

VULGAR LATIN IN THE BILINGUAL GLOSSARIES: THE UNPUBLISHED *HERMENEUMATA CELTIS* AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION

Rolando FERRI
Università di Pisa

ABSTRACT

This paper is about an unpublished Latin-Greek glossary transcribed by the German Humanist Conrad Celtis in 1495 from an unidentified MS. It is argued that the glossary is important to reconstruct areas of the Latin lexicon which are ignored by the literary evidence, especially technical and familiar terms. Although it is arguable that a great deal of the items in bilingual glossaries came from the Roman lexicographical tradition (but sometimes from versions more complete than those which have come down to us), some entries preserve spoken idiomatic expressions, and enhance our knowledge of 'submerged' and 'reconstructed' Latin.

Glossaries and *Hermeneumata*

Latin glossaries, bilingual and monolingual, have long been recognized as providing an important missing link in the history of Latin, especially for terms of the everyday, and the lower and technical registers ignored by most of the literary evidence. The evidence offered by glossaries for the study of what was at the time perhaps with fewer shades of meaning called *Vulgärlatein* was quarried in a series of important articles which appeared in the *Archiv für lateinische Lexicographie und Grammatik* in the wake of publication of the volumes of *Corpus glossariorum Latinorum* (CGL), from 1888 onwards,¹ or just about the time when the various volumes were making it into print: one may cite Funck 1893, and above all Heraeus 1937 on the language of Petronius (first published in 1899).

1. Goetz (Hrsg.) 1888-1923.

CGL entries are now registered at the beginning of most *TLL* articles, often to provide a Greek translation for each word. Not everyone agreed to this practice, as there was sometimes the question of whether this Latin could be regarded as ancient in any meaningful sense. In particular, the great Scot scholar Wallace M. Lindsay made derisive comments against the German gullibility of Goetz and his pupils hoping to recover ancient gold nuggets from the medieval dross and incrustations of the glossaries.²

However, on several occasions, the great antiquity of much of the contents of these bilingual materials has been vindicated, for example by papyrological and epigraphical finds. I have attracted attention to one such case in Ferri 2008, where I have used the evidence provided by *Hermeneumata Celtis*, the collection which I discuss in this piece (henceforward *HC*), to explain the meaning of the little-known Greek term ῥωμαιστής, found only in a few Greek inscriptions and coin legends and certainly unknown to Medieval scholars West and, possibly, East.

In similar vein and on a larger scale, Wilhelm Heraeus, in his 1899 article “Die Sprache des Petronius und die Glossen”³ drew attention to the importance of glosses for the understanding of many hitherto incomprehensible items from the *Cena Trimalchionis*.

Much of the bilingual materials printed in volumes II and III of *CGL* came from a class of ancient schoolbooks, extant in several medieval copies, the *Hermeneumata* or ‘translations’, a combination of bilingual Greek-Latin or Latin-Greek glossaries with more complex bilingual narrative texts and dialogues, focusing on a boy’s school experiences and everyday life vignettes, such as shopping at the market, washing at the baths, encounters with friends, financial transactions, and dinner party conversations. *Hermeneumata* included word-lists in alphabetical order, in origin only verbs with conjugations, and lists of nouns grouped by subject; finally, the *colloquia*, or conversation exercises, and various combinations of fairly elementary texts for reading.⁴

Hermeneumata are transmitted in medieval MSS of Western provenance, some Renaissance, some Carolingian in date. These are miscellaneous MSS, mainly of grammatical content, including tracts on orthography, typically *differentiae*, concentrating on the differences between words, for example *diues* and *locuples*, or between homonyms (words with same spelling but different meaning) and paronyms (words near-identical in spelling, including words which had lost their difference in pronunciation but retained it in correct spelling).

The particular bilingual text on which I am going to concentrate (= Vienna, ÖNB, *Supplementum Graecum* 43) has not been published up to now, except for the

2. Lindsay 1918; Lindsay, Thomson 1921.

3. Heraeus 1937.

4. For a fuller description see Dionisotti 1982, p. 86-87; Dionisotti 1985, p. 26-31.

colloquium, famously edited in *JRS* by A.C. Dionisotti,⁵ and some specific dictionary sections (*tituli*: Johannes Kramer has published in two different articles *tituli* 1-5 and 15, ff. 18^v-20^r; ff. 30^r-31^v, and Paolo Gatti has published *titulus* 39, ff. 39^v-40^r).⁶ I am preparing an edition of the autograph parts of the Celtis' MS (12^r-45^v), with a commentary, which I hope to complete soon.

