The Syntax of Old Romanian – Gabriela Pană Dindelegan (ed.) – 2016.
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The extensive volume reviewed is, as the editors themselves state, a "book that provides the first comprehensive overview of the syntax of old Romanian written in English and targeted at a non-Romanian readership". However, in my opinion, the usefulness of this book extends to all the researchers interested in the domains of Synchronic Syntax or/and Historical Linguistics, but also in studying the Romance languages. Published in the series entitled "Oxford Studies in Diachronic and Historical Linguistics" (edited by Adam Ledgeway and Ian Roberts), and dedicated to the Romanian Academy, *The Syntax of Old Romanian* is a collective work that brought together 22 linguists and was designed as a continuation of *The Grammar of Romanian* (OUP, 2013). Most of the authors are researchers at the "Iorgu Iordan – Alexandru Rosetti" Institute of Linguistics of the Romanian Academy (Bucharest), being coordinated by Professor Gabriela Pană Dindelegan.

In order to understand and describe the syntactic system of Old Romanian, the authors use an extensive corpus of texts, covering three centuries of language evolution, more precisely from the beginning of the 16th c., the date of the earliest attested Romanian texts, until the end of the 18th c., when conventionally starts the period of Modern Romanian. This impressive corpus, containing 115 texts of various stylistic types (see *Appendix 1*, pp. 639-648), provided a great number of examples for the description of the morphosyntactic phenomena investigated. As the publishing rules were very restrictive – only 700 pages –, the editors had the inspiration of including the remaining examples in an ONLINE APPENDIX of the book, available at www.lingv.ro → *The Syntax of Old Romanian.* examples that were included in *The online annexes*. This will definitely become a very important resource for the researchers interested in various aspects of the Romanian language.

From a methodological point of view, the authors use, as I previously anticipated, the corpus analysis, every linguistic aspect being described from a both diachronic and synchronic perspective, and using the theoretical instruments of modern grammar. In addition, the morphosyntactic features revealed by the Old

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Romanian (henceforth OR) texts are permanently compared to those of present-day Romanian (either in its standard (written) version, or in its dialectal version) or to those of other Romance languages. Explanations and arguments are provided for the usages and the historical development undergone by these features, and also for their partial preservation in the dialects. I believe that the primary motivation for this approach was to demonstrate how much of the language has remained stable over time, rather than merely to assist the reader in his or her understanding of Old Romanian. The editors/authors were aware that their work will often be used by readers whose first language is other than Romanian, and therefore they tried to relate Old Romanian structures to those of our nearest relatives – the Romance varieties.

The volume is structured in twelve chapters, preceded by a double Preface (a *Series Preface* (p. xxii), written by Adam Ledgeway and Ian Roberts, and a *Preface* (pp. xxiii-xxv) of the Romanian editor Gabriela Pană Dindelegan), a list of *Abbreviations and conventions*, and also by some biographical notes of the *Contributors*, and symmetrically followed by *Appendix 1* (pp. 639-648), *Appendix 2* (p. 649), *References* (pp. 650-680), and an *Index* (pp. 681-691), in accordance with the regular academic requirements. The ten important chapters of the book (excluding the first one, the *Introduction*, and the last one, the *Conclusions*) cover the most relevant descriptive linguistic aspects and chart the whole realm of the (morpho)syntax of Old Romanian.

Thus, in a very particular way, the introductory chapter has three parts: the first one (pp. 1-7), written by Emanuela Timotin, consists of a presentation of the corpus, insisting on the types of texts, their dating, and provenance. In the second part (pp. 7-9), Camelia Stan describes very synthetically the main phonological features of OR (inventory of phonemes – vowels and consonants – and the diatopic distribution of their allophones). Martin Maiden is the author of the third subsection of this chapter (pp. 9-13), in which he briefly outlines the morphological system of OR.

