

Lexicography and the history of culture (The case of Teodor Corbea's *Romanian–Latin Dictionary*)

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Abstract

This study aims at pointing to the cultural dimensions of lexicography, both by revealing the cultural content of lexicographic works and the authors' cultural horizons and by searching for a precise cultural motivation for compiling dictionaries. One such particular exercise is applied to Teodor Corbea's *Latin–Romanian Dictionary*, elaborated between 1691–1702. Our study focuses on the encyclopædic character of this work and its relations with the Greco-Roman culture. It also analyses the Latin–Romanian similarities and the way the Romance character of the Romanian language is reflected.

1. Introduction

Regarded as a less spectacular part of the history of linguistics, the history of lexicography did not enjoy a special interest on the part of specialists. Beyond their accuracy, the few attempts related to lexicography consist, for the most part, in listing the works as such, in evoking their dimensions, mentioning the shortcomings of each or a group of them and the echo a dictionary or a group of dictionaries had for posterity.

1.1. As far as Romanian lexicography is concerned, beyond the concise character proposed by the very title of the book, a remarkable work such as *Schită de istorie a lexicografiei românești* [Brief History of Romanian Lexicography] (Seche, 1966) reveals less than enough about the cultural context and reasons for writing such works, proving rather a kind of "Guinness Book" in the field of local lexicography, mentioning, for instance, the first German–Romanian bilingual dictionary, but failing to hint at the reasons for compiling such work. This is quite an important aspect, since, in principle, writing a lexicographical work requires a considerable amount of work and offers considerably less satisfaction to the authors—who, more than often in the case of our old literature, remain anonymous, unless the work is attributed to the last copyist whose signature it bears. Let us consider the case of our modern culture, where barely anyone remembers the names of Florian Aaron or Georges Hill, co-authors of the well-known *Vocabular franțezo-românesc după cea din urmă ediție a dicționarului de Academia Franțozească* [French-Romanian Vocabulary after the Last Edition of the French Academy Dictionary], volumes 1–2 (Vocab. 1840–1841), commonly associated only with the name of Petrache Poenaru, who, in his capacity as director of "Saint Sava" College, was the first to sign it. Equally well-known is the name of George Baritiu, who contributed to the writing of the second volume of the first academic dictionary of the Romanian language elaborated primarily by August Treboniu Laurian and Ioan Massim.

2. Old Romanian bilingual lexicography

Resuming the statement of Henricus Stephanus (Henri Estienne) in the famous *Thesaurus grecae linguae* (TLG), according to which writing a dictionary is harder than rowing in galleys, we believe that one must look for the general and particular motivation of this seemingly fastidious endeavour. Obviously, such

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strenuous effort was motivated neither by material gain nor by the promise of fame or public recognition. At least in the case of bilingual lexicography the cause should be related to the need to access a foreign culture, whereas in the case of monolingual dictionaries the motivations are yet more subtle, pertaining to the development of national identity and the interest for one's own people. The context in which a lexicographic work is elaborated, a context that is hardly ever incidental and thus requires decoding, as well as the cultural horizon reflected in the respective work should be perceived as connected to the history of culture. To support our viewpoint, we shall focus on a few moments in the development of Romanian lexicography, the historical context and the motivation behind the creation of some of these works.

2.1. Slavonic–Romanian lexicography, which manifested itself in the second half of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century is closely related, on the one hand, to the translation of liturgical texts into Romanian and, on the other hand, as indicated by the content of the Slavonic-Romanian glossaries, to the translation of a large volume of Slavonic property documents, a common practice at the time.

2.2. The two lexicographic works edited in Țara Hațegului and Eastern Banat in the second half of the 17th century, *Anonimus caransebesiensis* and *Lexicon Marsilianum*, regarded as “accidents” or curiosities of our old literature, should be perceived as representing a coherent aspect of the phenomenon of integration of a group of free Romanians living in the urban environment of Caransebeș, Lugoj or Hațeg, part of the structure and culture of the Principality of Transylvania (see Gherman, 2019).

2.3. Likewise, the Transylvanian School lexicography, in which the number of dictionaries and glossaries using Latin prevailed, should be regarded not only from a general cultural perspective—Latin was still the language of European culture and until towards the end of the 18th century it was the language that unified the multiethnic Habsburg Empire—but also from the perspective of the political programme of the movement aimed at proving the Romance appurtenance of the people and implicitly the Latin character of the language as an argument in favour of the Romanians' right to enjoy the same privileges as the other political nations (Hungarians, Saxons and Szeklers) had in the Principalities, according to the Medieval legislation still in force at the time. Thus, for the Transylvanian scholars, lexicography turned into a political weapon¹.

2.4. An extension of this perspective seemed normal for two Transylvanian scholars, namely Alexandru Treboniu Laurian and Ioan Massim, as the fight of Romanians from Transylvania was a logical continuation of the efforts supported by the *Supplex* generation in achieving the first dictionary of the Romanian language under the patronage of the Romanian Academy. However, on the opposite side of the mountains, the Transylvanians' political programme did not have any echo for scholars such as Alexandru Odobescu or Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, so that the misunderstandings that occurred after the publication of this work are related to a lack of comprehension rather than to the shortcomings of the work itself.

2.5. A last example: Ienăchiță Văcărescu compiled two dictionaries, a German–Romanian and a Romanian–German dictionary (both preserved in manuscripts, which, in our opinion, deserve a future editing), in which, quite unusually, the German lexicon is phonetically transcribed with Cyrillic characters. An explanation for this peculiarity can be traced in the political context of the second half of the 18th century, as Oltenia had been occupied by the Austrians for a long time. The two works had a precise, practical destination, being aimed at facilitating communication with the temporary occupants.

¹We should note that the glossary, the dialogues and the words used to illustrate the structure of the Romanian language in *Elementa linguae daco-romane sive Valachice*, published by Samuil Micu and Gheorghe Șincai in Vienna, in 1780, contain almost exclusively words of Latin origin. This observation is also valid for the second edition, issued under the name of Gheorghe Șincai.

3. Teodor Corbea's *Latin–Romanian Dictionary*

Teodor Corbea's *Latin–Romanian Dictionary*² (entitled by the author *Dictiones latinæ cum valachica interpretatione*) holds a special place in the old Romanian literature and lexicography due to its character, being the most extensive lexicographic work compiled in Romanian before the second half of the 19th century which contained, as did *Biblia de la Bucureşti* [The Bible from Bucharest] (1688), the vastest lexical inventory of an old text.

