

**Thallóczy and Nopcsa.
Two leading Austro-Hungarian albanologists
competing for symbolic capital**

Abstract: *One of the aims of the research project FWF Austro-Hungarian Albanology (1867-1918) – a case of Cultural imperialism? conducted by the Institute of History, Faculty of History and Anthropology of Southeastern Europe, at Graz University was to redefine science in terms of collaboration in the Austro-Hungarian relationships. For this purpose were used key concepts such as *illusio*, *doxa* and *capitals*, all loans from the Pierre Bourdieu's praxeology. The monology *The Austro-Hungarian Albanology (1867-1918)*, which is about to see the light, analyses the inherent characteristics of all actors and factors who influenced Albanology.*

There were apparently three groups of scholars: 1. Scientists spurred by purely scientific interests such as Jireček, Šufflay, Patsch, Meyer, Schober, Miklosich, Schuchardt, Meyer-Lübke, Jokl dhe Lambertz; 2. The group with mixed political and scientific interests such as Hahn, Thallóczy, Ippen dhe Nopcsa; 3. The group of scholars with military and scientific interests best represented by Veith, Praschniker, Seiner, Haberlandt, Nopcsa, Jokl and Lambertz.

The fact that Nopcsa, Jokl and Lambertz fall under two different categories is owed to their different interests in Albanology in different periods.

Keywords: *Austro-Hungarian Albanology, Pierre Bourdieu, cultural imperialism, Jireček, Šufflay, Hahn, Thallóczy, Veith, Praschniker, Jokl, Lambertz.*

Abstrakt: *Një prej qëllimeve të projektit FWF, „Albanologjia austro-hungareze 1867–1918 – një rast i imperializmit kulturor?“, në Institutin e Historisë, dega e Historisë dhe Antropologjisë së Europës Juglindore, Universiteti i Graz-it, ishte pikërisht rindërtimi i fushës „shkencë“, si bashkëpjesëmarrëse në marrëdhëniet austro-hungareze-shqiptare, duke aplikuar për këtë qëllim konceptet kyçe „illusio“, „doxa“ dhe „kapitale“, të huazuara nga praxeologjia e Pierre Bourdieu-s. Në monografinë e titulluar paraprakisht „Albanologjia austro-hungareze 1867–1918. Shkenca midis politikës dhe ushtrisë“, që do të botohet si rezultat i këtij projekti kërkimor, emërtohen ndër të tjera veprimtarët individualë dhe kolektivë të fushës albanologjike, duke analizuar qëndrimet dhe motivet e tyre.*

Ka pasur tre tipa të ndryshëm të këtyre veprimtarëve: 1.) tipi i pastër shkencor, përfaqësuar nga Jireček, Šufflay, Patsch, Meyer, Schober, Miklosich, Schuchardt, Meyer-Lübke, Jokl dhe Lambertz; 2.) tipi i përzier politiko-shkencor me afërsi me ose përfshirje në fushën politike, përfaqësuar nga Hahn, Thallóczy, Ippen dhe Nopcsa; 3.) tipi i përzier ushtarako-shkencor me afërsi ose me përfshirje në fushën ushtarake, përfaqësuar nga Veith, Praschniker, Seiner, Haberlandt, Nopcsa, Jokl dhe Lambertz. Emërtimi i dyfishtë për Nopcsën, Joklin dhe Lamberztin ka të bëjë me faktin se në periudha të caktuara ata qenë afër fushës politike dhe/ose fushës ushtarake.

One aim of my current research project¹ “Austro-Hungarian Albanology between Politics and Military” is the reconstruction of the formation and history of the field of Albanian Studies or albanology and its relationship with the “field of power”², a term introduced by Pierre Bourdieu, which stretches horizontally through all the fields and controls the exchange rate of economic, cultural, social or symbolic capital between the fields.

To answer the mentioned research question, Bourdieu’s field theory in relation to individual and institutional social actors has been chosen. It offers a significant potential for the analysis of the relationship between the Austro-Hungarian academic field on the one hand and the fields of foreign policy and military on the other hand. In addition to the current literature, the research on the social actors is conducted in the Viennese Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv and Kriegsarchiv as well as in the State Archive in Tirana.

