 10 years ago: his database would have accelerated the development of my dictionary. Sadly he wasn't persuaded, perhaps for reasons to do with ego or fears that I might plagiarize his work. It's only natural. I do not like Vinereanu's methodology, his analysis seems chaotic to me, mixing up the autochthonous and Latin elements. It seems that he subscribes to the truly dacomaniac theory that Thraco-Dacian is the root of all European languages, and Latin is a daughter of Thracian. This approach is foreign to me.

I was honest in telling him all this... He was likely upset, for years he no longer wrote to me. He did congratulate me on the appearance of EDR. We have a collegial relationship.

Among the linguists closer to our time I can refer, in a partially positive fashion, to Pârvu

Boerescu, who has a sort of lexicon of autochthonous elements; sadly that too is fairly chaotic, replete with hesitations, question marks. Still, his work is useful to the etymological endeavor.

DC: What are some of the key difficulties and complexities in the etymological study of Romanian which you explain in EDR? You have briefly touched on this.

SP: There are many, which is why the *Introduction* is unusually long for an etymological dictionary. I will try to briefly enumerate them.

The pre-Roman, autochthonous element. It was, is and likely will remain the most difficult issue in the etymological analysis of Romanian. For reasons unclear to me, the importance of this element has been minimized, under the pretext that it is a nationalist exercise akin to the Legionary Movement! These are the pretexts of laziness and ignorance. The Legionary period did not contain a single study relevant to Thracology! The Romanian far-right was a mixture of messianism and Nazi-type mystical exaltation. It had no connection to Thracology. In fact, from a linguistic perspective, from Hașdeu up to the 1960s the 'Thracology' concept did not even exist in Romania. The politicization of Thracology began, in Romania and Bulgaria alike, in 1972, when both countries saw the formation of Thracology institutes. Those were, later on, swallowed up by larger structures within the Academies of the two countries.

The autochthonous substrate includes toponymy, a field in which Romanian linguists are faring poorly, much more so than the Bulgarian neighbors, whose studies on old, pre-Slavic and pre-Roman, toponymy are much more numerous and coherent. For Romania we can cite, among the ample studies: the always-outdated endeavor by Nicolae Drăganu, *Toponymy and History*, Cluj 1928, and *Romanians in the 9th -14th Centuries, Through Toponymy and Surnames*, Bucharest: Romanian Academy, 1933. Also outdated *ab initio*: Iorgu Iordan's *Romanian Toponymy*, Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1963.

In those moments, the interwar period and beyond, other countries had focused intensely on the ancient European, Indo-European, and Pre-Indo-European heritage. The Romanian examples above are provincial and embarrassing when compared to what was being done in other countries. See, for instance, Petar Skok's stupendous study dedicated to toponymy in the Adriatic region (1950: *Slavenstvo i romanstvo na jadranskim otocima. Toponomastička ispitivanja*, Zagreb), not to mention the analysis of the Provence toponymy (Ch. Rostaing, *Essai sur la toponymie de la Provence*, also 1950). In the 1960s and beyond, Bulgarian linguists conducted other excellent analyses of pre-Slavic and pre-Roman toponymy. Examples can continue. Nothing of these remarkable analyses is reflected in the works of Romanian linguists working at the Linguistics Institute of the Romanian Academy or in the large Romanian universities that have Romanian Language Departments. I say this with much regret and sorrow...

The trends and conquests of linguistic science have gone unnoticed by Romanian linguists! This explains their lame attempts in the field of etymology, and the deplorable etymological dictionary initiated by the Romanian Academy of which two volumes, maybe three, have come out. It is terrible to have a large team, made up of dozens of people, that doesn't succeed in bringing research in Romanian etymology up to date, at least up to the Bulgarian level.

The moment the autochthonous element becomes adequately explained, through reflex at least, one can better analyze the Slavic influence, much exaggerated from the 19th century onwards. Here I have used the recent archaeological research of Florin Curta, a Romanian archaeologist settled in the US, at the University of Florida, as well as the work of other archaeologists, e.g. Eugen Silviu Teodor (with whom I published, in 2009, an interdisciplinary study on the Slavs: *Lingvistica și arheologia slavilor timpurii. O altă vedere de la Dunărea de Jos – The Linguistics and Archaeology of the Early Slavs. Another View from the Lower Danube*), Cătălin Borangic and Alexandra Comșa—with whom I

published a second interdisciplinary work on Thracians (*Tracii. Oameni, zei, războaie – The Thracians. People, Gods, Wars*. 2018). With the last two and other historians and archaeologists from Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, and other countries I am preparing an *Introduction to Thracology*. I hope it will come out at the end of 2025 or in early 2026 at the same publisher that has my dictionary, Peter Lang. Thracology needs to regain its dignity, after being marred by various political games occurring in the Communist era, in both Romania and Bulgaria. Beginning with 1990, Thracology got attacks from all sorts of incompetent snobs under the pretext of rejecting the Communist ideology and as a reaction to political interference in the humanities.

