

DR. PARASCHIVA BOBOC,
St. Kiril i Metodii University, Veliko Tărnovo, Bulgaria

Florentina Nicolae, *Neolatina cantemiriana. Studiu de sintaxa asupra operelor lui Dimitrie Cantemir De antiquis et hodiernis Moldaviae nominibus si Historia moldo-vlachica / Cantemir's Neolatin. A Study of Syntax in Dimitrie Cantemir's De antiquis et hodiernis Moldaviae nominibus and Historia Moldo-Vlachica*, Bucharest: Cartea Universitara, 2006, 460 p.

Dimitrie Cantemir's human destiny, i.e. events in his life, the multiple aspects of his scholarly activity, his philosophical and political ideas, his historical vision still attract researchers' attention, producing fundamental works or special studies. Florentina Nicolae's approach can be circumscribed to the latter category. The detailed examination of syntactic structures points out to an impressive amount of knowledge, information, all very instructive not only for a reader that is interested in Latin, but also for the researchers of Romanian philology, history, anthropology etc.

We shall use here the abbreviations proposed by the author herself: DMN: *De antiquis et hodiernis Moldaviae nominibus* and HMV: *Historia Moldo-Vlachica*.

The study begins with *Introductory specifications* (p. 3) signed by the author, followed by a *Foreword* (p. 5), which reflects Dan Slusanschi's appreciations (he is a professor at the University of Bucharest), a *List of abbreviations*, explanations on the *Symbols* used (p. 8) and an *Introduction* (p. 9), where the author focuses on the aim of the works, the critical edition used in research and some considerations on the evolution and the delimitations of the writing periods of certain Cantemirian studies.

Chapter I, *General Characteristics of Neolatin* (p.13), starts with a presentation regarding Neolatin in the European space, sometimes very much related in forms and stages, its tendency to renew, in the context of reconsideration of the mediaeval tradition and of the stylistic ideal, characterized by *imitatio* and *aemulatio* towards the national languages, and continues with its influences in the South-East European and Romanian space.

Among the symbolic figures of spirituality in the 18th century, Dimitrie Cantemir holds a special place. Through his works, he gives individuality and strength to Romanian Humanism, but, as the author concluded, "Dimitrie Cantemir

cannot be framed to the limits of the Romanian space, and even his own biography prohibits this limitation. As a politician and an intellectual, he is the result and the echo of interstate and interconfessional movements which crossed Europe from East to West, generating an intense circulation of reformatory and cultural ideas” (p. 23).

The method of research used by the author of this study is described in the second chapter, *Principles and methods* (p. 40). The author has chosen as the theoretical basis the principles and methods of functional grammar, using complementary methods – the syntagmatic description of syntactical functions taking in considerations both *values* and *form* of the grammatical connections - and also sustaining her presentation with the help of some concepts taken from categorial syntax (the concept of *syntagma* or *group* and of *category*).

In the third chapter, *Syntax of the sentence* (p. 44), different syntactic issues are analyzed in eight sections. The system of cases (starting from the vocative to the nominative, accusative, dative, genitive and ablative case, in oppositive and demarcative order) is discussed in the context of the case syntax, following the principles of functional grammar, considering that “between *value* and *function* there is a constant and biunivocal relation” (p.44). The last section of this chapter, *Concurrent cases*, highlights Cantemir’s perspective on the syntactic functions expressed by different cases, especially the subject, the predicative noun and the appositive attribute.

The fourth chapter, *Syntax of the complex sentence* (p. 119), aims at discussing coordination and subordination at the level of the complex sentences in Cantemir’s texts. Subordination is characterized by three major types of clauses: object clauses, circumstantial clauses and attributive clauses. The *asyndetic coordination* is rarely used in DMN and HMV, also avoided in the classical Latin. Cantemir prefers large and elaborate sentences. In contrast, the *syndetic coordination* is much more frequent both at the level of the simple sentence and of the complex sentence. Grammatical connections specific to this type of coordination in the two texts by Cantemir are very different and cover all the known coordination spheres, except *concessive coordination*, marked through *etsi*, *quamquam*, *tametsi*, which Cantemir does not use, because, as the author suggests, “they have a colloquial nature and a strong affective value, discordant to the scientific character of DMN and HMV” (p. 143).

The section *Syntactical organizations* is remarkably achieved through interesting observations and has not only methodological importance, but also a didactic one, by its circumscribing to the systematization of a large amount of information offered by the author. This section is related to another one entitled *Statistical perspective on coordination* (p. 157).

The research study continues in the same analytical manner on the three types of Latin subordination used by Cantemir in DMN and HMV. The chapter ends with *Consecutio temporum* (p. 291), where there are expressed anomalies, inadvertences, discordances due to the tendency of Neolatin to avoid rigidity and to Cantemir's search for an elegant expression in his rough copies. "Cantemir's critics pointed out the lack of direct access to ancient texts and that the author reached them in secondary and even tertiary sources. Indeed, Cantemir's writing has the imprint of the mediaeval and humanist texts. Over these layers of Latinity, there is the incontestable influence of the native language" (p. 378).

The fifth chapter, *Oratio obliqua* (p. 303), treats the modalities of expression frequently used by Cantemir in DMN and HMV to reproduce the authors' opinions, without citing them exactly, from numerous bibliographical sources. Found at the junction of two planes – the style and the syntax – in Cantemir's Latin, *oratio obliqua* is realized with the help of different procedures, specific to European Neolatin, i.e. by *verba dicendi* or related, by main verbs, one being redundant in longer sentences, by the *omission* of the main verb because of a syntactical error etc. In larger fragments written in *oratio obliqua*, there is, sometimes, an infiltration of an *oratio recta* (for example, in narrating Saint Sava's legend). The author analyses the levels of *oratio obliqua* (allusions, limited resumptions) and some other issues, like the use of declarative and interrogative sentences, the indicative mood in *oratio obliqua*, the infinitive in clauses, the conditional clauses. Dimitrie Cantemir does not use the free indirect style, to avoid an approach to the colloquial language.

The study is individualized by *Linguistic anomalies in Cantemir's Latin in DMN and HMV* (the sixth chapter, p. 324), analyzed at the morphological level, revealing the steps of writing the text, and by *Notes regarding Cantemir's bibliographical sources* (the seventh chapter, p. 344), presented in detail. The author has focused mainly on *Quotation and paraphrase in Cantemir's Latin, Latin bibliographical sources* and *Byzantine bibliographical sources*.

In the last chapter, *Final conclusions* (p. 368), the author expressed the conclusions of her research. Cantemir's Latin language in the two writings – rough copy manuscripts - taken in consideration from a syntactical perspective, is an integrant part of the European Neolatin in the 18th century, Cantemir being a follower of the classical and mediaeval tradition, and at the same time receptive of the humanistic cultural realities.

Selected bibliography (p.396) for this theme and the use of the documentary sources give consistence to the study. The large and complex amount of notes makes easier the reading of the text, by its explanations and immediate details.

An useful addition are the *Appendix* (p. 413) - which contains the list of Dimitrie Cantemir's works, manuscripts, princeps editions, editings – and the *Index*, containing the names that appeared in the study, *res potiores* (p. 436) and Greek terms. These are marks of author's rigorous search and of the nature of her scientific approach.

In conclusion, we consider that *Cantemir's Neolatin. A Study of Syntax in Dimitrie Cantemir's De antiquis et hodiernis Moldaviae nominibus and Historia Moldo-Vlachica by Florentina Nicolae* is a study that completes both the research on Cantemir and the studies on the Romanian culture in the 18th century.