3.1. Corbea's dictionary is the author's autograph manuscript, but it is not dated. The following mention appears in the end: "La tălmăcirea acestuiu lixicon ostenită-s au din plata părintelui Mitrofan, episcopul de Buzău, Todor Corbea, sîn iermonah Ioasaf din Braşov" [This lexicon was translated by Teodor Corbea, son of hieromonk Ioasaf from Braşov, paid by father Mitrofan, Bishop of Buzău]. As the precise date is unknown, considering the period in which Mitrofan was the Bishop of Buzău, Teodor Corbea's dictionary was definitely written sometime between 1691 and 1702. As Teodor Corbea travelled extensively to Russia and Transylvania starting with 1698, he obviously could not have written such a vast work during his travels, which entitles us to believe that the dictionary was actually elaborated in the first part of this period.

3.2. Mitrofan, the Bishop of Buzău, is one of the most complex personalities of our culture in the second half of the 17th century and the early 18th century: he collaborated closely, while he was Bishop of Huşi, with Metropolitan Dosoftei; after Dosoftei's second exile, he took refuge in Wallachia and was the corrector of *The Bible from Bucharest* and other books printed during the first years of Constantin Brâncoveanu's reign. The mixture of dialectal forms specific to Wallachia and Moldova in the first complete printed edition of the *Bible* in Romanian is attributed to him. As Bishop of Buzău (1691–1702), where he established a printing house, he edited several works of great importance for the Orthodox Church, and especially for supporting the Orthodox spirit: the first Romanian translation of *Pravoslavnica mărturisire* [The Orthodox Confession] (due to Brâncoveanu's faithful collaborator and official chronicler, Radu Greceanu, who, together with his brother, contributed to the elaboration of the printed text of the *Bible*), the first printed edition of *Menaion* (1698, in which there appear some text fragments from Metropolitan Dosoftei's *Viaţa şi petreacerea svintilor* [The Life of Saints], an aspect which has not been revealed before), a Slavonic and Romanian *Molitvenic* (1699), *Octoih ce să zice osmoglasmic* [Octoechos] (1700), *Triod, ce să zice tripeasneţă* [Triodion] (1700), a Slavonic and Romanian *Euhologhion, adeca molitvenic* [Euchologion] (1701), a Slavonic and Romanian *Pentekostarion* (1701), *Psalter* (1701), *Învăţătura preoţilor pre scurt de şapte taine* [Short Teaching on the Seven Mysteries for Priests] (1702), *Sfânta şi dumnezeiasca liturghie* [The Holy and Divine Liturgy] (1702). At least some of the dedicatory lyrics in these printed works and some fragments in the life of saints from the *Menaion* can be attributed, as indicated by the linguistic forms and versification style, to Teodor Corbea. The fact that he was asked by Mitrofan to write this dictionary was motivated by his solid command of the Latin language. He had actually been appointed "sicritariu de taină" (personal secretary) of Constantin Brâncoveanu and had carried out, on behalf of the prince, the Cantacuzino family and himself a vast correspondence in Latin with the Habsburg authorities and the Transylvanian Prince Francisc Rákóczi the 2nd (see Pippidi, 2005).

3.3. Originally from řcheii Braşovului, son of one of the priests from the local "Saint Nicholas" Church and brother of David, a well-known diplomat of the time, Teodor Corbea was a good connoisseur of Latin, Slavonic and Hungarian. Most probably he had studied the first two languages at the Kiev Academy. His excellent command of the Latin language recommended him as secretary of Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, and a close collaborator of the Cantacuzinos. After his flight to Russia, following Peter the Great's 1711 campaign in Moldova and Wallachia, he was also a close collaborator of the Tsar of Russia.

²Published by us in 2001 at the Clusium Publishing House in Cluj-Napoca. A new edition, accompanied by the Romanian lexis index and a CD with the manuscript facsimiles is about to be completed.

He did not consider himself the author of the dictionary, but rather its translator, as evidenced by the entry *Theodorus* in the dictionary: “**Theodorus, g.m.**³ nume de bărbați de obște; **item:** numele acestui de pă urmă, care această carte de pă latinie și ungurie o au tălmăcit rumâneaște” [name for men; **item:** name of the above-mentioned, who translated this book from Latin and Hungarian into Romanian]. The source of the dictionary is specified by the author himself: it is the third edition of Albert Szenczi Molnár’s Latin–Hungarian Dictionary (see [DUL](#)) ((who, in turn, used *Dictionarium latino-germanicum* by Petrus Dasypodius and Petrus Cholinus, one of the many editions of Calepinus or *Dictionarium latino-germanicum*, written by Johannes Frisius), with entries such as: “**Itorsium, g.n.** orășal în ținutul domnilor norimbergheani, în care acest noriberghean svaț cinstea bogată academie au zidit în numărul anilor 1575, unde acest Lixicon l-au scris Albertus Molnar în numărul anilor 1603” [a small town in the land of the lords of Nuremberg where a rich academy was built in the year 1575, where Albertus Molnar wrote this Lexicon in the year 1603] or: “**Argentina, g.f. et Argentoratum** tare oraș al Țărei Nemetești lîngă apa Rhenus, în ținutul Alsăciei. Acolo ca acela înalt turn iaste și bisearcă înfrîmșetată, cît în Europa altă biserică sau turn aseamne acestora nu iaste. Iaste iarăș acolo o academie vestită, în care de demult mulți înțelepți oameni s-au învățat, unde și eu, care această carte am scris (adecă Albert Molnar) trei ani și jumătate am lăcut în vreamea copilăriei” [a mighty town in Germany near the Rhine River, in the region of Alsace. There you can find a tall tower and a beautiful church as nowhere else in the whole Europe. There is also a famous Academy where many famous people studied in the past. I, Albert Molnar, who wrote this book, also lived there for three years and a half when I was a child]. However, this is not a mechanical translation of the Hungarian dictionary, as Teodor Corbea eliminated several entries that he probably considered irrelevant, he shortened a series of other entries and added some others to Szenczi Molnár’s list, also providing their Romanian equivalents.