The contribution of the Austro-Hungarian science to the exploration of Albania is an essential one. The greatest part of the research work was done in the fields of linguistics, history, ethnography, geography, geology and archaeology. It was about an elitist circle of albanologists, who almost all knew each other, partly competing or cooperating or being friends with each other. The Academy of Sciences in Vienna with its Balkan Committee and Albania Committee and the Academy of Sciences in Budapest with its Balkan Committee and Orient Committee were the driving force in the matter of expeditions in the Balkans before and during the First World War. There were two striking differences between them, one with regard to time and one with regard to content: the Balkan Committee in Vienna was founded already in 1897, whereas its counterpart in Budapest only several years later in 1914; the Viennese Academy even established in 1914 an own Albania Committee to underline its priorities in the Balkan Studies, whereas the Budapest Academy put more emphasis on Serbia and aimed

1 Austrian Science Fund (FWF), projectnr. P26437-G15.

2 Bourdieu, Pierre (1992/1999): Die Regeln der Kunst. Genese und Struktur des literarischen Feldes. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, p. 342.

also at the exploration of the “orient”. The leading research establishments for the linguistic, historical, ethnographical and archaeological exploration of South-East Europe were the respective institutes of the Austro-Hungarian universities, especially in Vienna, Prague, Budapest and Graz. The late founded not university related Balkan Institute in Sarajevo, which over the years became central in the Austro-Hungarian Balkan Studies, had a privileged status.

From today’s point of view it is difficult to reconstruct the field of Austro-Hungarian albanology, because oral history interviews cannot be done due to the temporal distance and because the research is dependent on written documents like files, memoirs, diaries and publications. Therefore the reconstruction of a field that dates back such a long time, has to be always fragmentary and incomplete. The other difficulty is the reconstruction of the historical genesis of the field of Austro-Hungarian albanology. Franz Miklosich was according to his generation on the same level with Johann Georg von Hahn. Hence we can call both the founders of Albanian Studies. In the seventies of the 19th century Miklosich and Hugo Schuchardt were both on their own. They were then joined in the eighties by Gustav Meyer. He was according to his generation the connecting link between Hahn and Miklosich and the generation of albanologists that emerged at the turn of the century. Around 1900, on the ground of the Dual Monarchy, the first true generation of albanologists was arising, which consisted of linguists, historians, ethnographers and archaeologists. Therefore it is only for the time between 1890 until 1918 that we can speak of a real field of Austro-Hungarian albanology. But this relatively small virtual field was embedded in two bigger fields – both interacting with each other – namely the field of general or international albanology and the field of Austro-Hungarian Balkan Studies or balkanology. The field of Austro-Hungarian albanology was more or less one of their subfields, so that its functioning can be rightly understood only in this complex mutual relation. If we consequently follow this theoretical train of thought, it becomes even much more complicated: each branch of the Austro-Hungarian albanology – whether linguistics in relation to Albanian language or history and ethnography in relation to Albania and Albanians – was in a certain sense a subfield of the superordinate fields of linguistics, history and ethnography and therefore can only be explained within this complex context. To avoid losing ourselves and our subject in a contextualism that leads to endless digressions, we need to keep our analysis within the bounds of the small field of Austro-Hungarian albanology.

The specific *illusio*³ of the general albanological field, i.e. the common

3 Bourdieu, Pierre (1984/1992): *Homo academicus*. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp., p. 11, 110, 125.

