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KÖZLEMÉNYEK

Béla Santa

ROMANIZATION THEN AND NOW
A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE EVOLUTION OF INTERPRETATIONS OF CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Romanization is a model that helps understand and explain the cultural changes that were brought about on a newly conquered territory by the Roman Empire. It refers to the process by which the conquered people integrated into the Roman Empire and became 'Roman'. Although Romanization is more than a hundred-year-old interpretative concept, it is only in the past few decades that its validity as a framework of interpretation has been seriously questioned. While there is an intense discussion about Romanization in Western scholarship, Hungarian research remains mostly unaffected and scholars do not seem willing to engage in the debate.

A romanizáció egy modell, amely segít megérteni, illetve megmagyarázni a változásokat, amelyeket a római hódítások idéztek elő a meghódított területeken, és általában azt a folyamatot értjük alatta, amely során a meghódított népek betagozódtak a Római birodalomba és 'rómaivá' váltak. Bár a modell több, mint száz éves, az érvényességét csak az elmúlt néhány évtizedben kerdőjelezték meg komolyan. Míg a nyugati publikációkban heves vita folyik a romanizációról, a magyar kutatásra ennek nagyrészt nincs hatása és úgy tűnik, hogy a kutatók nem mutatnak érdeklődést a kérdés iránt.

Keywords: *Romanization, acculturation, imperialism, Roman Empire, Dacia*

Kulcsszavak: *Romanizáció, akkulturáció, imperializmus, Római Birodalom, Dacia*

Introduction[1]

In the past hundred years Romanization,[2] as a framework of interpretation of the effects of Roman imperialism, has become the dominant interpretive concept of cultural change wherever the Roman past is studied. Today Romanization has very much become an explanatory fact of life. The way we think about certain aspects of Romanization has, strikingly, hardly evolved and there are very few scholars, if any, who would not use this model to interpret Roman archaeological evidence thus based on lines drawn more than a hundred years ago. Although there have always been critics of the model, it is only in the past few decades that the continuing validity and relevance of the theory has been seriously challenged mainly by Anglo-Saxon scholars to the point that some have suggested abandoning the concept. Critics of the model emphasise that Romanization is problematic, because it is a scholarly construct that was formulated and grew out of a special 'set of historical circumstances' at the end of the 19th century,[3] which have no relevance anymore (Freeman 1997; Hingley 1995; Hingley 1996; Hingley 2008b; Rothe 2005, 1). According to perhaps the harshest critic, Freeman, until what is meant by Roman material culture is defined, it makes no sense to talk about Romanization, especially as the Roman Empire was not a culturally homogeneous entity and the objects that are usually classed as 'Roman' may not have been thought of as such by the conquered. It is also problematic to draw conclusions concerning identity based on objects even though this is exactly what applying Romanization theory means (Freeman 1993; Freeman 1997; Barrett 1997). If not fully embraced yet, these ideas slowly seem to be taking root in Anglo-Saxon and western publications, or at least generating an on-going debate about approaches to cultural change (Alföldy 2005; Schörner 2005a; Versluys 2014), while this discussion is noticeably missing from Hungarian research.

In the following pages, first, we will briefly outline the origins of Romanization theory, which is necessary to demonstrate how much these ideas still inform current understandings of Romanization. A discussion of some of the fresher interpretations and critic of Romanization theory will be followed by Hungarian and Romanian understandings of cultural change. It is to be emphasised that the paper does not aim to be a full discussion of the theory, or the latest ideas or the evolution of Hungarian understandings of cultural change in the Roman world. The sole purpose here is to draw attention to the advances that have been made in the past decades and the debate that seems to have reached even Romania, but appears to be ignored by Hungarian research.

The Romanization of Mommsen and Haverfield

Theodor Mommsen (1817–1903) was probably the most productive scholar of the 19th century. Of his approximately 1500 publications, the best known is his five-volume history of Rome, *Römische Geschichte* (1854–1885), for which he won a Nobel Prize for Literature in 1902. The first three volumes described the rise and fall of the Republic. The fourth volume that was to discuss the Principate never appeared. The fifth volume (*The provinces of the Roman Empire*) was published in 1885 and it was revolutionary in the sense that rather than discussing the imperial history of Rome, it focused on the provinces. Because of the relative lack of literary evidence, Mommsen made use of archaeology to describe the consequences of Roman conquest and perhaps this development of new sources is the German scholar's most important contribution to research (Rothe 2005, 3). He used inscriptions to highlight the similarities of the provinces and explained the spread of Roman citizenship, coinage, religion and language with a process he called *Romanisierung* (Romanizing). Making sense of the available, seemingly uniform, archaeological evidence, Mommsen saw the Roman as a coherent culture and perceived the Roman Empire as a culturally homogeneous state that brought civilisation, peace and prosperity to the conquered, who "desired to be Romans" (Mommsen 1909, 82). *Romanisierung* in Mommsen's reading was an encouraged and carefully complemented conscious Roman policy that followed a conquest. The oftenquoted section from Tacitus (*Agricola* 21) was seen by the German scholar as evidence for this. Urbanisation and the army had an important role to play in the process (Mommsen 1909, 99, 197) and the progress of *Romanisierung* Mommsen traced by the spread of the Latin language, Roman religion, the use of Roman coinage, etc. in newly annexed territories. In this respect he found that with the exception of a few 'remote' places the Roman policy was successful. Everywhere "the old language and the old habits disappeared as the Romans came" (Mommsen 1909, 206). Mommsen never actually explained what he meant by *Romanisierung*, but it seems obvious that for him it was the process of how 'barbarians' became civilised Romans. For Mommsen the result of *Romanisierung* was a complete cultural change and the arrival of civilisation. Mommsen's work had an enormous influence on a young British scholar, Francis Haverfield (1860–1919). In a prefatory note in the 1909 edition of Mommsen's *Geschichte* Haverfield wrote: "It is indeed a wonderful book… it became easy to discern the true character of the Roman Empire…[which] wrought for the progress and happiness of the world" (Haverfield 1909, xii). Mommsen's *Romanisierung* model became the interpretive framework Haverfield used to explain the archaeological evidence and describe the effects of the Roman conquest of Britain.