4. The encyclopædic dimension of the dictionary

The comparison of the lists of Latin words included in Szenczi’s and Corbea’s dictionaries indicates, however, that the latter had a creative attitude, both by eliminating some entries and by selecting, within the entries, the meanings for which he provided the Romanian equivalents, occasionally adding entries he considered relevant, due to his experience as Latin secretary of Constantin Brâncoveanu or of the Cantacuzinos.

4.1. The fact that a considerable number of entries referring to ancient Greco-Roman culture were preserved proves Teodor Corbea’s adherence to the current of modernization of our culture known as “Romanian humanism”, placing his works besides the contributions of Constantin Cantacuzino and even those of Dimitrie Cantemir, because his dictionary acquires, along with the character of a bilingual dictionary, a pronounced encyclopædic dimension.

4.2. In Teodor Corbea’s work, for the very first time in the Romanian culture, the Rome of martyrdoms (seen before him, from a Christian point of view, only as a new apocalyptic Babylon, and from the point of view of the Eastern Church, as a centre of religious schism) becomes the glorious city of ancient culture. Such research is only possible by conducting a thorough text analysis, and Teodor Corbea’s *Latin–Romanian Dictionary* seems to provide the ideal material for such an approach. The confrontation between the two perspectives over the Eternal City produced an equally strong debate in the western world, during the Humanist and Renaissance periods, and also afterwards.

4.3. One should note from the very beginning that there are very few references to Christianity and Roman

³As Corbea’s dictionary is written with Latin characters (as it is normal in its Latin section) incidentally also in the Romanian section (where mostly Cyrillic characters are used), we opted for transcribing all Latin characters, wherever they might be placed within the text, in bold letters.

martyrdoms⁴: “**Bibiana**, g.f. o fată creștină rimleancă, care supt Iuliani s-au omorât pentru că au ajutat tătîni-său să îngroape trupurile ceale moarte ale creștinilor” [a Christian girl from Rome who was killed under Julius' rule because she helped her father bury the dead body of the Christians], “**Chrysanthus**, g.m. un voinic de la Alixandriia, care la Roma pentru leagea credinței creștinești s-au omorât” [a young man from Alexandria who was killed in Rome for keeping his Christian faith], “**Betlehem**, g.f. [n.n.: recte: **Bethleheem**] oraș al Iudeii, de-acolo pînă în Ierusalim 7 mile de loc, în care Domnul nostru Isus Hristos s-au născut” [a city of the Kingdom of Judah, 7 miles far from Jerusalem, where our Lord Jesus was born], “**Bethsames**, g.f. oraș al Galileei în care Domnul nostru Isus Hristos, precum spun scripturile, multe minuni au făcut” [a town in Galilee where our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Scriptures say, performed many miracles], “**Origenes**, g.m. numele unui dascal creștin” [the name of a Christian teacher], etc. The emperors that persecuted the Christians are not necessarily depicted in a negative light, as in the hagiographic literature: “**Decius**, g.m. nume al unui rimlean” [name of a Roman], “**Julianus**, g.m. numele unui împărat rimlenesc” [name of a Roman emperor], etc. In the case of Nero, the negative image can be traced from the texts of the ancient historians rather than from the lives of the saints: “**Nero, –onis**, g.m. numele unui împărat rimlean nemilostiv” [name of a merciless Roman emperor].

4.4. The negative references to paganism in the ancient word are also sporadic: “**Arsenotheles**, g.m. pl. dumnezăi au fost pre carii i-au socotit păgînii a avea năravuri și bărbătești și miurești” [gods believed by the pagans to have both masculine and feminine habits], “**Comus**, g.m. dumnezău⁵ în zilele păgînilor al nuntelor de noapte și al jocurilor” [pagan god of night weddings and dances], “**diffareatio**, g.f. jîrtvă au fost la păgîni spre despărțirea casătoriei” [pagan sacrifice for divorce], “**ethnicus**, –a, –um păgîn, –că” [pagan], “**Portunu**, g.m. dumnezăul vînslarilor și al vadurilor au fost întru păgînime” [he was the pagan god of the waters and boatmen], “**Saturnus**, g.m. una dintre 7 planite [one of the seven planets]; **item**: tatâl lui Jupiter, Iunie, al lui Neptunus și Pluto, pre care în păgînime l-au ținut dumnezău” [father of Jupiter, June, Neptune and Pluto, who was thought by the pagans to be a god], “**Tutanus**, g.m. dumnezău au fost între păgînimea rimlenească, pre care în nevoie ceale prea mari l-au chiemat într-ajutori” [Roman pagan god called for help in times of great misfortune], “**Vertumnus**, g.m. dumnezău au fost întru păgînime al învîrtirei, al întoarcerei” [pagan god of turning, of returning], “**Vitunus**, g.m. dumnezău păgînesc de demult au fost, pre care l-au socotit dătători de viață” [he was once a pagan god, the pagans thought him to be a life-giver].

4.5. The geographical horizon of Corbea's *Romanian–Latin Dictionary* is limited to the ancient perspective, as he only mentions the three continents known of in Antiquity (Asia, Africa and Europe), with a focus on the European continent: “**Africa**, g.f. o parte dintre trei părți a ocolului pămîntului” [one of the three parts of the Earth], “**Aphrica**, g.f. a treia parte a acestui pămînt” [the third part of the Earth], “**Asia**, g.f. una dintre ceaste 3 părți ale lumiei” [one of the three parts of this world]; a slight hesitation triggered by some vague knowledge of the new geographical discoveries occurs in the definition of Europe: “**Europa**, g.f. a treaea sau a patra parte a cestii lumi, în care iaste Țara Nemâscă, Țara Ungurească și Țara Italiei, de la Nemâscă Mare pînă la Marea-din-Mijlocul-Pămîntului și pînă la apa Tanaisului” [the third or the fourth part of this world that contains Germany, Hungary and Italy, from the German Sea to the Middle Sea and to the water of Tanais]. This eurocentrist perspective rooted in the ancient culture explains why Italy is depicted as better known than any other peripheral region of the continent; Rome is the centre of Italy, as implied by the following definition: “**Italia**, g.f. Italiia, în Europa între Marea Adriaticum și Tyrhenum, care are oraș mare pă Roma” [Italy, situated in Europe between the Adriatic Sea and the Tyrrhenian Sea, which has a big city, Rome]. It becomes an essential reference point, the distance from and proximity to

⁴This fact can also be explained by the source of Corbea's dictionary: as a reformed (Calvinist), Szenczi Molnár ignored for the most part the lives of the saints and the martyrdoms of the first period of Christianity.