What is now *Supplementum Graecum* 43 was assembled from two originally separate sections, bound together by the Humanist Conrad Celtis about the year 1500. The first part (1^v-11^v), written by Celtis' own scribe Johannes Rosenberger, is a Greek grammar taken from contemporary printed sources (the so-called *Erotemata*), and of no particular interest; the second half of the MS, on leaves 12^r-45^v was Celtis' own transcript from what he described, in a prefatory letter, as a very ancient MS found in the library of the Benedictine monastery of Sponheim in the German Palatinate (est. ca. 1145). Celtis' colophon states that the transcription was executed in October 1495.

Five years later, Conrad Celtis submitted his MS for publication, to Aldus Manutius in Venice, as we gather from the accompanying letter on the first *folium* (1^r). In it, Celtis described the MS as a *grammatica* and a *dictionary*, and suggested it would be of great use for young students of Greek across Europe. We can still read, in the correspondence of Celtis, Manutius' own letter of rejection, written in September 1504.⁷ Manutius pointed out that there were several such study tools available at the time, both Greek grammars and dictionaries. Surely, the desire to protect the market prospects of other items in his own catalogue weighed heavily with him, but Manutius must have been aware of the difficulties of seeing to the press such rough material as that handed in by Celtis, without accents and often corrupt beyond restoration, at least with the means of the time.

The antigraph of *HC* had lost the alphabetical word-list, of which we only learn that it comprised 11 309 words. The surviving parts are the colloquium and the glossary by topics or chapters, including 49 different sections: in fact two consecutive but distinct sections are numbered erroneously '33', and one is acephalous, bringing us to a total of 51 different sections.

The study of the subject chapters is a fascinating dive into the everyday of ancient Rome, from sawdust to timber roof, from bath towels to ceremonial cummerbunds. There is of course the difficulty in decyphering for the first time an unpublished document. The Greek is written in Celtis' own non-professional, untrained Greek hand, and, though badly corrupt, is easy to read, and very legible. The Latin, however,

5. Dionisotti 1982.

6. *Supplementum Graecum* 43. Codicological descriptions, in Bick 1920, p. 53-54; Wuttke 1970, p. 289-303; Hunger, Hannick 1994, p. 35; *Colloquium*: Dionisotti 1982, p. 83-125. Partial editions of the glossary in Kramer 2001, p. 249-65; Kramer 2004, p. 43-62; Gatti 2006, p. 105-121.

7. The letter is dated to '3 September 1501', but the editor of the letters, Rupprich, believes that that date is an error for '1504': cf. Rupprich 1934, p. 568-569. The issue should perhaps be reconsidered anew.

is a different story, because it is in Celtis' informal cursive hand, with gothic elements, and some letters are very difficult to make out. It is clear that Celtis, though an eminent Latin writer of his day, often did not have a clue of what he was transcribing, for which he is not to blame, as many technical and familiar words would never have come within his horizon as a Latin writer of elegant verse, epistles, and panegyrics.

The contribution of *HC* to 'Vulgar Latin'

First of all, *HC* is not an original document from Antiquity, but a Humanist copy of an earlier document. Opinions differ as to how ancient we may assume the anti-graph to have been. Kramer⁸ argued on the basis of Greek errors that *HC* is a direct copy of a late-antique document in uncial script, perhaps on papyrus. I have tried to disprove this thesis looking at errors in the Latin half, a number of which presupposes misunderstanding from an antigraph in minuscule script. This leads me to the conclusion⁹ that *HC* goes back to a late-antique MS only through at least one Medieval intermediary, perhaps one of the many Carolingian *Hermeneumata* books, a conclusion which must make one more cautious when weighing the value of *HC* as evidence as regards, for example, the linguistic significance of spelling errors, not to mention the possibility of lexical intrusions of Medieval items (on which *infra*).