Although his scholarly output was considerable at some 500 publications, Haverfield is mainly remembered for a lecture, *The Romanization of Roman Britain*, he delivered at the British Academy in 1905. This was published in the proceedings of the British Academy in 1906 and appeared in subsequent updated and considerably extended editions in 1912, 1915 and after Haverfield's death (in 1919) in 1924. In the book Haverfield applied Mommsen's model to examine how the Roman Empire's civilising mission was accomplished in Britain through the Romanization of the province. Mommsen's influence is strongly apparent in the book. Haverfield used the same method and categories (language, art, religion, urbanism, etc.) whilst giving a more thorough analysis of what Romanization meant. He also used parallels with other parts of the empire to show that Romanization happened all over Europe not only in Britain. Romanization for Haverfield was the direct consequence and purpose of a Roman conquest. It was a unilateral mainly spontaneous, not imposed, but an encouraged process (Haverfield 1924, 17) that eventually turned natives into Romans, affecting both rich and poor.[4] Roman was a uniform, coherent culture, which quickly spread and which drove out native language, art, religion, material culture. It worked because the conquered recognised the superiority of what Rome had to offer and they eagerly accepted it. The progress of

cultural change Haverfield measured by the adoption of 'Roman' material culture. The idea that this could be basis upon which conclusions can be drawn about identity is clearly articulated (Haverfield 1906, 203). For Haverfield, if one used 'Roman' objects, one was Roman, or at least aspiring to be so. The Roman government encouraged Romanization by increasing the Roman and Romanized population in a newly conquered province by establishing colonies, and by offering citizenship to those wishing to become Roman. According to Haverfield, the Romans Romanized by 'introducing Roman speech and thought and culture…[but] this Romanization was perhaps not uniform throughout all sections of the population' (Haverfield 1906, 210). This is an important point, because it shows that Haverfield allowed for local variations within Romanization (see also Haverfield 1912, 16). He concluded that 'Romanization extinguished the difference between Roman and provincial through all parts of the Empire but the East, alike in speech, in material culture, in political feeling and religion. When the provincials called themselves Roman or when we call them Roman, the epithet is correct' (Haverfield 1915, 22).[5]

This brief summary of the ideas of the architects of the Romanization model clearly indicates how much current understandings of Romanization retain the general character of the models of Mommsen and Haverfield. The building of administrative centres, the establishment of colonies, for example, still tend to be interpreted as attempts to Romanize a newly conquered territory. The spread of coins and 'Roman' goods are all taken as indicators of Romanization. It is this theme which is perhaps the most problematic aspect of the model, i.e. the drawing of conclusions on identity or cultural change based on archaeological finds. Can a change in material culture signify a change in identity or culture?

In his review of Millett's *Romanization of Britain* (Millett 1990a), Freeman (Freeman 1991) took issue with what was meant by 'Roman', arguing that until what constituted 'Roman material culture', the spread and use of which was used to indicate and quantify Romanization, was defined, and what made it specifically 'Roman' was explained, it made no sense to talk about Romanization. Freeman pointed out that 'Roman' material package is a modern invention that goes back to Mommsen and Haverfield who tried to show cultural homogeneity in the Roman Empire by highlighting similar elements in it and the categories used a century ago (language, art, religion, urbanisation, etc.) are still applied when discussing Romanization. Freeman emphasised that the Roman Empire was an 'ever evolving, but multifaceted creature and not one which established an identity and structure under the early Principate and which remained constant and uniform across its totality'. He argued that the use and adoption of what tended to be seen as 'Roman' goods do not indicate identity or an aspiration to become Roman. They can imply changing tastes and preferences, availability, or the use of better quality or simply cheaper alternatives to locally accessible goods.[6] It is an important point that objects we see as 'Roman' may not have been perceived as such by those whose identity we are trying to measure by their adoption of those items.[7] So for example, Samian ware was a product of a Gallic industry.[8] Freeman concluded that it is these questions that require attention before we can try to measure and quantify cultural change (Freeman 1991; Freeman 1993).