⁵We should note that Teodor Corbea did not use different words to designate the gods of Antiquity and the Christians' God, using the same word for both notions. For 'goddess' he uses the term: *dumnezăoie*, which is not known to have been used previously in Romanian.

it being very important⁶.

4.6. The Roman history is equally well-known⁷, yet for Teodor Corbea the true Antiquity relates to culture. He knows the names of the great Latin writers: Cicero⁸, Horatio⁹, Ovid¹⁰, Juvenal¹¹, Lucretius¹², Titus Livius¹³, etc. He had extensive knowledge about Vergilius and his books¹⁴, while Cicero's Latin (he expressly quoted linguistic forms from Cicero's works) is a point of reference to which he turns again and again.

4.7. Beyond the world of the Latin culture, the author mentioned most often is certainly Homer ("Homerus, g.m. numele unui petic elin vestit și înțelept" [the name of a famous and wise Greek poet]), from

⁶"Beletra, g.f. oraș italienesc, nu departe de la Roma" [Italian town, not far from Rome], "Bovilliae, g.f. pl. oraș aproape de Roma" [a town near Rome], "Præneste, g.f. oraș au fost italienescu, nu departe de Roma" [it was an Italian town not far from Rome], "Tybur, -ris, g.m. oraș italienesc aproape de Roma" [Italian town close to Rome], "Ostia, g.f. oraș italienesc dincolo de Roma, unde cură Tiberisul în mare" [Italian town beyond Rome, where the Tiber flows into the sea]. Rome itself is well-known to Corbea: "Æquimelium, g.n. numele unui loc la Roma" [name of a place in Rome], "Agrosus, g.m. dealul păcăreacu zace Roma" [the hill on which Rome is located], "Argiletum, g.n. un loc în Roma nu dăparte de la Palatiūm" [a place in Rome not far from Palatium], "Buthrotum, g.n. loc obăgit la Roma" [a place conquered by Rome], "Carmentalis, -e, g.f. [n.n.: recte: Carmentalia] nume a unii porț de la Roma" [name of a gate in Rome], "Carseoli, g.m. pl. sat de la Roma" [a village in Rome], "circus, g.m. [...] în Roma o zidire mare rotească, loc de privirea jocurilor" [in Rome, a great round building, from which the games were watched], "Cispius, g.m. un munte la Roma" [a mountain in Rome], "Coelium, g.m. un munte la Roma [a mountain in Rome], vide: Cælius", "Fontinalis, g.f. nume al porței de la Roma care cu alt nume să zice Capena" [name of a gate in Rome, otherwise named Capena], "Fori, -orum [...] loc de privit au fost în Roma" [it was a place for viewing in Rome].

⁷"Ariobarzanes, g.m. nume al unui împărat de la Machidoniia, care romanilor au fost priiati bun" [name of an emperor from Macedonia, a good friend of Romans], "Asinius, g.m. orator roman, frate lui Avgust" [a Roman speaker, brother of Augustus], "Atratinus, g.m. procuror de la Roma au fost" [he was a counselor from Rome], "Cæsar, g.m. nume al cîtorva romani de pre carii pre toț împărații rimlenești și număsc Chiesar" [name of some Romans after which all the Roman emperors were named Caesar], "Catilina, g.m. un domn de la Roma viclean, care au fost nevoitorii spre aducerea răului rimlenescu" [a sly ruler from Rome, who endeavored to do harm to the Roman people], "centumviri, g.m. pl. o sută de oameni județi de la Roma" [one hundred judges from Rome], "Cethegus, g.m. pîrgari de la Roma" [a consul from Rome], "Claudia, g.f. o fâmeie rimleancă; iarăși: o seminție vestită la Roma" [a Roman woman; also: a well-known Roman family], "Claudianus, g.m. un poetic alixandrinean; iarăși: un împărat de la Roma" [a poet from Alexandria; also: an emperor from Rome], "decemviri, g.m. pl. zece oameni mari, boiari, care au îndereptat Roma" [ten great noblemen, who made laws in Rome], "dictator, g.m. crai prea mare au fost în Roma, pre carele în vreme răscolită spre aceaea l-au ales ca toți de dinsul să spînzure" [a great ruler from Rome, who in times of rebellions was chosen to lead them all], "Gabinus, -i, g.m. un om mare de la Roma" [a great man in Rome], "Galba, g.f. [...] numele unui om de la Roma" [name of a man from Rome], "Gracchus, g.m. nume al unui pîrgari de la Roma" [name of a consul from Rome].

⁸"Cicero un vestit și mărît boiar de la Roma și înțelept înfrîmșețat vorovitor" [a famous and great nobleman in Rome and a wise and talented orator].

⁹"Horatius, g.m. un poetic lircusean și satirisean" [a great writer of lyrics and satires].

¹⁰"Ovidius, -i, g.m. numele unui poetic vestit" [name of a famous poet].

¹¹"Juvenalis, g.m. numele unui poetic satiric" [name of a satirical poet].

¹²"Lucretius, g.m. un poetic de demult care s-au născut după Tițero la al doisprăzeacelea an" [an ancient poet who was born 12 years after Cicero].

¹³"Livius, g.m. un istoriceari vestit, care de lucrurile făcute rimlenești cu împodobire au scris" [a famous historian, who wrote in a beautiful manner about the Roman things].