interests and doctrines of the albanologists, consisted in casting light on the unknown aspects of the Albanian history, culture and language. The specific doxa⁴ of the subfield Austro-Hungarian albanology, set by the political field in Austria as well as in Hungary, i.e. the common belief of the Austro-Hungarian albanologists that the Dual Monarchy had to pioneer in the above mentioned matter, influenced the selection of research topics. After clarifying the issue of the position of Albanian within the Indo-European languages, the linguistics turned to the exciting question of the Illyrian, Thracian or Illyrian-Thracian character of the Albanian language before it was transformed by the Vulgar Latin influence. Furthermore, attempts were made to explore the relationship of Albanian with Dalmatic and Rumanian, the depth of the Latin influence on preliminary Albanian and the separation of the hereditary vocabulary from the loan and borrowed words. At the same time, the scientific consolidation of the Illyrian thesis reinforced the position of the Albanians in the Balkans, allied with the Monarchy, with regard to their Slavic neighbours with Anti-Habsburg attitude. Thus, it was also of political significance, when the influence of Latin on preliminary Albanian and that of Romanian on Albanian did not go too far and when the part of the hereditary vocabulary was greater than the part of the loan and borrowed words. Therefore it was probably no coincidence that the Austro-Hungarian albanologists like Hahn, Miklosich, Meyer, Meyer-Lübke, Jireček, Šufflay and – with some restrictions – Patsch and Nopcsa argued without exception for the Illyrian origin of the Albanians and of the Albanian language. Regarding the issues of the ethnogenesis of the Albanians and the origin of the Albanian language Jokl took a mediating position, which was published however only after the end of the Monarchy. It was also no coincidence that in the science of history the main emphasis of the work of the Austro-Hungarian historians was put geographically on Northern Albania and periodically on the medieval history of the Albanian people. The Cultus Protectorate of the Monarchy was concentrated on the Catholic districts in the North Albanian territories, and the nation building project of the Albanians searched for legitimacy in the glorious late medieval times of Skenderbeg. The examples mentioned here shall be confined to the geographic and ethnic definition of the medieval Albania, made by Šufflay, the collection of source material about the Albanian history „Acta et diplomata res Albanicae mediae aetatis illustrantia“ and the collectively written „Illyrisch-albanischen Forschungen“. The ethnographic research was also almost exclusively concentrated in North Albania. The very late beginning archaeological research of Albania dedicated itself to the ancient culture and neglected strongly the Pre-Illyrian, Illyrian and early medieval period. This resulted

4 Ibid., p. 235-239.

from the fact that on the one hand the general interest of the archaeology at that time was directed at the time of the ancient Greeks and Romans and that on the other hand the Austro-Hungarian albanologists, being well-disposed towards the Albanians, believed that the Illyrian-Albanian continuity could be proved exclusively with linguistic arguments.

The fact that there are three different types of actors, is important for the analysis: the pure scientific type, represented by Jireček, Šufflay, Patsch, Meyer, Schober, Miklosich, Schuchardt, Meyer-Lübke, Jokl and Lambertz; the mixed political-scientific type with proximity to or even involvement in the political field, represented by Hahn, Thallóczy, Ippen and Nopcsa; the mixed military-scientific type with proximity to or even involvement in the military field, represented by Veith, Praschniker, Seiner, Haberlandt, Nopcsa, Jokl and Lambertz. The double naming of Nopcsa, Jokl and Lambertz has to do with the fact that in certain periods they were also close to the political or military field. It is conspicuous that the representatives of the mixed military-scientific type had a relatively low average age, when the Dual Monarchy collapsed in 1918. Haberlandt, the youngest, was only 29, Seiner, the oldest, was with 44 just in the middle of his scientific career. Regarding the both mixed types, we can further distinguish who primarily was a scientist and who a politician, diplomat, civil servant or officer. But this cannot be decided easily for each case. While Hahn and Ippen were primarily diplomats, Veith officer and Nopcsa albanologist, the functions of politician, civil servant and researcher were developed to the same extent in the case of the double career of Thallóczy. The assertion of Oliver Schmitt that the Austrian scholars did not have a double function like their Hungarian colleagues,⁵ is not valid, if, for example, we think of Ippen. If a classification of types would be made for the time after the First World War, some modifications would occur in favour of the pure scientific type. Just the representatives of both mixed types led in the time of the Dual Monarchy, especially in politically and militarily explosive phases, to a diffuse overlap and linking of the scientific field with the political and military field. In the case of Schuchardt and Meyer-Lübke we have to ask first and foremost if their participation in the virtual field of the Austrian-Hungarian albanology can be postulated at all in view of their low albanological publication activity extending only over a short period of time. I have decided for a generous interpretation and have taken them into account, although being conscious that they are exposed to heavy