Once all this is clarified, one can better analyze the Latin stratum too, the most important in the Romanian language—though not the only one. Statistically, the order of the linguistic strata is this: about 1,440 old Latin elements (and about the same number through the 're-Latinization' of the 19th century), likely close to 1,000 pre-Roman autochthonous (Thraco-Dacian) elements, about 500-600 authentic Slavic elements (not pseudo-Slavisms, with the remark that many are obsolete), a few hundred miscellaneous elements, many of them obsolete: Hungarian, Ottoman, etc. There's a discussion on this in my *Introduction to EDR*.

Finally, if we properly study these elements, we can reconstruct a phonetic inventory of ancient Romanian, where there was at least one special phoneme which linguists call laryngeal. I actually believe it was a velar spirant. The discussion is becoming technical now, so I'll stop here. I wrote about this detail of old Romanian phonetics many years ago; no Romanian linguist has reacted, positively or negatively, to my hypothesis.

DC: If there are other aspects you'd like to bring up, please share them with us.

SP: Well, there is much to tell, to analyze, to criticize. I've reached an age when I am tired of being delicate and waiting, I can be a bit harsher.

I find it unacceptable that the Romanian Academy should publish only one history of the Romanian language, admittedly a solid one, in two volumes that came out in 1965 and 1969, respectively. In that second volume Cicerone Poghiric, for the first time since Hașdeu, took a coherent approach to the autochthonous heritage, which many, before and after the appearance of that work, played down and mocked, saying that the importance of that heritage has been exaggerated. It is the other way around: not only has it not been exaggerated, it has always been minimized, and remains so today. This doesn't hold true for my EDR, but, as we say, one flower doesn't make a spring. It's been over half a century since the appearance of that history! It's true that other histories of the Romanian language have been published... I actually consider that of Gh. Ivănescu (1980) to be the best one done to date. But even since then it's been nearly half a century!

DEX is not an etymological dictionary, and its website *dexonline.ro* is not supervised by the Romanian Academy, as some might assume, but by a group of enthusiasts. The etymologies given there are, in many cases, erroneous, superficially treated, confused. For instance, 'et.nec.' (unknown etymology) is a label used haphazardly, for many substrate elements, for words with multiple explanations, for words with a clear origin, and sometimes with no justification. I discuss this in my *Introduction to EDR*. The new etymological dictionary initiated by the Academy is no competition for mine, despite the fact that a team of dozens of people has been elaborating it for decades. If you have no methodology, if you're not cognizant of the great conquests of linguistic science, if you're placed in a pre-Hașdeu era, nothing good, solid, 'reliable' can result. But the data collected for this dictionary can be used at a later date.

We can judge the precariousness of Romania's etymological analysis of the last decades, in fact of the entire post-Hașdeu era, by looking at the difference in approach between the first series of the

Academy's Dictionary (DA), supervised by Sextil Pușcariu, and the post-1948 series, completed under the aegis of the Communists. A catastrophe! The dictionary took A CENTURY to finalize! Now we need a team of young researchers to bring it, conceptually, to a common denominator. Otherwise, setting aside the etymological aspect, we finally have a thesaurus-dictionary of the Romanian language. A minimum.

I imagine the colleagues at the Institute of Linguistics will be upset at this, and the colleagues at the University of Bucharest and others in the country: Cluj, Iași... I say all this with much sadness, as I am very disappointed by the truly low level of our etymological research, which had a brilliant beginning in Hașdeu and saw a steep decline after his death, in 1907. In fact, in 1888, when his daughter Iulia passed away, before turning 19. After that moment Hașdeu turned to channeling, becoming—to my knowledge—the author of the first Romanian-language treatise on channeling, which I saw at the Câmpina museum. Hașdeu was the first to write an introduction to the comparative analysis of Indo-European languages, the first authentic Thracologist (with some difficult-to-accept explanations, but also many brilliant ones), the first to explain the origin of Albanians, editor of old Slavic texts (he was versed in all Slavic languages, speaking Polish, Russian and Lithuanian at home), etc. A colossal figure. I've seen clueless individuals who criticize Hașdeu. I'd advise them to first delve into his works, then keep silence for some years, until they reach—if they do—his level. If not, they should stay silent forever.

Hașdeu was recovered, so to speak, in the latter part of the 1960s and in the 1970s, mainly through the efforts of two linguists of those times, Cicerone Poghirc and Grigore Brâncuș. He has recently been ignored again, for reasons I won't stop to analyze. Snobbery and conceitedness are no friends of sciences.

What would I like now? To complete the above-mentioned *Introduction to Thracology* and, if I have time, an etymological dictionary of toponyms. Then exclaim, like the Great Poet [Ion Barbu]:

What's needed is an ample song, akin to
The silken rustle of salty seas' demesne...

DC: I will end by remarking that we're in a moment when the humanities are seeing budget cuts in many institutions, and in recent years Romanian was removed from the curriculum of some US universities, something I find deeply regrettable. I hope that your English-language dictionary, accessible to international audiences, will draw the attention of many Romanians and foreigners. It seems a great acquisition for Romance Languages departments in universities. Thank you for the interview and for the long, erudite effort toward the completion of this highly valuable study.

March 7, 2024