ON THE ROMANIAN TERM *PĂDURE*

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Abstract

In this article, we write the linguistic monograph of the generic term around which the Romanian forest terminology is built. Starting from the lexicographic definition and from the etymology, we draw a comparison with similar words in other neo-Latin languages, resulting in some interesting historical conclusions. We mention important geographical and hydrographic terms containing the idea of forest in their age-old names, which is very suggestive from historical, linguistic and spiritual point of view. We illustrate the "lexical efficiency" of the term, as well as its "echoes" in toponymy, hydronymy and anthroponymy.

Key words: *forest*, *etymology*, *toponyms*, *anthroponyms*, *Latin* (*language*)

Résumé

Dans cet article nous traçons une esquisse de la monographie linguistique du terme générique autour duquel se construit la terminologie roumaine de la forêt. En commençant par la définition lexicographique et par l'étymologie, nous les comparons avec l'étymologie des termes équivalents des autres langues néo-latines, tirant ainsi des conclusions très intéressantes d'ordre historique. Nous évoquons des termes géographiques et hydrographiques importants, qui contiennent dans leurs racines anciennes l'idée de forêt, fait révélateur du point de vue historique, linguistique et spirituel. Nous illustrons «l'efficience lexicale» du terme, ainsi que ses échos dans la toponymie, hydronymie et anthroponymie.

Mots-clés: *forêt*, *étimologie*, *toponymes*, *anthroponymes*, (*langue*) *latine*

The Romanian word *pădure* (*forest*, *wood*) appears in most dictionaries along with the following definition: *pădure* s.f., pl. *păduri*: "large land area covered with trees; the group of trees growing in a tight dependence on this area; trees which belong to this group, together with numerous plant species (moss, mushrooms, herbs, shrubs) and wild animals living here"[1].

[1] Cf. *DLR*, VIII, 1, 1972, p. 231.

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In Romanian, *pădure* is inherited from Vulgar Latin – the form *padūlem* is obtained through metathesis from Classical Latin – *palus, -ūdem*, which meant "swamp" Important linguists[2] convincingly explain the evolution of the meaning: covered with thick vegetation – reed and rush – the swamps of the past, seen from a distance, looked like forests. A similar situation, as far as the evolution of the meaning is concerned, can be found in the Albanian language, which proves that the term belongs to the Balkan Latin.

In other Neo-Latin languages (e.g., the French term *forêt*, the Italian term *foresta*, the Spanish term *forestales*, the Portuguese term *floresta*), the word for "forest" comes from another Latin word [*silva*] *forestis*, which, in its turn, is thought to come from Classical Latin – *forum*.

There is a fundamental distinction between *padūlem* and *forestis*, namely "[+/-] human intervention": *padūlem* is a rich, thick, wild forest, impossible to cross (especially if one does not know it or unless someone *shows you the way* – cf. Sextil Puşcariu), while [*silva*] *forestis* is "managed" and attended to by man.

The Latin word *sylva* was not inherited in Romanian, but we have the Adjective *sălbatic* (wild) coming from the Vulgar Latin adjective *silvaticus*, which, in its turn, comes from the Classical Latin adjective *sylvaticus*. The initial meaning of "sălbatic" (wild) can be related to the syntagm "de pădure" (living/growing in the forest): *animale sălbatice* (wild animals), *viță sălbatică* (woodbine) *flori sălbatice* (wild flowers).

The Romanian words *selbă*[3] (first occurence, in Ion Budai-Deleanu's writings) and *silvă*[4] are bookish Latinisms.

The geographical name *Transilvania* can be easily translated: "(the land) *beyond the forests*". *Ardeal*, a word of Hungarian etymology, is the exact translation of the toponym *Transilvania*. The relatively new Romanian proper names *Silvestru*, *Silvia*, *Silviu* come from the same Latin root.

The immemorial age of our forests as well as the link between the

[2] Candrea, Densusianu, 2003, p. 222 and Şăineanu, 1887, p. 87.

[3] This one can be found in Mihai Eminescu's poetry: "*Visând cu doina tristă a voinicului de munte… /Visul* ***selbelor*** *bătrâne de pe umerii de deal*" – *Opere* I, 35/3.

[4] Cf. *DLR*, X, 3, 1978, p. 910.

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spiritual life of the dwellers and the forestial nature of the land[5] is also reflected in the Romanian folklore mythology: *Pădureanca*, *Păduroaica*, *Muma-Pădurii*, *Păduroiul* are forest "demons" and fairy-tale characters.

Here are some names of legendary forests which made their way into the Romanian t o p o n y m y: *Teleorman* (*deli* + *orman* – "crazy/mad forest", meaning "large and thick") – term of Cuman origin; *Bucovina* ("beech forest", from *buk* "beech") – term of Slavic origin, and h y d r o n y m y: *Dâmboviţa* ("a body of water flowing among the oak-trees", from the Slavic word *donbŭ* "oak"); *Ilfov* (from the Slavic word *elhov* "with alders", from *elha* "alder").

Bucovina, *Dâmboviţa*, *Ilfov* illustrate the "survival", in the Romanian toponymy, of some Slavic equivalents of common Latin terms, which undoubtedly demonstrates the contact of old Slavic populations with the autochthonous sedentary population. The Romanian toponymycal system is a strong argument for the continuity of the Thraco-Romans as well as the Romanian-Slavic cohabitation. The great importance of forests in our history, as well as the stupendous extension they once had, are both reflected in the toponymy.