On the other hand, some ideas concerning Romanization have evolved. Predictably, these are those aspects of the model that could be understood as the manifestations of the '*Zeitgeist*' of the 19th century. Some suggested alternative theories, Hingley's globalisation model (Hingley 2005; also Hitchner 2008; Pitts–Versluys 2015) for example, are unsurprisingly very much projections of our own time.[9] In the post-colonial age, Romanization is not understood as a one-way civilising process from the more advanced Roman to the inferior native anymore. In Martin Millett's model the driving force of Romanization was not the Romans, but the native elite for whom the adoption of Roman culture was a way to reinforce their social status (Millett 1990a, 212).[10] Thus, Romanization was 'internally driven rather than externally imposed' (Millett 1990b, 38). Replacing uniformity, 'diversity' features heavily in these new interpretations. In Greg Woolf's model those 'becoming Roman' did not assimilate into a static Roman culture, but actively participated in shaping it and turning it into their own, which created diverse identities, which could be different in different parts of the empire and could be experienced in different ways (Woolf 1997; Woolf 1998). According to Woolf, Roman was an inclusive and diverse culture that was always changing, but there was also uniformity and something characteristically Roman in it, which can be traced in the common features in the material culture and similar processes (urbanisation, for example, Woolf 1992). Mattingly also saw the process of cultural change as a two-way interaction experienced in many different ways (Mattingly 1997, 8–9): it is through the transformation of

'material culture' that the process of cultural change is measured and Mattingly aims to identify 'discrepant identities' in the 'material culture' (Mattingly 2006, 17). He recognises several factors that might influence one's identity, e.g. status, wealth, location, gender, age, etc. and his conclusion is that 'different groups constructed their own versions of Roman and/or non-Roman identity, both in embracing and in resisting the empire' (Mattingly 2004, 22). The models of Woolf and Mattingly indeed offer a more finely tuned and flexible approach than Romanization as they recognise diverse rather than homogenous ('Roman' or 'native') identities. The inherent problem of Romanization that of 'Roman material culture', however, seems to survive and feature prominently in these and other concepts, as they attempt to draw conclusions about identity based on material culture without actually defining it and discussing what it might have represented to those adopting it thus possibly recognising cultural change where there may not have been one. It is also to be emphasised that ethnic identity might not have had the significance which is assigned to it today and the scholarly 'obsession' of looking for it and attempting to recognise it in the archaeological material of the ancient world is perhaps only the projection of today's academic perceptions of modern society (Jones 1997, 135–140; Mattingly 2014, 38).[11]

It is also apparent that scholars tend to feel that a justification is needed for their use of the model, although admittedly Romanization has its die-hard supporters even in British research.[12] An explanation of what is meant by it is also increasingly felt to be necessary (e.g. Keay–Terrentano 2001, ix; Wilson 2015).[13] Sometimes Romanization is used simply out of convenience and scholars are at pains to explain that what they mean by Romanization has not much to do with what is/was 'traditionally' meant by it. For them it remains a useful tool to describe the complex processes involved in the integration of a newly conquered people into the Roman Empire, especially as it contains the keyword 'Rome' (Alföldy 2005, 43, cf. Freeman 1993; Hingley 2014a, 6378–6379). It is sometimes used in a 'weak' or 'weakest' sense (Keay–Terrentano 2001, ix; Roth 2007, 9–10),[14] which Mattingly called a 'desperate measure' to hang onto an outdated theory and compared the Romanization debate to 'grooming a dead animal' (Mattingly 2002, 537; Mattingly 2011, 204, cf. Schörner 2005b). It should perhaps be noted that although Romanization tends to be understood as the ugly 'r' word and a perished theory only in British research, its usefulness is under scrutiny everywhere in western academia (Versluys 2014, 5–6; Hingley 2014b, 21). Dead or not, Romanization is still with us even though a clear evolution of how we think about cultural change seems to have taken place.[15] In a recently published collection of essays entitled Processes of Cultural Change and Integration in the Roman World (Roselaar 2015), one can find the echoes of the newer ideas discussed above. The editor, Roselaar T. Saskia, points out that: '(t)he most important result of these studies is an awareness of the enormous variety of responses to Roman conquest; this variation existed not only on the provincial or regional level, but even from location to location. … provincials… created their own cultural identity.' Roselaar emphasises that 'it is impossible to identify a uniform 'Roman' culture'. Of material culture she says that the use of terra sigillata in Gauldoes not indicate an aspiration to become Roman, because '…the meaning associated with an object would not be the same everywhere', which is an echo of Freeman's ideas (Freeman 1993). Importantly, it is also acknowledged that the adoption of any 'Roman cultural practices' can be seen as a pragmatic choice to take advantage of arising opportunities, rather than a desire to become 'Roman' (Roselaar 2015, 1–12).[16] One's delight at these fresh ideas is somewhat marred by Roselaar's insistence on the term Romanization: '…the Roman conquest did cause significant change in all parts of life, and that the term 'Romanization' can be used as an umbrella term to incorporate all these changes; although it does not, of course, mean that people felt themselves to be 'Romans' (Roselaar 2015, 4).