¹⁴"Actor, g.m. numele al unui om în Virgiliius" [name of a man in Vergilius], "Acutia, g.f. muiarea lui Virgiliius" [the wife of Vergilius], "Alcanor, g.m. nume al unui om de care Virgiliius pomeneaște" [name of a man mentioned by Vergilius], "Almon, g.f. [...] un nume de păstorii la Virgiliius" [name of a shepherd in Vergilius], "Alphesibæus, g.m. nume al unui păstorii în Virgiliius" [name of a shepherd in Vergilius], "Alsus, g.m. un nume de păstorii în Virgiliius" [name of a shepherd in Vergilius], "Amaryllis, -idis, g.f. nume al unei mojice în carteau lui Virgiliius" [name of an ordinary woman in Vergilius' book], "Andes, g.m. pl. un sat lîngă Mantuanal [sic!], în care Virgiliius s-au născut" [a village near Mantuanal, where Vergilius was born], "Anthores, g.m. nume al unui om în Virgiliius" [name of a man in Vergilius], "Bavius, g.m. un poetic neînvațat, pizmaș lui Virgiliius" [name of a bad poet, opponent of Vergilius], "Bianor, g.m. nume al unui om în Virgilio" [name of a man...], "Choroebus, g.m. [...] numele unui copil nebunatec în Virgilio" [name of a frisky child...], "Corydon, g.m. un păstorii în Theocritus și în Virgiliius" [a shepherd in Theocritus and Vergilius], "Damoclas, g.m. nume al unui păstorii la Virgiliius" [name of a shepherd in Vergilius], "Didymaon, g.m. un faur vestit de care pomeneaște Virgiliius" [a famous blacksmith mentioned by Vergilius].

whose work he mentions the two epic poems, the *Iliad*¹⁵ and *Batrachomyomachia*; Corbea's dictionary abounds in events and characters from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*¹⁶, and also mentions “**Batrachonyomarchia**, război de broaște și de șoareci, adecă războiul broaștelor cu al șoarecilor, de care au scris Homerus” [war between frogs and mice, of which Homer wrote].

4.8. Greco-Latin mythology is also abundantly present in Corbea's text. What is particularly interesting is the fact that the author does not perceive it as a dimension of paganism, but rather as belonging to literary culture and poetic imagination, recording the data from the perspective of Renaissance florilegia¹⁷. He distances himself from the Antiquity, which remains an essential point of reference from a cultural perspective, not necessarily because of the conflicting dimensions of Christianity-paganism, but rather because he was essentially a modern spirit and realized that he was living in another era, an era that was

¹⁵“**Ilias, –dis, g.f.** carteau Homerus de piarderea Troadei” [Homer's book on the fall of Troy].

¹⁶“**Achilles, g.m.** fiul lui Oeleus, care au fost hodnogi în războiul Troadei” [son of Peleus who was a commander in the Trojan War], “**Æantium, g.n.** oraș al Troadei” [town in Troy], “**Agastrophos, g.m.** fiul lui Peon și, în războiul de la Troada, mare viteazu” [son of Peon, brave warrior in the Trojan War], “**Ajax, –cis, g.m.** numele la doi greci viteazi în războiul Troadei, polecra unuia Telatonius, al altuia Oilesus” [name of two brave Greek men who fought in the Trojan War, of which one was called Telatonius, and the other Oilesus], “**Alcander, g.m.** unul dintre soții lițieniști ai lui Sarpedon, pre carele în războiul Troadei Ulises l-au omorât” [one of Sarpedon's companions from Lycia, who was killed by Ulysses in the Trojan War], “**Alethes, g.m.** nume al unui om din Troada” [name of a man from Troy], “**Andromache, g.f.** muiarea lui Hector de la Troada” [the wife of Hector from Troy], “**Antenor, g.m.** numele al unui om mare de la Troada” [name of an important man from Troy], “**antepilani** înainte umblători aleș viteaji au fost la războiul Troadei” [brave soldiers who composed the first ranks in line of battle in the Trojan War], “**Anthemion, g.m.** tatăl lui Sișocu de la Troada” [father of Simoeisios from Troy], “**Antilochus, g.m.** fiul lui Nestor în războiul Troadei, de la Memnos s-au omorât” [son of Nestor, killed by Memnos in the Trojan War], “**Astynous, g.m.** hearțeg troadean pre carele Diomedes l-au tăiat” [defender of Troy killed by Diomedes], “**Aulis, –dis, g.f.** oraș elinesc; unde semințiile care au mărs supt Troada s-au adunat dempreună” [Greek town where the armies gathered to set off for Troy], “**Berithrus, g.f.** un oraș de la Troada” [town from Troy], “**Cajeta, g.f.** nume al unii muieri de la Troada” [name of a woman from Troy], “**Berytis** oraș care să ţine de Troada” [town near Troy], “**Dardanus, g.m.** fiul lui Iupiter și al Electrei de pre care Dardania apoi s-au numit Troada” [son of Jupiter and Electra who gave the name of Dardania, later known as Troy], “**Diomedes, g.m.** craiul Etoliei și în războiul Troadei hătnogi mare al grecilor sau eliniilor” [Prince of Etolia and leader of the Greeks in the Trojan War], “**Epeus, g.m.** numele aceluia care au făcut calul cela mare de lemn de la Troada” [the name of the one who built the large wooden horse from Troy], “**Glaucus, g.m.** fiul lui Hippolocus în războiul Troadei” [son of Hippolocus from the Trojan War], “**Helena, g.f.** fata lui Tindarus, muiarea lui Menelau, pentru a căriiă frimseaște s-au pierdut Troada” [daughter of Tyndareus and wife of Menelaus, for whose beauty Troy was lost], “**Adamastus, g.m.** un ithaclian soț lui Ulises” [a companion of Ulysses from Ithaca], “**Calypso, g.f.** fata lui Oțean la carea au fost Ulises” [daughter of Oceanus, to whom Ulysses went], “**Elpenor, g.m.** soț de călătorie al lui Ulises pre carele Țirte cu cîteva [sic!] cu dîns l-au simbat în porc” [companion of Ulysses who was turned into a pig by Circe], “**Ithaca, g.f.** ostrov la Marea Ionium în care au domnit Ulises” [island in the Ionian Sea, the homeland of Ulysses], “**Polyphenus, –i, g.m.** un uriaș care au avut numai un ochi și și acela i l-au scos Ulises” [a giant who had only one eye, blinded by Ulysses], “**Telegonus, g.m.** un fiu al lui Ulises de la Țirte” [Ulysses' son from Circe], “**Telemachus, g.m.** fiul lui Ulises de la Penelope” [Ulysses' son from Penelope], “**Theoclymenus, g.m.** un spuri tor de ceale viitoare, care au gîcît Penelopei venirea bărbatului său, a lui Ulises” [prophet who told Penelope about the return of her husband, Ulysses], “**Scylla, g.f.** [...] fata lui Forcus, care (precum scriu poeticii) s-au simbat în stîncă de piiatră de mare sau în jivină cu formă ciudată care aşa urlă ca cînele” [daughter of Phorcus who (as the poets say) turned into a sea rock or a beast-shaped monster who howls like a dog], etc.