Whichever the case, the orthography of the lexical section, or glossary proper, as opposed to the *colloquium*, is classicizing and has nothing very striking to reveal about the phonetics of late or 'vulgar' Latin.¹⁰ The orthographic correctness of *HC* must perhaps be ascribed, in part at least, to Celtis himself, who was a careful Latin writer and may have corrected here and there what he recognized as substandard orthography. The contribution of *HC* to Latin and Greek resides mostly in the information we gather from it about the lexicon of specific areas of human activity, and that with a fair chance of going back to very early, ancient and not medieval, sources, in at least a sizeable number of cases.

By comparison with other *Hermeneumata* collections, *HC* is remarkable for its length. Before loss of the alphabetical section, *HC* was probably about twice as long as any of the other extant collections, for example *Hermeneumata Monacensia* (= *CGL* III, 118-220); its extant glossary by subject chapters, comprising over 5000 entries, is the longest known. This size must be the result from contamination of different sources: chapters including fairly mundane terms such as *de moribus humanis* include identical words three times over, as if scribes had conflated different

8. Kramer 2004.

9. Ferri 2011.

10. However, some cases of substandard spelling are indeed found, for example reduction of hiatus in terms such as *linia* from *linea*, or reduction of diphthongues as in *oricularius* instead of *auricularius*, *coliculi* for *cauliculi*.

sources, making no attempt to rationalize the sequence. Even with such repeats, the amount of original material, as shown by a comparison with the invaluable *CGL* indices (*Thesaurus glossarum emendatarum*, vol. VI-VII), is very high, with several new words both on the Latin and on the Greek sides.

The vocabulary of the glossary is organized by thematic sections, as in other similar *Hermeneumata* books, forming a large encyclopedia which spans from gods' names and religious institutions, all pagan, to kitchen and cooking vessels, working tools, education, human anatomy, family ties, sweet preparations, vegetables, birds, mammals, reptiles, agriculture, medicine, and seafaring.

The issue of the coming into being of glossaries, and of *HC* is particular, is very complicated, and I don't propose to tackle the subject here. Suffice it to say now that *HC* shares many items with its other relatives in the *Hermeneumata* family, and that some of these can clearly be traced to the Roman lexicographical tradition (Festus). It is however possible that the compilers of *HC* had access to fuller versions than what has come down to us, and that is where their contribution is important. This original core will have been supplemented with occasional items from perhaps even the spoken language of the scribes, first coming in as *marginalia*. Of course the fact that we cannot write a closing date for the time when entries ceased being added weakens considerably the value of the collection as linguistic evidence, but, in many cases, we have solid proof that *HC* has good antiquarian background. This is the case of some of the entries transmitting names of Roman magistracies or musical performers, sometimes known to us only from one or two inscriptions: no Medieval monk collecting glosses from school syllabus authors could have chanced on them.

In the following list, I discuss some of new words found in *HC*. Arabic numbers refer to chapter and entry number in my own provisional edition of *HC*.

Words with a Germanic etymology

15, 6 (*de potestate, officiis, magistratibus*) *senatus* νουνεχής, γερουσία]

33bis, 47 (*de uictu quotidiano*) *brama*, *furcilla* βουλιμία]

In 15, 6, *senatus* is translated by the familiar Greek γερουσία 'council', and by a more puzzling νουνεχής. I take the second translation as evidence that the author of this specific entry was familiar with derivatives of Germanic *Sinn* as a common lexical item, and could therefore confuse *senatus* with something like **sennatus*, 'thoughtful, intelligent', cf. Italian *assennato*.¹¹ Similarly, in 33bis, 47, the common Greek βουλιμία is translated by *brama*, not known as a Latin word, but found in several French and Italian dialects with the appropriate meaning, 'desire to eat'. Again, *REW* gives **bramare* a Germanic etymology (*REW* 1270 from Germ. *brammon*; cf. It. *bramare***).

11. Cf. *REW* 7948a.

I interpret these lemmata as intrusions from the Medieval Latin phase, unless one is ready to assume that at the end of antiquity some Germanic loan-words had cut deep inroads into the language.