In the second chapter, entitled *The verb and its arguments: the root clause* (pp. 14-231), Rodica Zafiu and six co-authors describe a series of OR verbal features, starting with the TAM system, with the use of pronominal clitics, and continuing with the presentation of the syntactic frame and variation of verbs. A special attention is given in this chapter to the argument structure, the authors describing the most important syntactic constituents of a verb phrase: the subject, the direct object, the secondary direct object, the indirect object, and the prepositional object. The investigated aspects for each of these arguments were: the selecting verbs, their lexical features, their realizations, the word order, as well as some specific characteristics, such as the emphasis and focalisation discourse mechanisms of the subject (subject doubling, topicalization, left dislocation, and hanging topic) or the variation with *p(r)e*-marking and the generic reading of the direct object. The subject(ive) predicative and the object(ive) predicative

complements are discussed in the sub-section dedicated to the *property-denoting complements*, and the chapter ends with the constructions involving overall clausal structure, namely passive constructions, middle and anaphoric reflexives, reciprocal constructions, and adverbal possessive dative clitics. The verbal domain is also the focus of Isabela Nedelcu, Adina Dragomirescu and Dana Niculescu in chapter three of this volume (pp. 232-287). They investigate the four *non-finite verb forms* of OR – the infinitive, the supine, the participle, and the gerund –, and the aspects concerning only one non-finite verbal form (such as the structures involving the long and short infinitive or those with supine) or more than one non-finite form (such as control and raising constructions, the competition between the finite and non-finite forms).

Chapter four of the book, *The nominal phrase* (pp. 288-393), presents the morphosyntactic behaviour of the nominal phrase internal constituents. Thus, the analysis starts with the determiners, more precisely with the definite and indefinite articles, the demonstratives, the determiner *cel*, and the alternative and identity determiners. Camelia Stan concludes in this subsection that the most important aspects concerning the syntax of the determiners are "the multiple expression of the enclitic definite article, the multiple marking of case by the enclitic article, and the proclisis of the feminine marker *ei*" (p. 303). A special attention is given to the polydefinite structures, and also to the partitive phrase, Gabriela Pană Dindelegan investigating the contexts that involve the partitive *de*, which progressively diminished its uses from the beginning of the 16th c. until the end of the 18th c., when it reached its lowest frequency. Pronominal possession, (numerical and non-numerical) quantifiers, (restrictive and non-restrictive) modifiers, appositions and nominal classifiers, nominalizations, the licensing of nominal ellipsis, and nominal intensifiers are other important aspects of the nominal phrase very rigorously examined in this chapter by the other three co-authors: Alexandru Nicolae, Raluca Brăescu and Andra Vasilescu.

The next contribution, *Adjectives and adjectival phrases* (pp. 394-413), belongs to Raluca Brăescu, who makes a detailed presentation of the OR adjective, based on the following issues: the morphological and syntactic variation, the definiteness agreement patterns, the postnominal and prenominal adjectival complementation. As concerns the word order of adjectival modifiers, the author remarks that "there are no clear rules of ordering", and that, compared to the present-day language, "it exhibits a higher degree of DP-internal word order variation" (p. 413). The last part of this chapter is devoted to OR degree configurations, and to the process of grammaticalization underwent by the degree markers of comparative and superlative.

Carmen Mîrzea Vasile's chapter, *Adverbs and adverbial phrases* (pp. 414-423), the sixth in the book, deals with the typology of the adverbs in the OR (in comparison to the Modern Romanian (MR)), with the internal and external syntax of adverbial phrases. In addition, the adverbial grading is investigated, and the results

of the analysis proved that, although MR and OR use "the same degree patterns", the inventory of the degree markers and their degree of grammaticalization is quite different (p. 418). Still, unlike MR, which uses only weak adverbs (*și* 'also; immediately', *cam* 'about', *mai* 'also; still', *prea* 'too', *tot* 'still'), in order to dislocate complex verb forms, OR uses also full lexical adverbs, such as *rău* 'badly' or *(mai) bine* 'better'.

In the next chapter – *Prepositions and prepositional phrases* (pp. 424-443) –, Isabela Nedelcu sets as her goal the presentation of the prepositions' behaviour in OR, as well as the changes in the inventory and properties of linguistic items in the passage from Old to Modern Romanian. Besides the attention given to the inventory and the polysemic nature of the prepositions, the researcher focuses on the syntactic restrictions imposed by prepositions (heads of the prepositional phrases) to their complements (case, determination, and number restrictions). From this point of view, it is underlined that in the first OR period "the status of the subcategorized preposition was not fixed" (p. 443), and that many of these lexical items were in competition because of the similarities of their forms.