5 Schmitt, Oliver Jens (2015): *Balkanforschung an der Universität Wien*. In: Grandner, Margarete Maria; König, Thomas (Hg.): *Reichweiten und Außersichten. Die Universität Wien als Schnittstelle wissenschaftlicher Entwicklungen und gesellschaftlicher Umbrüche*. Göttingen: V&R unipress, p. 77.

criticism.⁶

These actors competed on the basis of their economic capital (i.e. financial assets and material possession), cultural capital (i.e. education and professional position), social capital (i.e. relations and networks) and symbolic capital (i.e. prestige and social reputation) against each other for maintaining or changing the power relations within the field of Austro-Hungarian albanology. Of course, the answer to the question of the prestige of a person is strongly related to or dependent on the context, because, to give a common example, the so-called hopeless “bad apple” of the family could be regarded in the circle of friends and acquaintances as a reliable and great person. If we are dealing with actors, who came from Austria-Hungary and whose scientific, political or military activity was directed at or developed in the Albanian area of settlement, we always have to take into consideration, if they acquired their capital within the Dual Monarchy or among the Albanians. In the time of the Monarchy it was still easier for a South-East Europe researcher to accumulate symbolic capital, because in the Balkans and especially in Albania there was still almost everything to discover. In our analysis we always have to consider that the capital of the actors developed and changed over time. The big success did not only result in general admiration but also in jealousy among competitors. By the way, this was and is valid for all fields. The individual actors were in general in a special relationship of dependence with the collective actors, consisting of the academic and ministerial institutions, which they worked for or which financed their explorations. To cut a long story short, we could summarize this permanently tense relationship with the slogan “desk actor versus on-location actor”. Mutual trust in difficult situations or in case of unforeseen problems on the spot, when the explorer had to rely on the sympathy and support from Vienna, was often a crucial factor for whether a field research could be carried out successfully or ended in a disaster, thus resulting in the growth or decrease of the symbolic capital. As a general rule, the mastery of the native language, i.e. the Albanian, combined with the knowledge of the local mentality, was the biggest capital for the explorers to open the door to the natives already from the beginning, of course often with the unpleasant consequence that they noticed all negative vibrations too. Let us look in this regard more closely at Thallóczy and Nopcsa, the main actors of the Albanian-Hungarian relations in the fields of research and politics.

Ludwig von Thallóczy was a magyarized German of Hungary and a

6 Hurch, Bernhard (2009): Von der Peripherie ins Zentrum: Hugo Schuchardt und die Neuerungen der Sprachwissenschaft. In: Acham, Karl (Hg.): Kunst und Wissenschaft aus Graz. Bd. 2.1., Kunst und Geisteswissenschaft aus Graz. Wien: Böhlau, p. 1–20, does not mention at all Schuchardt’s albanological contribution in his detailed paper about Schuchardt’s work.

member of a family of civil servants and teachers. In 1877, due to career reasons, he changed his name from Ludwig Strommer to Lajos (= Ludwig) Thallóczy, according to a Hungarian Croatian aristocratic family. Since he made a parallel career in political administration and science, he clearly belonged to the mixed political-scientific type. We want to limit the discussion of his capital to his academic career. Thallóczy drew his cultural capital from his completed history and law studies at the University of Budapest, his presidency of the Hungarian Historical Society and his membership of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His social capital was expressed amongst scholars especially by the fact that he mobilized successfully a number of Hungarian historians for his project of an edition on Bosnian history and that he cooperated intensively in research with slavists at the University of Vienna and with institutions related to Slavonic studies.⁷ His symbolic capital consisted in the fact that he was considered as the founder of Hungarian Balkan studies – his contemporaries called him the “mobile Balkan Institute”⁸ – as well as the founder of medieval Bosnian and Albanian history. Thus he increased the source material about Bosnian history into a geographically and thematically big edition series, which dealt with the relationship of Hungary with the Southern neighbour regions in the Middle Ages. Since 1895 Thallóczy followed also the Albanian history. He published together with Jireček and Šufflay in 1913 and in 1918 „Acta et diplomata res Albaniae mediae aetatis illustrantia“, regesta about medieval history of Albania, and he edited in 1916 the „Illyrisch-Albanischen Forschungen“. Although his research work was motivated by foreign policy and power politics, it nevertheless represented the basis for the late Middle Ages history of the northern Balkans, distinguished by objectivity and critical methodology.