¹⁷“**Atlas, –antis, g.m.** un munte înalt în Mauritania, iară la poetici, un uriaș mare care ţine ceriul în spate” [a high mountain in Mauritania which the poets describe as a giant who carries the sky on his shoulders], “**Averna, g.n. pl.** un aleșteu în ținutul Campaniei, pre care i-au zis poeticii a fi poarta iadului” [a pond in the land of Campagna about which the poets say it is the gate to hell], “**Dindymus, g.m. sing. in plur.** dindima vîrfurile ceale înalte a munților de la Frighia; la poetici s-au svinit mumînilor dumnezăilor” [the high peaks of the mountains in Phrygia; the poets call it the mother goddess], “**Europa, –æ, g.f. idem, item:** fata lui Oțeanus după scrisoarea poeticiilor” [daughter of Oceanus, as the poets say], “**Geryon, g.m.** crai spaniolesc au fost pre care l-au omorât Hercules, care au avut trei capete, precum scriu poeticii” [Giant from Spain who had three heads, as the poets say, and who was killed by Hercules], “**Hymen, g.m.** dumnezăul nuntelor după scrisorile poeticiilor” [god of marriage, as the poets say], “**Jupiter, Jovis, g.m.** văzduh, aer; iarăș: fiul lui Saturnus pre care l-au ţinut poeticii prea de sus a fi” [air, sky; or son of Saturn, the poets thought too highly of him], “**Tantalus, g.m.** fiul lui Iupiter și al Plutei, carele în iad (din părearea poeticiilor) totodeuna însătează și flamînează, săvai că pînă la grumaz stă în apă și înaintea nasului spînzură mărul cel rodit, cu care, cînd va să trăiască, îndată să zmuzeaște de la dîns [son of Zeus and Plouto, who, as the poets say, is forever thirsty and hungry in hell, although he stays in a pool of water up to his neck and an and with an apple tree in front of him, with the fruit ever eluding his grasp]; **hinc: tantalus, –a, –um**”, etc.

different from that of “bătrînii” [the ancient] or “cei de demult” [those from the past]¹⁸; “cei de demult”, “bătrînii” and “poeticii” [the poets] represented a closed universe, another civilization and another world, so that a conflict between Christianity and the pagan Ancient world was out of discussion. Moreover, the same phrases could designate peoples that no longer existed or faded out in history, as well as objects of which we only read in the ancient books¹⁹.

We note thus that for Corbea, ancient Rome and Christian Rome did not represent conflicting images (Gherman, 2001) simply because the two aspects of the Eternal City evoked two different universes. This fact clearly points to the process of laicization of the Romanian culture, which starts at the point where the cultural and the religious dimensions no longer coincide²⁰, the two worlds evoking different spaces.

4.9. If Italy and Greece are known primarily from information provided by the Greek-Latin literature, Europe (France and Germany, especially) is presented by means of pertinent information belonging to the modern times; thus, Nuremberg becomes the centre of the world: “Noriberga, g.m. oraș mare al Țărei Nemțești, care cu frumoasa zidire, cu bogăția, cu neguțători, cu fealiuri de fealiuri de lucruri scumpe și cu oameni meșteri iaste vestit și nu o mint. Acesta, în toată Evropa, în Țara Nemțască alte orașuri biruind, cu Vineția frîncească [sic!] să priceaște. Acest oraș nu numai Țărei Nemțaști ci și toții Evrope în mijloc iaste” [large city of the German country, famous for its beautiful buildings, wealth, merchants, all sorts of precious things and great people. This city, more beautiful than any other in the German land, rivals Venice in France [sic!]. This city is located not only in the center of Germany, but also in the very heart of Europe], or “Norvegia, g.f. ținutul Evropei de către crivăț, care îl biruiaște craiul danienesc” [Europe's country in the direction of the north wind, ruled by the king of Denmark].

4.10. The landmarks of the modern world are first and foremost the cultural ones: “Argentina, g.f. et

¹⁸“Rhadamanthus, g.m. fiul lui Iupiter și al Europei, derept și vîrtos împărat al Lîției, de unde poeticii îl țin a fi împărat sufletelor din iad” [son of Zeus and Europa, fair and brave king of Lycia, of whom the poets say he was the judge of the souls in the underworld], “Cunina, g.f. bătrînii o au ținut a fi dumnezăoaie a copiilor înțelepți” [the ancient people say she was the goddess of wise children], “Atropos, g.f. nepurcătoare, adeca una dintru 3 parche, carele fieștecăruia de la dumnezău svîrșită viață croiescu, (jerebiia) tortul îl taie. Bătrînii cei de demult precum au fost romanii și elini pre aceastea mai sus zise le-au numit a fi dumnezăoaie” [one of the three Moirai, who chose how people ended their life by cutting their threads. The ancient Greeks and Romans would call them goddesses], “daps, g.f. feali al jîrtvei au fost la cei de demult” [type of sacrifice for ancient people], “Druidă, g.m. pl. înțelepții cei de demult ai frîncilor” [ancient wise men of the Celts], “lucus, g.m. nume de bucate au fost la cei de demult” [ancient name for foods], “Marica dumnezău l-au ținut cei de demult a fi purtători de grija țărmurilor” [a god, of which the ancient men considered the protector of the shores], “Opigema, g.f. Juno, pre care cei de demult o au socotit ajutătoare copiilor celor ce să nasc” [Juno, of which the ancient people considered the protector of new-born children], “Tænarus, g.m. pl. Tænara, g.n. un deal aproape de Spartha sau un loc sub dealul Malca unde iaste o groapă mare și o peștere adâncă, îmbăsnătă, care cei de demult o au socotit poarta iadului” [a hill in the vicinity of Sparta or a place under the hill of Malca where there is a big hole and a deep cave where the ancient people believed was the gate to hell], etc. The cultural reception of ancient mythology is also marked by the fact that more than often the authors whose writings contain relevant references related to it are also cited: “Tutilina, g.f. Varro et Nonius dumnezăită s-au ținut a scutirei, a ferirei la romanii cei de demult” [Roman goddess considered responsible for protection], etc.