The word *pădure* is generally known and used in the territories inhabited by Romanian speaking population; the term is recorded in all Romanian counties; the oldness as well as the stability of this word in the Romanian vocabulary reflects the importance of the forest along centuries of harsh and troubled history.

Furthermore, we must emphasize the "lexical efficiency" of this term, clearly seen in its rich lexical family[6] (nouns, verbs and adjectives derived with preffixes, suffixes or both): *pădurar*, *pădurareş*, *păduraş*, *pădurat*, *păduratec*, *păduratic*, *pădurănesc*, *pădurăresc*, *pădurărie*, *pădurărit*, *pădurăriţă*, *pădurean*, *pădureancă*, *păduresc*, *pădureşte*, *pădureţ*, *pădureţie*, (*a*) *păduri*, *pădurică*, *pădurice*, *păduricios*, *păduridă*, *pădurişte*, *pădurit*, *păduriţă*, *păduroaică*, *păduroi*, *păduros*. To these, we should also add: *a împăduri*, *a despăduri*, *a reîmpăduri*, *împădurit*, *despădurit*, *reîmpădurit*, *împădurire*, *despădurire*, *reîmpădurire*.

[5] Brâncuş, 2004, p. 152.
[6] Cf. *DLR*, VIII, 1, 1972, p. 230-235.

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The terminology characteristic has "invaded" those parts of speech which have no denominative role, such as the adjectives (*pădureț, împădurit, păduros,* etc.) and the verbs (*a împăduri, a despăduri,* etc.).

The Dictionary of the Romanian Language (edited by the Romanian Academy) offers an important number of derivative nouns, the most interesting of which are the diminutives (*pădurică* s.f., pl. *pădurele*, etymology: *pădure* + dim. suff. *-ică*; *pădurice* s.f., pl. *pădurici*, etymology: *pădure* + dim. suff. *-ice*; *pădurişte* s.f., pl. *pădurişti*, etymology: *pădure* + coll. suff. *-işte*; *pădurița* s.f., pl. *pădurițe*, etymology: *pădure* + dim. suff. *-iță*) as well as many old and rare terms (*pădurănesc*, etymology: *pădurean* + suff. *-esc*; *pădurăresc*, etymology: *pădure* + suff. *-ăresc*; *păduresc*, etymology: *pădure* + suff. *-esc*; *pădureție*, etymology: *pădureț* + suff. *-ie*; *păduridă*, etymology: from *pădure*, by means of analogy with words such as "silfidă", "nereidă").

There are multiple "echoes" of the term *pădure* in the Romanian toponymy[7], proving the importance of this reality in our history: *Pădure* (Ab[8]), *În Pădure* (Sb), *Sub Pădure* (Mş), *Calvaser-Pădure* (Sb), *Frăsinetu Pădure* (Ot), *Ibăneşti-Pădure* (Mş), *Idicel-Pădure* (Mş), *Orşova-Pădure* (Mş), *Urziceni-Pădure* (Sm), *Pădurea* (Ab, Mş, Sj), *Pădurea Iacobeni* (Cj), *Pădurea Neagră* (Bh), *Pădurani* (Tm), *Pădureni* (Ag, Ar, Bc, Bh, Bt, Bz, Cj, Cț, Cv, Db, Iş, If, Mş, Nț, Sj, Sb, Tm, Vs, Vr), *Pădurenii* (Bz, Cj, Db), *Pădurenii Mici* (Tm), *Pădureți* (Ag), *Pădurețu* (Ag, Vl), *Păduroiu din Deal/din Vale* (Ag), *Păduriş* (Sj), *Pădurişu* (If), *Arieşu de Pădure* (Mm), *Dealu Pădurii* (Ag), *Dubiştea de Pădure* (Mş), *Filipeştii de Pădure* (Ph), *Moara de Pădure* (Cj), *Preajba de Pădure* (Dj), *Săcalu de Pădure* (Mş), *Sângeru de Pădure* (Mş), *Sângiorgiu de Pădure* (Mş), *Sânmihaiu de Pădure* (Mş), *Seaca de Pădure* (Dj), *Marginea Pădurii* (Ph), *Valea Pădurii* (Hd, Mş), *Vărsătura Pădureni* (Vr).

There are also some "echoes" of this term in the Romanian hydronymy[9]: *Pădurea, Pădurilor, Pădurani, Pădureanca, Pădureț*, as well

[7] The toponyms are taken from: Bolocan, 2002.

[8] The abbreviations between round brackets represent the names of the Romanian counties.

[9] The hydronyms are taken from: Bolocan, Burci, Şodolescu-Silvestru, Toma, 2006.

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as in the anthroponymy[10]: *Pădurar*, *Păduraru*, *Pădurariu*, *Pădure* (last name, but also first name – *Pădure al Banului*), *Pădurean*, *Pădureanu*, *Pădureleanu*, *Pădurescu*, *Pădureț*, *Pădurețu*, *Pădurică*, *Pădurice*, *Păduroiu*.

To summarize, *pădure* is an old Romanian word, inherited from Latin; it has few neological synonyms (*silvă*, *selbă*); it is widely known and used on the Romanian territory; it is very rich in derivatives (both with suffixes and prefixes); it has developed a rich phraseology and paremiology, and is extremely used in mythology and folklore, as well as in folk and classical poetry.

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[10] The anthroponyms are taken from Iordan, 1983 and Constantinescu, 1963.

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