Franz Nopcsa took part – at least temporarily – already before the First World War and especially during the first two war years, as commander of an Albanian volunteer corps, both in the political field and in the military field. Therefore he has to be classified both as mixed political-scientific type and mixed military-scientific type. Based on the fact that he retired from Albanian politics in springtime 1913, we can speak for the years 1915–1916 only of the mixed military-scientific type. Nopcsa, because of the parental estate Szacsal at Hátszeg in Siebenbürgen, was for certain in material and financial terms one of the most secured albanologists at the time of Dual Monarchy. Besides the economic capital, he earned as graduate of the geology and paleontology studies at the University of Vienna and as expert of almost all Balkan languages as well as by his

7 Ibid., Bd. 14, p. 282 f.

8 Hajdú, Zoltán (2001): Political geographical research of the Balkans in Hungary. In: Geographica Slovenica 34, I, p. 116.

successful career as paleontologist, geologist and explorer of “the exotic” Albania also considerable cultural capital. Likewise, his social capital was to be estimated equally high, both in Austria-Hungary and in Albania. He was born in a family, which in 1852 received the title of baron and which played since centuries an important role in the history as well as in the political and social life of Siebenbürgen.⁹ By means of his multiple family ties to the Hungarian nobility he could enjoy a gigantic network of contacts that opened him all the doors. Above all he was promoted by his uncle of the same name, the “Oberhofmeister” (supreme master of the court) of the Empress Elisabeth.¹⁰ Through his memberships in numerous scientific societies and commissions he had also diverse work contacts in Europe, for example with Carl Patsch, the director of the Balkan Institute in Sarajevo. Because he stayed from 1903 to 1916 repeatedly for longer periods of time in Shkodra and the surrounding highlands, he established close contacts with all the important notables and tribal leaders, who considered him almost as their own kind. From all this and other factors resulted his enormous symbolic capital, again both in Austria-Hungary and in Albania. Nopcsa participated in the life of the Albanian highlanders, spoke perfectly their language and embraced their mentality, so that he was even allowed to take part as a voter in their tribal assemblies. His marksmanship and bravery increased his prestige giving him the status of a hero. Also his reputation in the monarchy was something to be proud of, by the very genealogical fact that he came from an ancient Hungarian noble family. Nopcsa did not rest on his laurels, but increased his good reputation by pure performance. His lecture as a twenty-two year old man in the class assembly of the Academy of Sciences in Vienna with the title „Dinosaurierreste aus Siebenbürgen“ created a great sensation in the academic circles and was published still in the same year in the periodical of the academy.¹¹ Subsequently, he became the founder of two disciplines – paleophysiology and paleopathology – so that in the following years he was offered memberships in numerous scientific societies.¹² As if that was not enough, Nopcsa made an additional name for himself as geological, geographic and ethnographic explorer of Northern Albania. Nevertheless, in the Double Monarchy, although on the one hand he was respected, on the other hand he was treated with hostility and defamed, because he often pursued his own Albania policy and attacked in public that of the

9 Hála, József (1993): Franz Baron von Nopcsa. Anmerkungen zu seiner Familie und seine Beziehungen zu Albanien. Eine Bibliographie. Wien u. a.: Geologische Bundesanstalt u. a., p. V.

10 Robel, Gert (1966): Franz Baron Nopcsa und Albanien. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, p. 13.

11 Hála (1993), p. VI.

12 Ibid..

Ballhausplatz. His failed candidacy for the throne of Albania in 1913 may have made him look ridiculous in the European public and may have been actually responsible for his following retreat from the Albania policy, which he afterwards justified differently, and his prestige may have suffered from it: his opponents at the Ballhausplatz had to reluctantly acknowledge that Nopcsa was at that time the best expert of Northern Albania.