Romanization in Hungary

One of the first Hungarian scholars to use Romanization theory to describe the consequences of a Roman conquest was András Alföldi (1895–1981) (Alföldi 1934; Alföldi 1936a; Alföldi 1936b). It is not the purpose here to examine his work in detail, but it is interesting to note that Alföldi seems to have embraced all the aspects of the model described above and the influence of the 'German school' is strongly apparent. The role of the army and the establishment of colonies and towns, the settlement of veterans are described as tools of the Romanizing policy in Pannonia. The increased use of Latin and spread of Roman material culture are also understood as signs of cultural change (Alföldi 1936a). For Alföldi, Romanization was a conscious, carefully planned process, which ensured the integration

of the conquered peoples into a higher culture (Alföldi 1934, 23; Alföldi 1936a, 21).

One of the very few definitions of what Romanization means comes from András Mócsy (1929–1987). He discussed the term in connection with the Romanization of Moesia Superior and defined it as 'the spontaneous and institutionally directed changes affecting the social, economic and cultural conditions that took place a result of the Roman rule in the European and North-African provinces of the Roman Empire'(my translation, quoted in Balla 1990, 34; also Mócsy 1970, 7). In contradiction to Alföldi, according to Mócsy, a Roman conquest should not be seen as a mission to spread Roman culture or Latin. In his reading, Romanization was a tool on the part of Rome that was meant to ensure the smooth administration of a conquered territory, it was only a means to an end (Mócsy 1987, 10–11). The process itself was, although directed and encouraged, mostly spontaneous and not an assimilation into a higher culture. This is an interesting distinction, because there seems to be an apparent move-away from Alföldi's Mommsen influenced interpretation. As for the use of Latin, for Mócsy, the spread of Latin inscriptions should not be understood as indicators of the widespread use of the language, but as an obvious consequence of Latin being the language of public life and administration (Mócsy 1974, 260–263, cf. Barkóczi 1964, 292). Looking at Mócsy's earlier publications on the history of Pannonia (Barkóczi et al. 1963, 13–79), a clear evolution of ideas is apparent here. His 1964 History of Pannonia is a description of the carefully planned and centrally organised Romanization of the province, in which every imperial measure is interpreted as a thoughtfully considered step towards the full Romanization of the region (Barkóczi et al. 1963, 41, for example). In his later version of the same history (1974, also 1987), if the development of the province is understood through its Romanization, the concept does not directly feature as heavily as before. The process of 'becoming Romanized' is presented as a more spontaneous development rather than a carefully implemented plan. The tools of Romanization, however, remained the same. The army and the establishment of colonies were seen by Mócsy as the main factors of Romanization (Mócsy 1987, 6) and the measure of cultural change of the native population he interpreted through archaeological evidence. It is to be noted, however, that he saw the quick spread of Roman goods as a simple matter of their design 'being the latest fashion' (Mócsy 1974, 259) and not necessarily an indicator of (instant) cultural change, or the use of Latin (Visy 2012, 246), even if in the end the process of Romanization resulted in the creation of a 'colourless, undifferentiated, empire-wide culture'. Although he allowed for regional differences, these were not the result of diverse responses to Romanization, but depended on whether the process started earlier or later (Mócsy 1974, 176, 259, 263; Mócsy 1987, 8; Balla 1990, 34).

The Romanization described in Erdély története (The History of Transylvania; Köpeczi 1986) is perhaps not as nuanced as Mócsy's interpretation, but it is not much different from it. It is worth quoting because it is the most comprehensive description/definition offered in Hungarian research: 'Romanization was a long process by with the aboriginal population progressively assimilated Roman customs and culture. Their material culture was the first to be influenced and modified by Roman techniques and styles… Becoming a Roman was a more or less voluntary act; the provincial administration and the *civitatis* provided a structure for the process, which was also nurtured by urbanization and military service. Tribal communities slowly disintegrated as the society was transformed by lengthy military service, urban life, commerce, and other economic activities. Assimilation of the empire's languages was fostered by military service that lasted 25 years. The linguistic change, which spanned many generations, led first to bilingualism, then to total replacement of the mother tongue. In the empire's provinces, this process generally took at least 400 years, if not longer.…Romanization was deliberately promoted by external measures, and the gradual process of assimilation can be well-traced in the archaeological finds of the province.' Unsurprisingly, the conclusion is that '(t)here is no trace of such a process in Dacia' (Tóth 2001, 114).[17]

If in the past three decades no detailed analysis of Romanization has been published in Hungarian research, the model is still being applied. The idea of Romanization still features heavily in publications, if fresher ideas are also present and the appearance of 'Roman' design on pottery is not necessarily interpreted as a sign of Romanization, but as an attempt to manufacture a competitive product (Szabó–Borhy 2015, 144–145). In other descriptions old interpretations seem to survive without their validity being questioned and ideas described above are still dominant without being critiqued.