Greek loan-words (assimilated to Latin phonetics and morphology)

Here is a list of Greek loan-words, presented in the MS as Latin, with an assimilated morphology. The asterisk means that there is no entry in *TLL* or *Forcellini*, or other available printed and electronic lexica of Latin. The words in parenthesis are the title of the section (*titulus*) in which the word occurs in *HC*.

- 14, 79 (*de artificibus*) **contopecta* ἰσχυροπαίκτης] The Latin is clearly a calque of κοντοπαίκτης (*LSJ* ‘actor who balanced a pole on his head’).
- 11, 102 (*de natura humana*) **carrachia* παιδίσκη; 13, 101 (*de adfinitate*) *carrachia* παιδίσκη] I have found so far no explanation, and the etymology is not perspicuous. Perhaps from *curagulus*, occurring in Priscian, *Partitiones* 76, 20 Passalacqua: so *curacula* = *curacla*, for ‘attendant’; or from *currere*, *currax*, **curracula*. Lastly, it may be an unknown loan-word from Greek κορίσκιον, κοράσιον (both in Pollux, *Onon.* 2, 17), κωράλιον (Hesych. κ 4873 = παιδάριον, κόριον) ‘maid’.
- 12, 603 (*de moribus humanis*) **scardilissus* μιλφόρς] Cf. Gk. σκαρδαμυκτής, ‘someone who blinks or winks’, also as a disease. μιλφόρς means (*LSJ*) ‘falling off of the eye-lashes’.
- 12, 1201 **atlifuga* *στραγευτής] The meaning is clear, ‘idler, loiterer’, and must be related to the Greek verb στραγ(γ)εύομαι. A similar Latin gloss occurs in *CGL* III, 335, 4 and 528, 3, but the form is ΚΛΑΤΩΝ *oclifuga*, for which Heraeus 1937, p. 98-99 conjectured κλαγγών (in the *TLL* article *oclifuga*), a word found mostly in lexica, Hesychius, *Etym. Gen.* (λ 2 = ὁ εὐθέως λανθάνων τοῦ ἀγῶνος καὶ φόβου, ‘he who quickly disappears in the face of labour and fright’), *Etym. Magn.*, and in the *Excerpta Lugdunensia* 2, one of the late-antique handbooks of hippiatrics, of a diseased horse. The reading of *HC* is slightly different, and suggests a different etymology, that is that the compound is a hybrid word-formation, from *at(h)lum* ‘task’ and *fugere*.
- 12, 118 *scordalus* βάνυσος] ‘a vulgar, aggressive person’. From σκόρδον, *garlic*, thought to be a stimulant. Cf. Petr., *Sat.* 59: *agite, inquit, scordalias de medio*, ‘Banish, he said, quarrel from here’.
- 12, 166 *alogiosus* σπάταλος, ὀλίγωρος; 12, 859 **alogiosus* ἄθυρος] The Latin word is not in *TLL*, except as a noun *alogia* ‘nonsense, trifle’ (cf. Petr., *Sat.* 58: *non didici geometrias, critica et alogias nenias*). The various Greek translations mean respectively ‘wanton, lascivious’ and ‘contemptuous, negligent, careless’, or ‘open, unchecked’, none of which seems a very good match.

Words for which a new, technical or specialized, meaning is offered

This category includes words which were already known, but which occur here with a new meaning, relating to a special sphere of activity.

- 18, 258 (*de militia*) *anaticula* κορώνη] *Anaticula*, meaning *little duck, duckie*, also as an endearment, turns up in *HC* with a Greek translation meaning *door-handle*, in the section on serraments and houselocks.¹²
- 18, 83 *praefectus studiorum* παιδονόμος (also at 20, 89)] Only παιδονόμος was known, but *TLL* s.v. “*praefectus*” mentions a *praefectus orator*, who seems to have referred to someone in charge of higher education in cities.
- 27, 64 (*de argenteis*) *cycni* κύκνοι] In the context, listing words for silverware, *cycni* can only be a kind of house tool, and I take the meaning to be ‘chimney-hook’, on the basis of the similar meaning of κόραξ at *Suda* ε 2614 ἐπιστάτην· ξύλον κόρακας ἔχον, ἐξ οὗ κρεμῶσι τὰ μαγειρικὰ ἐργαλεῖα ‘epistates: a piece of wood on which hooks are nailed, for the cook’s tools to hang from’, apparently referring to ‘hooks, resembling ravens’ beaks’.
- 18, 125 (*de militia* = *de habitatione*) *cucumula* ὑπόκαυστον] *cucumula* is the diminutive form of a word for ‘pot’, ‘small bottle’. The *titulus*, however, contains words for city venues, streets, etc., not house tools, and the Greek translation ὑπόκαυστον ‘heated from underneath’ implies that *cucumula* here means a space, perhaps of circular or semicircular shape. There are only three more occurrences of this word in *TLL*, but only one is reconcilable with this meaning, from the sixth-century *Vita Caesarii Arelatensis*, where it means ‘apse’: cf. 2, 17: *ingrediens cocumulam ad consignandos infantes*, ‘on entering the apse to baptize the infants’.