Coordination and coordinating conjunctions (pp. 444-462) is the title of the eighth chapter of the volume, in which Blanca Croitor puts forth a description of the OR syntactic structures based on coordination. The analysis is based on five types of coordinative relations: conjunctive, disjunctive, adversative, conclusive, and alternative. The inventory of coordinators that express each of these types is very closely described, most of them being preserved in Modern Romanian, while others (such as *e* or *i* 'and') being restricted or lost. The other aspects treated by the researcher in this chapter are: the repetition of conjunctions vs. juxtaposition, the asymmetry of the conjuncts, the phenomenon of split coordination, the interferences between coordination and subordination, and the use of coordinators as sentence connectors especially in literary texts from OR.

The OR *complex sentences* (based on subordination) are described in the next chapter (pp. 463-561), co-authored by Mihaela Gheorghe, Andreea Dinică, Rodica Zafiu, and Oana Uță Bărbulescu. The presentation starts with the complement clauses and the complementizers selected by the heads of the matrix clauses in order to express the syntactic relation of subordination. The mechanism of relativization is also the focus of this chapter, and a special attention is given to the description of clausal adjuncts, comparative clauses and constructions. The series of adjunct clauses is opened by the temporal and location clauses – called *situative adjuncts* (*GALR* 2008: 487, *our transl.*) –, which were characterized by a very rich inventory of connectives, then the manner clauses are examined, although "manner is prototypically expressed at phrasal level" (p. 500). Each of the subsections devoted to these adjuncts, as well as those investigating the causal, purpose, result, conditional, and concessive clauses contain a significant number of examples, and many quantitative analyses, statistics, that give substance and authenticity to the qualitative analyses. This perspective is based on Biber's observation that

"quantitative analyses give a solid empirical foundation to the findings; non-quantitative analyses are required for the interpretation. Either type of analysis in isolation gives an incomplete description" (1988, 52).

Alexandru Nicolae's contribution, *Word order and configurationality* (pp. 562-575), is meant to shed light on another important syntactic phenomenon, which is the order of the constituents in a nominal, adjectival, verbal or clausal domain. The corpus analysis results proved the fact that "OR displayed freer word order than MR (…), and allowed non-local feature checking" (p. 574). As concerns the configurationality, the researcher notes that there is evidence of a discourse-configurational grammar, and that OR should be considered an intermediate stage in the passage from Latin (non)-configurational/discourse-driven syntax to configurational syntax existing in MR.

The eleventh chapter of the book – *Clausal organization and discourse phenomena* (pp. 576-628) – is the collaborative work of seven authors of the volume, and tackles the following discursive issues: polar and wh-interrogatives, indirect interrogatives, exclamatory constructions, negation and negative constructions, presentative constructions, cognate constructions, feminine singular pronouns with neutral value, and appellation and forms of address. This chapter also throws into prominence the special uses of repetitive constructions, found both in the translated religious texts, and in the original texts.

The volume ends with a chapter of *Conclusions* (pp. 629-637), that summarizes the findings and highlights the main OR features, as well as the most important structural changes appeared in the passage to the next level – the Modern Romanian. Gabriela Pană Dindelegan and Adina Dragomirescu carefully collect the partial conclusions from the end of each subsection of the volume, and outline the complex results of the corpus analyses.

In conclusion, as a reviewer, I appreciate the editors' effort in bringing together the works of a significant number of established authors in the field of Romanian language, in order to create a magnificent volume that provides a complete study of the syntax of Old Romanian. I particularly appreciate the fact that the book is well written and perfectly organised, with at least one chapter dedicated to each important morphosyntactic phenomenon, with a large number of examples glossed and translated, so even non-specialists of the Romanian language can understand them. Additionally, very useful tables and statistics make the analyses even clearer and convincing. The authors use a typological or comparative perspective, focusing on those phenomena that are considered specific to Old Romanian, and employing a modern syntactic framework. Another important feature and advantage of this volume is given by the extended analyses of syntactic variation or based on the grammaticalization theory, and all these aspects make the volume attractive to a wide audience. Last, but not least, I consider this book a valuable source of information about the development of Romanian language and a

welcome addition to the growing context of current research in the history of the Romance languages.

References

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