The army still tends to be understood as a driving force or instrument of Romanization (Székely 2014, 80; Vilmos–Grüll 2008, 193), even though recent

research strongly questions whether retired auxiliary soldiers, for example, should be seen as agents of 'Roman culture', especially considering that they made up only a small fraction of the population, where they were present at all (Cherry 1998, 93; Haynes 2013, 340–342). The peaceful acquisition of the Kingdom of Cottius is interpreted as a triumph of Romanization (Farkas 2015, 178), which suggests that, according to the author, the purpose of a Roman conquest was to Romanize. Objects are understood in terms of identity. Discussing archaeological finds, 'Roman' material culture (i.e. terra sigillata and 'Roman' styled objects unearthed in pit dwellings) tends to be explained as proof for the dwellers' Roman identity. That easier and cheaper availability, especially around Aquincum, and the above discussed perhaps more attractive design of these might be the reason for their strong presence in the archaeological evidence is not considered and the presence of Celtic finds is played down as insignificant (Bíró 2007, 23; also Magyar 2015, 217; Láng 2016, 44). A similar approach is applied in an otherwise interesting and admirably researched recent monograph on the Pannonian *vici*. The social structure and the development of these settlements are interpreted in terms of their Romanization and material culture is understood as a medium that can offer evidence as to the identity of the population in the *vici* (Bíró 2017, 211–225). In the archaeological material of the *vicus* in Budaörs certain items (mirrors, lamps, etc.) in graves are also considered to be clues as to how far the deceased had progressed in the process of cultural change (Ottományi 2016, 162, 191, 231). The increasing amount of 'Roman' pottery on a site is also supposed to signify changing identities (Ottományi 2014, 113). How this checklist works exactly is not clear, however. At the risk of sounding cynical, one could ask if there is a set number of these items that is necessary to qualify as a Roman. There is no doubt that in many cases acculturation happened, but it is highly debatable whether archaeological evidence can be used to draw conclusions on identity and very often the most that can be said is that what we know for certain is that we do not know. If a suggestion might be made, at the risk of stating the obvious, perhaps contextualising these sites in their regional environment could provide a better understanding of these settlements and those living in it.

It is not the purpose here to list all the publications that treat archaeological material this way and 'lecture' the authors on theories concerning cultural change, but this short review is perhaps useful in demonstrating how much understanding of cultural change in Hungarian research is still informed by old interpretations and seem to ignore newer approaches.

Looking at the bigger picture, disappointingly, one looks in vain for discussions of newer understandings of Romanization in Hungarian scholarship, even though there seems to be an awareness of the latest ideas discussed above. There is also an apparent reluctance to take part and engage in the debate.[18] A historian simply brushes aside newer approaches to cultural change without discussing them as '…they did not take us a step closer to becoming acquainted with reality' (Grüll 2007, 167–168; Grüll 2016).[19] This would be disappointing in itself, but the brief discussion of Romanization in the same volume (2007) offers a view that is based on cultural diversity and the author suggests 'multiculturalism' as a concept that perhaps best describes the Roman experience, but which seems to be the manifestation of those discarded ideas finding their way into the author's tool set after all. It is not encouraging either that one looks in vain in a Hungarian university course book on Roman history (Havas et al. 2007) for a detailed analysis of the theme of Romanization as a model of interpretation of cultural change (Also pointed out by a reviewer, Vilmos–Grüll 2008, 195), which sadly suggests that the authors did not deem the debate or the subject worthy of a thorough discussion even though as we have seen there is much to say on the subject.

In Hungarian research Romanization is very often discussed in connection with Dacia and the Daco-Romanian continuity theory (Mócsy 1987; Balla 1990; Tóth 2001; Gáll 2007, 95–96). It is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that to some extent Hungarian and especially Romanian scholarship concerning Romanization still struggles in the straitjacket of the assumed continuity. The history of the debate goes back to the 19th century and it must be interpreted in the context of Transylvania and the question of chronological priority there. Originally used as an argument in the fight for the political rights of the 'autochthonous' Romanian nationality in Transylvania, after the Treaty of Trianon in 1920 the supposed 'Romanian continuity' provided the scholarly argument and justification for the cession of Transylvania to Romania. Unsurprisingly, a Hungarian call to arms followed and in the succeeding years an academic war between Hungarian and Romanian scholars erupted reaching its climax after 1940 when Northern Transylvania was returned to Hungary for a few years during The Second World War. Romanization, as a model that could 'scientifi-