Latin words reconstructed in *REW* but not found in Latin texts of any period¹³

- 24, 141 *cremaculum*: κρεμαστήριον] Cf. *REW* 2310, where French *crémaillère* = *chimney hook* is suggested to have come from a reconstructed Latin word, **cremasclum* and **cremaculum* (from Gk. κρεμάννυμι, with a Latinate suffix). In fact, the Latin word does occur in *CGL* II, 145, 1, κρέμαται *pendet, unde cremaculus* (only instance in *TLL*).
- 24, 87 (*de supellectile*) **depanatorium* *μηροτήρ] A reconstructed form **depanare* is assumed by *REW* 2569 as the basis for the various Romance inheritors, e.g. It. *dipanare*, from *panus*, ‘a spool wound with thread’ (*OLD*), and connected with πῆνος. μηροτήρ also is not on record, but seems connected with μηρούμαι, to wind off thread.

12. The chapter is *de militia*, but in fact it is clear that something is missing or was missing in the antigraph, and that the section is *de habitatione*, on house-dwelling.

13. Müller 1999, p. 183-191.

- 43, 58 (de gregibus) *pulleter πωλίος] *REW* 6825 *pulliter is the basis of It. *puledro* and similar forms, meaning ‘pony’. The earliest Latin occurrence with this meaning (‘colt’) is in the sixth-century collection of *Leges Visigothorum* 8, 4, 5 Zeumer.
- 12, 1306 *orbitarius ὁδοιδόκος] *orbitaria is reconstructed in *REW* 6084 from Romance reflexes, meaning ‘track of a waggon’. The Gk. term means ‘brigand, highwayman’, which is possibly correct for the Lt. too in the context.

Other unparalleled or little known Latin words

- 12, 797 *latra ληστρίς] Roman grammarians state that *latro* is a *commune*, that is it refers to male and female robbers with no different morphology.
- 12, 972 appiosus μετέωρος] *TLL* has *apiosus*, describing a diseased horse, in hippiatrical texts, although the exact nature of the disease is unexplained. μετέωρος is a Greek medical term, for ‘undigested’, or ‘inflated’, ‘swollen’, although the nature of the ailment remains unclear.
- 12, 973 *apello *τραπεζοκόλαξ] *Apello* has no parallels, though *Apella* is mentioned by Horace, *Serm.* 1, 5 as a Jewish name. Naevius the comic writer also wrote an *Apella*, which, on the strength of the Horace passage, is thought to have dealt with Jewish characters in Rome. The two extant fragments, discussing onions, are not revealing about the themes of the play. However, *Apella* was a very common Roman name, a by-form of *Apelles*, often used by freedmen. The occurrence of *apello* in the glossary suggests an alternative interpretation for the theme of Naevius’ comedy, namely that the main character was a *parasitus*, because the Greek translation τραπεζοκόλαξ is very close to several known literary sobriquets for the ‘parasite’, such as κνισοκόλαξ, ψωμοκόλαξ, τραπεζολείκτης, τραπεζολοιχός.
- 30, 39 superficia: ἐπανωτρίδα] Compounds with prefix ἐπάνω are common in Late and Byzantine Greek, e.g. ἐπανωφόριον ‘overcoat’. The noun *superficiū* seems to refer to a dress or robe worn over (an ‘all-over’, perhaps a kind of apron). *Superficiū* occurs in *CGL*, and in Latham 1965, but only in reference to buildings. The appropriate meaning is registered only in Du Cange, from Iren. Lugd., *Adu. haer.* 2, 14: *quasi centonem ex multis et pessimis panniculis consarcientes, finctum superficiū subtili eloquio sibi ipsis praeparaverunt*, where clearly a dress, or overall, is intended.
- 46, 78 (de medicina) scrattae φθισιχοί] This Latin word was used in Plautus and Titinius as an epithet for prostitutes. Festus describes the usage as an idiomatic vulgar phrase whereby women of low repute were called ‘spittings, things of no value’ (Festus, 448 Lindsay: *scraptae dicebantur nugatoriae ac despiciendae mulieres, ut ait unus, ab is quae screa idem appellabant, id est quae quis excreare solet, quatenus id faciendo se purgaret*). The clear connection of the gloss *scratta* with ‘spitting’ reinforces the Latin etymology of It. *scaracchiare*, Fr. *cracher* from *excreare*, sometimes disputed: *REW* 4752 takes these