¹⁹“liber, libri, g.m. pelița cea supțire albă dinlăuntru a coajei lemnului pre care au scris cei de demult (adecă bătrînii)” [the white thin layer inside tree bark on which ancient people used to write], “albegnnina, g.n. pl. partea cea albă a mațelor vitelor, care dumnezăilor au jîrvuit cei de demult” [the white part of the intestines of cows sacrificed by the ancient people for the gods], “amystis, g.f. neamul băuturei de dușă au fost la sîrbii cei de demult” [old Serbian drink], “daps, g.f. feali al jîrtvei au fost la cei de demult” [type of sacrifice for ancient people], “Hunni, g.m. pl. ungurii cei de demult” [the old Hungarians], “jazyges, g.m. pl. lăcitorii cei de demult ai Țărei Ardealului” [the old inhabitants of Transylvania], “lucus, g.m. nume de bucate au fost la cei de demult” [type of ancient food], “Marcomani, g.m. pl. cechii și morăvanii cei de demult” [the ancient Czechs and Bohemians], “Metanastă, g.m. pl. ardeleanii, lăcitorii cei de demult ai Ardealului” [the old inhabitants of Transylvania], “myxon, g.m. feali al peștelui pre care romanii cei de demult bucată mare l-au ținut a fi” [type of fish highly appreciated by the ancient Romans], “phală, g.f. pl. turn de lemn care cei de demult l-au zidit în locul de privirea jocului” [wooden tower built by the ancient people for watching the games], “philura, g.f. coaja cea dinlăuntru a teiului, pă care au scris cei de demult” [the inner layer of the linden tree bark on which ancient people wrote], “rogus, -i, g.m. grămadă de leamne pă care cei de demult au ars trupurile ceale moarte” [pile of wood on which ancient people used to burn the bodies of the dead].

²⁰One can observe the manner in which in the previous Romanian culture the prevalent religious dimension produced a selection of values depending on its necessities.

Argentoratum tare oraș al Țărei Nemțești lîngă apa Rhenus, în ținutul Alsăției. Acolo ca acela înalt turn iaste și bisarecă înfrîmșețată, cît în Europa altă biserică sau turn aseamine acestora nu iaste. Iaste iarăș acolo o academie vestită, în care de demult mulți înțelepți oameni s-au învățat” [a German town near the Rhine River, in Alsace. There you find a tall tower and a beautiful church as nowhere else in the whole Europe. There is also a famous Academy where many famous people studied in the past], “**Altorsium, g.n.** orașal în ținutul domnilor norimbergheani, în care acest noriberghean svat cinstes bogată academie au zidit în numărul anilor 1575” [small town of the land of the Nuremberg where a rich academy was built in the year 1575], “**Herbona, g.f.** oraș în ținutul Nasoviei al Țării Nemțăsti, în care iaste școală vestită, care să priceaște cu academiile și pre care le și învince” [German town in the region of Nassau where there is a famous school, even better than the academies], “**Marpurgum** oraș al Țărei Nemțești în ținutul Hassiei în care iaste academie vestită” [German town in the region of Hessen, where there is a famous academy]. The information related to culture in the period following Antiquity is rather scarce: the name of Venerable Beda is mentioned among others (“**Beda, g.m.** în Țara Angliei au fost dascal învățător de Scriptura Sfântă” [he taught the Holy Scriptures in England]) along with composer Orlando di Lasso (“**Lasus, g.m.** cel mai dintîi care au scris de muzică” [the first one to write music]); Boccaccio is only mentioned in relation to his historical works: “**Boccatius, g.m.** un istoriceari italiian” [an Italian historian].

Teodor Corbea's humanist perspective is expressed, as in the case of his contemporaries, by the fact that he emphasizes the Latin character of the Romanian language. This perspective was shared by numerous western men of culture who came into contact with the Romanians, being also embraced by the Romanian historiography starting with the 17th century (Grigore Ureche, Miron Costin, Constantin Cantacuzino, Dimitrie Cantemir, etc.). Unlike the other scholars, Teodor Corbea does not state it directly nor does he mention the Roman descent of his people explicitly. By commonly identifying the ancient populations of the Antiquity with those who inhabited the respective region in his time, he extrapolates to the Romanian territory: “**Daci, g.m. pl.** rumînii” [Romanians], “**Getæ, g.m. pl.** rumînii” [Romanians], “**geticus, -a, -um** rumînesc, -ă, din Țara Rumînească” [Romanian, of the Romanian country], although the same population is also identified differently as: “**Dacæ, g.m. pl.** seminții de la Sfânta” [people from Scythia].

5. The influence of the Latin model

The author is, however, well aware of the Latin origin of certain Romanian words. Due to the numerous similarities between Latin and Romanian he provides a list that is considerably larger than the ones previously elaborated by Grigore Ureche and Miron Costin, an aspect which proves an obvious awareness of the Romance character of the language. Quoting just from the first pages of the dictionary, we identify: “**abellina, g.f.** alună”, “**abjugo, -as** dezjug”, “**abjuratio** jurare”, “**abnepos, g.m.** strănepot”, “**abneptis, g.f.** strănepoată”, “**abnodo, -as** clinciurile, nodurile curăț”, “**abrodo, -is, -ere** roz”, “**abrumbo, -is, -ere** rumpu”, “**abscondo, -is, -ere** ascunz, tăinuiesc”, “**absconsio, -onis** ascundere”, “**absconsor, g.m.** ascunzători”, “**absimilis, -e** usebit, -ă, nu-aseamine”, “**absisto, -is, -ere** stau, las”, “**absorbeo, -es, -bui, -psi** sorbu”, “**abstergo, -es, -ere** ștergu”, “**abstersio, g.f.** șteargere”, “**abtersus, -a, -um** șters, -ă”, “**accresco, -is, -ere** cresc”, “**acer, acris et acra acru**”, “**acor, g.m.** înăcrime”, “**acor, g.m.** înăcrime”, “**acuncula, -æ, g.f.** acșor”, “**acus, -us, g.f.** ac”, “**adaquo, -as** vite adăp”, “**addenseo, -es** desăsc”, “**addesso, -es** desăsc”, “**adductio, g.f.** ducere, povătuire spre ceva”, “**adfringo, -is** frîngu”, “**adgemo, -is** gemu”, “**ajuro, -as** foarte mă juru”, “**ajuto, -as** ajutu”, “**adjutor** ajutători”, “**adjutorium** ajutori”, “**adjutrix** ajutătoare”, “**adjutus, -a, -um** ajutat, -ă”, “**adjuvo, -as** ajutu”, “**adlatro, -as** latru”, “**admiratio, g.f.** minune, ciudă, mirare”, “**admirator, m.** minunători, mirători”, “**admiror, -aris** mă mir, mă minunez”, “**admugio, -is, -ire** zbieru, mugescu”, “**adporto, -as** portu, aducu”, “**adrado, -is** razu”, “**adrodo, -is** rozu”, “**adsideo, -es, -ere** șezu lîngă ceva”, “**adsido, -is** așezu lîngă ceva, mă sloboz”, “**arma, g.f.** armă”, “**armus, g.m.** armă, umere”, “**arquatus, -a, -um** în chipul arcului plecat, strîmb, -ă”, “**arquites, g.m. pl.** arcari, războitorii cu arce”, “**arquus, g.m.** arc”, etc.