cally prove' the cultural change of the native population of Dacia was a blessing for Romanian research, but the concept was used by both sides to prove one's right and to refute the other's inevitably different research conclusions concerning Roman Dacia and the 'Romanized' population there (e.g. Buday 1925; Alföldi 1926; Părvan 1928, 149–208; Alföldi 1936b, 149–157; Daicoviciu 1943; Alföldi 1943; Alföldi 1944; Székely 1943, 31–35; Visy 2012). In some cases these were rather perplexing suggestions. Reacting to Hungarian arguments, which considered (and they still do) the Roman occupation of Dacia too short a period (approx. 160 years) for the full Romanization of the province and thus the continuity to happen, Vasile Părvan (1882–1927) proposed that the cultural connections between Dacia and Italy and thus the Romanization of Dacia might have started as early as 1000BC! Constantin Daicoviciu (1898–1973) considered an extra two centuries before the Roman conquest of Dacia sufficient and put the start date to around 100BC (Székely 1943, 33). In communist Romania the research objective remained the same, i.e. to prove the rapid and long-lasting Romanization of the Dacians (Oltean 2007, 6). Although perhaps a new direction could be expected after the fall of communism, one seems to have hoped in vain. The Daco-Romanian continuity theory became a political dogma under Ceaușescu (Deletant 1991) and anyone questioning it risked becoming an outcast even years after the dictatorship fell.[20] In spite of this, things seem to slowly change, however. Besides the well-known historian Lucian Boia's (Boia 2001) and others' (e.g Niculescu 2002; Niculescu 2007; Mitu 2006; Mitu 2013)[21] scholarly efforts aimed at writing history devoid of nationalistic aims (László 2012), mention may be made of a recent monograph, which the reviewer refers to as a 'breakthrough in Romanian archaeology', as the author states that archaeology does not have the tools to prove the Daco-Romanian continuity (Lăzărescu 2015; Gáll 2017, 104). Strangely enough, Lăzărescu does not discuss Romanization, but others do.

Surveying recent Romanian research, on the one hand, one finds similar understandings of archaeology to Hungarian interpretations discussed above. That the adoption of 'Roman' material culture, practices, etc. can be the indication of Romanization is also apparent in Romanian scholarship (Oprenau 2008, 140; Diaconescu 2004). It is disappointing that not even Oltean[22] managed to write on Dacia without using Romanization as the interpretative model. Oltean, for instance, talks about 'Trajan's approach to romanisation' when discussing urbanisation.[23] It could be reasonably argued that whether Trajan had an opinion on or an approach to Romanization is at least highly debatable. Settlers are referred to as being at 'various stages of romanization' (also Diaconescu 2004, 112) and Romanization is seen in terms of ''Roman' action and native response'. Inscriptions are 'markers of romanisation'[24] and a sunken house is seen as out of place and probably a 'temporary cultural reminiscence' near a villa site in Romanized Dacia (Oltean 2007, 220–227).[25] Latin inscriptions are seen as evidence for Romanization and thus that certain parts of Dobrudja were 'completely Romanised' is mostly based on Latin inscriptions, which, according to Petculescu, suggest that the population spoke 'solely Latin (at least in official circumstances)' (Petculescu 2006, 36). It can be said that these ideas are not much, if any, different from Hungarian interpretations, but one also comes across bafflingly dated ideas about cultural change. In a relatively recent text on the Romanization of Dacia the author explains that 'Dacians were impressed by the superior material civilization…When two peoples meet, the most prestigious one (politically or culturally) gets the upper hand' (Bărbulescu 2005, 166; also Cătăniciu 2007, cf. Opreanu 2007; Rubel 2011b). Dacians assimilated into the superior Roman culture as they saw it as progress. That this is a more than a hundred-year-old outdated idea does not need emphasis.

On the other hand, as part of a project that was meant to be the 'Romanian contribution to this crucial, on-going debate [on Romanization], and a much-needed reappraisal of the concept of Romanization', we can find recent attempts at devising newer approaches to the theoretical aspects of the model and its context in Romanian research (Rubel 2009; Rubel 2011a; Rubel 2013).[26] The driving force behind this initiative was the realisation that recent debates on the process of integration have had very little influence on research in Romania (Rubel 2011b, 13).[27] The same could be said of scholarship in Hungary.

Whether this project to revitalize Romanian understandings of cultural change can help Romanian research reappraise its position on Romanization is not yet clear, but it is to be noted that however forward looking the initiative seems, these newer approaches to cultural change should not be based on older, dated interpretations.[28] Also, if the realisation has been made that the process referred to as Romanization was a complex phenomenon that manifested differently from region to region and could be experienced differently, then it could be argued that

it makes no sense to talk about Romanized colonists, or colonists at various degrees of Romanization that ensured the Romanization of a province (Mihailescu–Bîrliba 2011; Mihailescu–Bîrliba 2013), as this would imply a uniform 'Roman' identity and it has been established that such a thing did not exist. One must of course consider that the Roman conquest and subsequent occupation and integration of Dacia or Pannonia into the Roman Empire brought changes to, for example, the political structure or the lives of many, if not all, of those living in the province prior to the arrival of the Romans, but an attempt to leave the 'Roman' attribute out of the description of Dacia or Pannonia would certainly result in fresh and stimulating discussions and a new understanding of these provinces.