to be from an onomatopoeic *krak-* root. Perhaps more importantly, the word *scratta* appears now to have been in use, presumably more as a current term rather than as a technicism, designating a ‘consumptive’, someone with a spitting cough.

- 41, 232 (*de agri cultura*) *embractum* ἔνθρουκτον] The Latin form occurs only in Apicius, 9, 444, in the heading (Souter: ‘an Italian dish’; ‘caudle’, ‘casserole’, or ‘stew’ in Apicius translations).¹⁴ The meaning of the term is thoroughly obscure. Hesych. s.v. ἔντριτον (ε 3402) explains it as a word used by the Galatians: τὸ ἰδιονίου ἔμβρωμα (‘a snack’), ὃ Γαλάται ἐμβρεκτόν φασιν. If the word has any connection with ἐμβρέγειν, it means ‘soaked’. However, the supposedly Gallic origin has suggested a connection with *bracis* (Delamarre 2003, s.v. “*embractum*”: *boisson fermentée, sauce piquante*). The Greek gloss is impossible to reconstruct, in the absence of a clearer idea about the meaning, and it might be ἔμβρεκτον itself, or ἔνθρουπτον (‘crumbled and put into liquid’, or a kind of ‘cake’, or ‘pie’), or Hesychius’ own mysterious lemma, ἔντριτον. In *HC*, *embractum* comes between *faba* and *lens*, which suggests a pulse soup of sorts.

I hope even this selection is enough to show the interest of the glossary both for the study of Latin lexicography in Late antiquity, and for the reconstruction of the technical or familiar registers of the Latin vocabulary at a later period.

Abbreviations

DMLBS = *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, Oxford, 1997-.

LBG = *Lexikon zur Byzantinischen Gräzität besonders des 9.-12. Jahrhunderts*, Hrsg. von E. Trapp, Vienna, 2001-.

LSJ = LIDDELL H.G., SCOTT R., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed., Oxford, 1940; repr. with a supplement, 1968; revised supplement, 1996.

MLW = *Mittelateinisches Wörterbuch*, Munich, 1999-.

OLD = *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. by P. Glare *et al.*, Oxford, 1976.

REW = *Romanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Hrsg. von W. Meyer-Lübke, 3. vollständig Neubearb. Aufl., Sammlung Romanischer Elementar- und Handbücher. Reihe 3, Wörterbücher, Heidelberg, 1935.

TLG = *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* [on line] <<http://www.tlg.uci.edu/>>.

TLL = *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, Leipzig, 1900-

14. Another occurrence in the same work is uncertain: 8, 359 *cum inbracto V, cum bracto E, cum em- P*.

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Addendum

I believe now (2011) that *brama* at 33bis, 47 is a scribal error for *bruma*, one of many pointing to a minuscule antigraph for the glossary. *Bruma* means in Latin ‘winter solstice’, but some Late Latin sources know the meaning ‘ravenousness’: cf. Isid., *Etymologies* 5, 35, 6 (under *bruma*) *edacitas enim Graece βρῶμα appellatur*. According to other sources, the word is connected to followers of Bacchus (*Bromius*), allegedly immoderate in their appetites for food, drink, and pleasure in general.