5.1. Since the Hungarian language does not have the category of gender for adjectives, Corbea uses the

Latin language model for the Romanian equivalents as far as this grammatical category is concerned: “**affirmatus, -a, -um** mărturisit, -ă, întărít, -ă”, “**afflatus, -a, -um** suflat, -ă”, “**alacer, alacris, alacra** veasel, voios, -ă, sîrgitorii, -re, isteț, -ță, ager, -ră”, “**algidus, -a, -um** friguros, -ă, geros, -ă”, “**algificus, -a, -um** frigitorii, -re, geruatorii, -re” etc. Occasionally, in order to point to the existence of gender-related forms, he uses the phrase “pă 3 neamuri” [in three gender forms]: “**ædonius, -a, -um** trațienesc, -ă; iarăș: de preveghitoare (pă 3 neamuri)”, “**æneus, -a, -um** de aramă (pă 3 neamuri)”, “**æquanimus, -a, -um** cu inimă lină (pă 3 neamuri)”, “**ædilitius, -a, -um** spre boieria ziditorului meșter lucru sau altceva (și aşa pă trei neamuri)”, etc., mentioning the fact that adjectival forms are variable even in the case of periphrastic phrases, in which this variability is not actually traced in Romanian: “**acernus, -a, -um** de arțari (pă trei neamuri)”, “**ædonius, -a, -um** trațienesc, -ă; iarăș: de preveghitoare (pă 3 neamuri)”, “**ærius, -a, -um** văzduhos, -ă, de aer (pă 3 neamuri)”, “**affinis, -e** vecin, -ă, de aproape (pă 3 neamuri)”, “**æquævus, -a, -um** de o vreme (pă trei neamuri)”, “**ætnæus, -a, -um** din muntele Siliției (floare) și aşa umblă pă trei neamuri”. Aware of the similarity with the Latin language and consequently, the difference from the Hungarian language, he notes: “**ætolus, -a, -um** de la Etolia om sau altceva, fiește neam va hi (pentru că aşa umblă la rumâni acest feali de nume adăogători)” [because this is how the Romanians use this name]. These differences between Romanian and Latin make him occasionally introduce explanations such as: “**dimidius, -a, -um** jumătate (pă 2 neamuri rumânești)”.

5.2. The Latin lexis of the dictionary motivated the author to consciously make use of the Romanian word derived from the respective etymon, even if those were rare words. Such a situation is illustrated by the verb *mursăca*, used only in connection with the Latin verb *morsicare* ‘to bite’: “**morsicatum, adv.** mușcăteaște, mursăcăteaște”, “**morsio, g.f.** mușcare, mursăcare”, “**morsiuncula, g.f.** mușcăturea, mursăcăturea”, “**morsus, -us, g.m.** mușcare, mursăcatul”, “**morsus, -a, -um** mușcat, -ă, mursăcat, -ă”; elsewhere in the dictionary, Teodor Corbea uses the Romanian verb *a mușca* ‘to bite’, even when it carries prefixes specific to *mordere*: “**admordeo, -es** mușcu”, “**commordeo, -as** mușcu”, “**demordeo, -es** mușcu jos”, “**mordax, -cis, g.o.** mușcători, -re, usturători, -re, pișcători”, “**mordacitas, g.f.** mușcătură, pișcătură”, “**mordeo, -as** mușcu”, “**mordicibus pro morsibus, dixit Plautus** cu mușcători”, “**mordico, -as** mușcătorescu”, “**mordicus, adv.** mușcind, mușcăteaște”. The author’s awareness of the Latin character of the language is also indicated by his choice of rarely used regional terms suggested by the Latin words, for which he also provides additional explanations: “**colostra, g.f.** corastră, laptele cel dintîi după naștere” [colostrum, the milk produced right after birth]. Following the model provided by the Latin text, Corbea even re-creates some forms that are phonetically closer to the Latin word, as in *capestere* (“**capisterium, g.n.** capesteare, ciur”), although elsewhere in the dictionary the same term occurs as *căpestere*: “**labrum, g.n.** buză; iarăș: scafă, căpestere, troacă”, “**maстра, g.f.** moldă, căpesteare de copt, căpesteare de frămîntat”, “**magis, -dis, g.f.** moldă, căpesteare de frămîntat”, etc.

6. Conclusions

The question that obviously comes to mind, namely for what purpose did Bishop Mitrofan of Buzău need this dictionary?, has several answers, all equally valid. Mitrofan, the former Bishop of Huși and close collaborator of Metropolitan Dosoftei, who, after coming to Wallachia, contributed to the printing of the *Bible from Bucharest*, was a highly cultivated man who valued and needed access to texts written in Latin. He had a special interest in the greatest Latin collection of the lives of saints, *Vita sanctorum*, which he used for printing the *Menaion* in 1698. Since a simple linguistic preference can justify the identification of a writer, the phrase *cici și colea* meaning ‘here and there’, which can be identified in the texts of that time only in Teodor Corbea’s work and in some of the lives of saints in the *Menaion* from Buzău, entitles us to believe that he was not merely a paid translator of the dictionary, but also a collaborator of the monumental *Menaion*.

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