Concluding thoughts

To end on a positive note, while it seemed necessary to bring attention to the above described dated ideas on cultural change articulated in Hungarian and Romanian research, it is to be emphasised that there is an awareness of the latest ideas and efforts are made, at least in Romania, to contribute to the debate on Romanization. As a general conclusion of this brief survey it can be said that although a rapid evolution of the understanding of cultural change in the Roman Empire has taken place in the past decades, as far as can be seen, Hungarian scholars, while appear alert to the latest ideas, regrettably, do not seem to deem engaging in the debate a meaningful exercise. It is also apparent that 19th century ideas are still applied (also in Romanian research) when considering cultural change. It might be said that although some of the observations made in the article are negative, they are not meant to be little the work of Hungarian or Romanian scholars. The paper was written with the aim to draw attention to the Romanization debate and the significant advances that have been made in recent years in the way we see and interpret cultural change in the Roman Empire.

Notes

1 I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer of the first version of this paper for their constructive and insightful suggestions.

2 Of the several spelling variations of the term 'Romanization' (romanisation, Romanisation, 'romanisation', etc.) (Hingley 2000, 111), the capitalised *Romanization* version will be used in this paper. In quotes the variant preferred by the cited author will be used.

3 Although the 'theme' of Romanization goes back to the Renaissance, it simply meant the adoption of Latin, rather than cultural change. For a survey of understanding of Romanization before the 19th century, see Freeman 2007, 520; Hingley 2008a.

4 Roman pottery, glass and coins found in huts in a native settlement in Anglesey made Haverfield conclude that the 'external fabric of Roman provincial life were present and almost dominant' (Haverfield 1912, 37–38), which suggests that those living in the village lead Romanized lives.

5 Although the colonial experience is apparent in Haverfield's work, there is evidence to suggest that his opinions were in part shaped as a consequence of two visits he made to Austria-Hungary at the end of 1880s (Freeman 2017; also Haverfield 1891; Freeman 2007, 519–523, 534–535).

6 It is known that pottery was mass produced and piggybacked on military transports, which probably made it cheaper than local alternatives anywhere. See Fulford 1991, 40; Wilson 2015, 275.

7 For similar sentiments on *terra sigillata*, see Wells 2001, 128. Reece defined material culture as 'material better known inside the Roman Empire than outside' (Wells 1988, 11). For a brief discussion of the connection between material culture and ethnicity, see Gáll 2007, 98–101, and also Brather (e.g. Brather 2002; Brather 2004). For a reaction to Brather's ideas, see Curta 2013.

8 Using the same line of thought according to Richard Reece, as a result of Romanization, 'Britain became more Gaulish, more Rhinelandish, more Spanish, a little more Italian, a very little more African, and a little more Danubian' (Reece 1988, 11). For Barrett (Barrett 1997, 51), Reece merely replaced 'Roman' with other problematic categories and whether certain goods arrived from within the empire is not relevant.

9 Reece's reaction to Hingley's 'globalizing' theory sums up the inherent problem with applying models: Hingley 'thinks [that]…Imperialism is the wrong theory and a good dose of better theory will do us all good. The only thing it is likely to do is provide material for another author in 50 years' time to demonstrate how the new theory led us equally astray' (Reece 2001, 226).

10 The poor are largely ignored by Millett's Romanization concept at the expense of the elite for which

he was criticised, among others, by Webster, whose creolising model ironically does the exact opposite (Webster 2001).

11 For more exhaustive discussions of aspects of Romanization and suggested models, see e.g. Alföldy 2005; Schörner 2005a; Versluys 2014. For a fascinating recent study of identity in Roman Gaul and Spain arguing for the importance of local identity over becoming 'Roman' or 'Romanized', see Johnston 2017.

12 According to de la Bédoyère, we don't need fabricated' arcane social science terms like 'discrepant experiences' [to] provoke a debate where there isn't really one to be had' (quoted in Hingley 2007, 538).

13 By Romanization Wilson means 'the appearance and adoption of cultural traits or material that are not indigenous ...and can be associated with the arrival of, or influence of, the Roman Empire (Wilson 2015, 274).

14 Confusingly, for Roth 2007, 10. Romanization is the 'most neutral term' because 'its original implications are now so widely rejected'.

15 Even if the titles on the provisional program of a congress on Romanization held at the University of Heidelberg in December 2017, sadly, do not seem to reflect these advances. https://www.academia.edu/34183207/Congress_on_Romanization_December_2017_Institute_of_Classical_Archeology_University_of_Heidelberg_Preliminary_Program Last accessed 1 September 2017.

16 It is interesting to note that Kuzsinszky (Kuzsinszky 1895) interpreted such actions in exactly the same way more than a hundred years ago.

