

Deacon Coresi (1510-1583) and his Activity as Typographer in the Context of the Protestant Propaganda in 16th Century

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Abstract

The biographical data on the life of deacon Coresi (Coressius) are extremely few and it has been admitted, after many debates, studies and analyses, that he was from Târgoviște, it is supposed that he joined a school in Slavonic at Dealu Monastery, and that he was the owner of a printing press, yet standing out as a skilful printing master. It is also known that he had a son, called Șerban, whom he taught the art of the printing press. The name of deacon Coresi is mentioned in the books he had printed in Brașov (during two periods: 1556-1557; 1560-1583, at irregular intervals), Târgoviște (1557-1558), Alba Iulia (1567-1568) and Sas-Sebeș (1580), during five great periods (1556-1558, 1559-1565, 1566-1570, 1571-1577, 1578-1583), in the Romanian and Slavonic languages. Thus, by his activity, deacon Coresi contributed to the introduction of the Romanian language in the cult of the Orthodox Church of the Romanian Countries, but also in the use of the princely chancelleries of the extra-Carpathian Romanian Countries. Following the discussions had around the thesis called *the inner impulses* compared to the thesis of the *influences from the outside*, many Romanian scholars and researchers are convinced that the phenomenon of introduction of the Romanian language in the official use of the Church and of the Reign does not represent an initiative under the exclusive patronage of the protestant propaganda, but is rather *a work of Romanian, Orthodox initiative, a page of internal history*, without being ignored, nevertheless, the fact that the first printings in the Romanian language appear in the environment of Transylvania, preoccupied by the ideas of the Reformation, which also imposes the observation that the activity realized by deacon Coresi, especially in Brașov, does not occur independently from the principles promoted by the Reformation. As far as the formation of the

Romanian unitary literary and liturgical language is concerned, one can admit that this process begins with Coresi's printings, even though the acceptance of the Wallachian dialect as the only Romanian norm will happen later, according to the specialists, namely by mid-18th century. However, both for the initiation of the respective process, and for the fact that Coresi's printings represent the first texts printed in the Romanian language, constituting, therefore, *the material support from which the study of the Romanian literary language began*, deacon Coresi is *rightly* called *the father of the Romanian literary language*. Consequently, the protestant propaganda was expecting, through the nationalization of the cult of the Orthodox Church and the printing activity of deacon Coresi, to discover, in the Romanians' conscience, elements able to awaken in them a certain spiritual crisis, which did not happen, because different was the living of the Orthodox faith from all that had been offered, at that time, by the Roman-Catholic doctrine and the outbreak of the Reformation.