

Cristian Moroianu, *Etimologie și lexicologie românească. Convergențe sincronice și diacronice*, București, Editura Universității din București, 2015, 448 p. (Iustina Burci)



Consistent with the field that consecrated him – Romanian lexicology – Mr. Cristian Moroianu brings again to the attention of the specialists, those generally interested in the history of words, a new publication, in which over 100 Romanian etymologic doublets are presented, both synchronically and diachronically.

The book begins with an introductory chapter (p. 7-37), fragmented into eight short segments, in the second part (the most consistent and important of the work), the author managing to realise, thoroughly, the micro-monographs of the appellatives chosen for the analysis.

Yet, for the beginning, in the first part of the subdivision (p. 7-10), the author reminds us that the route for the development of words and the formation of languages, is a long and sinuous one, the appellatives having their own “life”, both within an idiom, when “they move from one

evolutionary stage to the other, in the historic process of creation of new peoples and linguistic communities” (p.7), and outside it, as a consequence of the direct and indirect relations that occur between cultural communities, a situation that generates borrowings, from one language to another. As regarding the Romanian language, the words from the substrate completed the Latin base, to which there have been added words from the languages we have come in touch with, along our history.

The inter-linguistic exchanges between peoples, implicitly between already formed idioms, are also the subject matter of the second segment (p. 10-18). They were formed dichotomically; on the one hand, through “direct, oral and common contact” (p. 11) among the simple people, not restrained by linguistic norms, as in the case of mixed communities and neighbouring areas. The author illustrates this affirmation with numerous examples of foreign words that entered the language through different spheres of the Romanian language (agricultural terminology, householding, animals and plants, human body, military organisation, school, church), especially south-Slavic and Hungarian, but also with lexemes “imported” from us, by the Bulgarian, Serbian, Hungarian, Ukrainian languages, the phenomenon of borrowing being multidirectional.

On the other hand, there is the cultural borrowing – which appeared through the fields of administration, politics, laic or religious culture – the one that generated enrichment, from the lexical point of view, with appellatives from Slavic, Hungarian, middle- and neo-Greek languages.

Most of the times, the common borrowings, along with the cultured ones, come from an external source. The successiveness and the simultaneity of the relations between languages led to the existence of multiple origin words. This situation is explained in the

third segment (p. 18-21) through “... the entering of two, or more etymons, with the same meaning, from different external sources, which have, at their origin, a unique etymon” (p. 20) and also supported with examples from different languages and fields.

Words can be taken from two or more languages, at the same time and distance, by one or more speakers, a fact that generates competition for the vocabulary of the literary language, “the others remaining individual cultural options” (p. 22); nonetheless, other options are becoming specialised semantically and/or morphologically, or they enjoy “a free literary circulation” (p. 22). This aspect represents the subject matter of the fourth segment, from the introductory part (p. 22-23).

If along the previous part, the accent is on time and space, singularity and plurality of speakers-borrowers, as basic elements in the existence and the evolution of an etymon, in the fifth segment (p. 23-27), the etymon is regarded from the perspective of ways in which it entered a language. They are known from a previous analysis: on the one hand there is the oral, common, route, on the other, the written, cultured one.

The etymological doublets – whose existence in Romanian linguistics was noticed from the 19th century by Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu – are formed when, in the Romance languages, a Latin etymon, “with a unique form, or realized in a variety of non-derivative forms” (p. 27), entered, through inheritance and borrowing. To some of these doublets a term can be attached, from English, due to its current status as the language of modern society, of informatics, economy, scientific discoveries, etc. as mentioned in the 6th subdivision (p. 27-30), the role of Latin – whose vocabulary encompasses, firstly, “a succession of lexical layers, chronologically, historically and culturally explained” (p. 29), over which lies “a cultured layer, based on rigorous norms and having its beginning in the republican era” (p. 29) – in the emergence of etymological doublets being a significant one.

Within the section that precedes the last one (p. 30-34), the author makes a short incursion in the bibliography of the writers passionate with the history of words. There are mentioned here, remarkable linguists such as: Sextil Pușcariu, Sorin Stati, Alexandru Tohăneanu, G. I. Tohăneanu, Grigore Brâncuș, Marius Sala, to whom there have been added, recently, Andrei Cornea (*Cuvintelnic fără cuvinte sau despre trădarea Anticilor de către Moderni, de-a lungul, de-a latul și de-a dura vocabularului de bază*) and Alexandru Ciolan (*Misterele cuvintelor*). From the Roman space, the Italian Gian Luigi Beccaria (with the works *L’italiano in 100 parole* and *Tra le pieghe delle parole. Lingua, storia, cultura*) is also mentioned.

In the last section (p. 34-37) of the introductory part, the author presents both the materials that he took into consideration in his work, represented by “35 episodes that depict the influx and the formal and semantic evolution of over 100 Romanian etymologic doublets, lexical and affixoid. They have at least one inherited element, which constitutes the starting point of an etymological and lexicological analysis” (p. 34), and the structure of each analysed “episode”, which starts with “the mentioning of the common Latin etymon and its family, at ordinary and/or cultural level, and continues with the lexical-etymological detailing of each of the components, chronologically, from the inherited word or words, to their borrowed correspondent elements, calqued, or obtained through internal non-derivative means. Around the inherited and borrowed doublets, there are built their own lexical families, which, together, make the lexical-etymologic family of the root inherited words and, finally, through relating to the origin Latin etymon, its etymological family, on the Romanian territory” (p. 35-36).

After we become familiar with the theoretical aspects of the matter, Mr. Cristian Moroianu begins the linguistic detailed description of each “episode”: *Alb, albă* and *album*; *Arie, arie* and *ar*; *Arină* and *arenă*; *Arm* and *armă*; *Aspru* and *aspru*; *Bășică* and *vezică*; *Bun, -ă, bon, bonă* and *bonus*; *Căpețel, capitel, cadet, cadou* and *caudillo*; *Călcâi* and *calcaneu*; *Căprioară* and *cabriolă*; *Cărare* and *carieră*; *Câmp, campos* and *campus*; *Credință, credenț* and *credență*; *Cumplit, complet, complet* and *complex*; *Curs, curs* and *corso*; *Drege, dirija, dirigui, dirige* and *dirigăli*; *Față* and *facies*; *Fereca, fabrica* and *forja*; *Foc* and *focus*; *Fragă* and *frez*; *Frâu* and *făină*; *Găinaț* and *galinaceu*; *Greu, grav* and *grave*; *Ie, linie* and *lenjuri*; *Lup* and *lupus*; *Mascur, mascul* and *macho*; *Mărunt, minut, minută* and *menu*; *Miază, miez, mediu, mediu, medie, media* and *medius*; *Muc* and *mucus*; *Nou, nov-ă, novă* and *neon*; *Ospăți* and *ospiciu*; *Poamă* and *pom*; *Poartă, portă, port* and *porto*; *Primar, premier* and *premieră*; *Solz, soldă, solid, sol, solidus* and *jold*.

The bibliography (p. 345-354) and a comprehensive *Index* (355-447) make the structure of the work complete.

The present book joins the series of those that bring an essential contribution to the deciphering of the history of words, addressing, as the author himself confesses (p. 37) all who wish to be trained and fully aware of the management of the language that they speak, getting to know its reproduction and self-defence mechanisms.