17 The standard Hungarian work on Roman Dacia, or any aspect of the history of Transylvania, is still *Erdély története vols I–III.* (Köpeczi 1986).

18 Alföldy is an exception, but he had western scholarly affiliations.

19 Translation of the author.

20 A very interesting and heated discussion of this topic at a conference in Transylvania made me feel that scholars are simply scared of 'coming out' about their views on whether the available evidence supports the continuity theory. For the 'tribulations' of Sorin Mitu, the coordinator of a history textbook, see Părăniau 2001. For Romanian reactions to Boia's *History and Myth in Romanian consciousness*, see Boia 2001, 1–26.

21 Mitu's *Transilvania mea. Istorii, mentalităţi, identităţi* Mitu 2006 is now available in Hungarian (Mitu 2017).

22 Oltean has British scholarly affiliations.

23 On whether urbanisation can be interpreted as a vehicle of Romanization, see Cherry 1998, 84–85.

24 On whether inscriptions erected by auxiliaries in Dacia can be interpreted as markers of Romanization, see Chappell 2010.

25 Similarly, Bíró finds pit-dwellings in Roman established settlements with no *La Tène* predecessors 'striking' (Bíró 2017, 212).

26 Rubel 2013 is the somewhat extended German version of Rubel 2011a. For a full list of publications and the quote, follow http://arheo.ro/romanization/ Last accessed 5 May 2018.

27 A critical comment one might make on Rubel's article on Romanian scholarship and suggestions for directions of Romanian research is that he managed to write an overview of the Romanization debate without a single reference to Freeman, a leading authority on the subject.

28 Ardevan 2011, for example, strongly argues for the undeniably complete Romanization of Dacia based mostly on some very dated (see footnote 1, for example) or academically highly questionable papers, such as Bărbulescu 2001; Protase 2001. For a devastating review of the use of archaeological evidence in these publications, which form part of *Istoria românilor II* (Protase–Suceveanu 2001), see Niculescu 2002 and Niculescu 2007; also Gáll 2007.

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ROMANIZÁCIÓ HAJDAN ÉS MA. A RÓMAI BIRODALOMBAN VÉGBEMENT KULTÚRAVÁLTÁST TÁRGYALÓ INTERPRETÁCIÓK FEJLŐDÉSÉNEK RÖVID ÁTTEKINTÉSE

Rezümé

A romanizáció modell, amely segít értelmezni a római kori régészeti leleteket, és azt a folyamatot értjük alatta, amely során a Római Birodalom által meghódított terület betagozódott a Római Birodalomba és rómaivá vált. Az eredetileg Theodor Mommsenhez (1817–1903) fűződő modell szerint a romanizáció egy gondosan kidolgozott terv szerint haladt, és a latin nyelv, a római vallás, az urbanizáció es a római használatai tárgyak megjelenésében fogható meg. Véleménye szerint a folyamat olyan jelenségek segítségével követhető nyomon, amelyekből identitásra vonatkozó következtetéseket lehet levonni. Szerinte a hódítások célja is a római kultúra terjesztése, a romanizáció volt. Ezek a gondolatok még mindig uralkodóak a mai kutatásban, bár egyértelműen a 19. századi „*Zeitgeist*", „korszellem" szülöttjei. Az elmúlt néhány évtizedben főleg angolszász kutatók össztűz alá vették a romanizációt, mint a kutatás mai állása szerint már meghaladott értelmezési modellt. Ez a gondolatébresztő tudományos vita számos új elgondolást, értelmezést, és újabb, valószínűleg a jövőben a romanizációhoz hasonló sorsra jutó modellek kidolgozását eredményezte, és bár a kutatók egy része nem fogadja el ezeket a frissebb elképzeléseket, a téma folyton napirenden van és sok, a kutatást előrevivő gondolat fogalmazódik meg *pro* és *contra*. Ehhez képest a magyar szakembereket, úgy tűnik, nem hozza lázba ez a tudományos vita és a mai romanizáció értelmezés sok esetben megegyezik a száz évvel ezelőttivel. Az egyetlen témakör, ahol a romanizáció elmélet átgondolása előkerül, az Erdély és a dáko-román kontinuitás kérdésköre. Talán nem meglepő, hogy a magyar kutatásba is ezen elmélettel kapcsolatban került be a fogalom. A román es magyar történészek között az Erdély hovatartozásának problémájáról zajló, a tudományosság köntösébe bújtatott vitába Alföldi András (1895–1981) vonta be és alkalmazta Mommsen romanizáció modelljét. Bár a ma zajló vitának megfelelő finomhangolás bizonyos mértékig a magyar kutatásban is megtörtént, Alföldi óta alapvetően nem változott a romanizáció értelmezés. Ez nehezen érthető, hiszen az újabb gondolatok, legalábbis a figyelemfelkeltés szintjén, már például a román régészetet is elérték, míg Magyarországon behatóan senki nem foglalkozik a kérdéssel és úgy tűnik, hogy még a fiatalabb generáció is ignorálja a témát.

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