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## ORTHODOXY AND CULTURE, TRADITION AND ROMANIAN SPIRIT OVER THE CENTURIES. APOLOGETICS IDEAS IN THE THOUGHT OF DMITRI CANTEMIR

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The present research tries to underline the connection between the cultural testament and the orthodox tradition and reveals the importance and actuality and also the necessity of religious education in the life of the young generation. In this concern, our great Christian philosopher Constantin Noica, in his book “Pages about the Romanian Soul”, speaks about the *historical axis* of the orthodox faith in which there are placed the traditions and the Romanian soul over the centuries. He offers as an example three important personalities, apologists of the culture and “Romanian spirit, brilliant thinkers of our people: Neagoie Basarab, Dmitri Cantemir and Lucian Blaga”. This process of becoming is concentrated on three spiritual landmarks, identified in the works of these three great men.

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To describe the Romanian descending into the history and the leaving of the vision (...) says Constantin Noica, I choose three different cultural moments: the former from the XVI century, the next from the XVIII century and the last one from the XX century. In the first example we can see a conscience orientated to absolute (...) In the other command the crisis and the self-insufficiency that is revealed in the same conscience in the historical character. And the third cultural moment tries to bring a reconciliation between the eternal plan and the one of Romanian historicity, but it ends by being a statement of struggle towards our cultural values.<sup>1</sup>

About Dimitri Cantemir has been written and certainly will be written hundreds of pages. Important exponent of the humanist culture, laminated man, great scholar and very good theologian,<sup>2</sup> the Moldavian prince is successfully present and active in the historical, religious and apologetic perspectives of our people. He fulfill this special work in the letter and spirit of the Holy Scripture being “born and increase within the Orthodox Church from Moldavia”. This made him a real apologist of the orthodox faith which has placed it beyond the other plans of his scientific research. Moreover, in his thinking, “the orthodoxy” signifies also *liberty*, because “this part of the Christian Church was contemplated by Cantemir as temple of the Christian liberty. Therefore the apology of Christian people is the same with «the act of defending of our national being». On this dimensions, «the symbol of the Cross, as one of his contemporary used to say, became the flag of (Christian) law» and also the banner of fatherland”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C. Noica, *Pagini despre sufletul românesc*, București 2014, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> „Unlike his ancestors, Dmitry Cantemir was remarked by the variety of information, by the magnitude of his work and by his universal notoriety. He was the synthesis of our old culture, being appreciated by the Steward Cantacuziono for the importance of his culture. Nicolae Iorga considers him a universal man, a genial and polyvalent humanist. Prince Cantemir was not only a man of culture, but he had a very intensity religious life, writing many theological books” (PS Prof. Univ. Dr. Irineu Slătineanu, *Cuvânt înainte la Ș. Reșceanu, Ortodoxie și gândire religioasă în opera lui Dumitrie Cantemir*, Craiova 1999, p. 1).

<sup>3</sup> N. Chițescu, *Ortodoxia în opera lui Dumitrie Cantemir*, „Glasul Bisericii” 9–10 (1973), p. 1097–1098.

In this context, the religious education had a major importance in the cultural and apologetic formation of the Moldavian prince. His first professor was Jeremy Cacavela, that “known to dominate his soul and to give it a Christian direction such that the first book of Cantemir: *The fight of the soul with the wise or the fight of soul with the body (Divanul sau gâlceava înțeleptului cu lumea sau giudețul sufletului cu trupul)* is an admirable work of Christian spirituality on the biblical theme *vanity of vanities, all is vanity*, from the Book of Jove”.<sup>4</sup> Later, when he was only 15 years old, he followed the Theological Academy of the Ecumenical Church of Constantinople, where he was sent as a pledge for his family. This school was famous for its encyclopedic character. “Here the prince had learned alongside literature, mathematics, astronomy, physics and medicine, and dialectics, rhetoric or homiletics, Christian moral, patristic dogma etc., according to the curriculum of the high courses of the Academy, and also other additional courses like reading and knowing the liturgical books and the Holy Bible”.<sup>5</sup> All this acquired knowledge will be useful in his future work, especially the theological one where he used frequently the Holy Scripture. That’s why he always thought that the Scripture was “the spring of all the divine knowledge”.<sup>6</sup>

The outstanding intellectual capacity develops and grows up inside the humanist thinker and this important quality was successfully integrated in his written work. Therefore, he managed very easily to express his vast culture using the dialects that he knows very well, the most of them “learned in the school of life”. All this converges into the definition of the humanist character of his entire work. In this context

the humanist genesis of the Moldavian prince cannot be separated by the influences of: Nicolae Milescu, Miron Costin, Metropolitan Dosoftei, and Constantin Cantacuzino (...) A very serious preparation stood at the basis of the work and personality of Cantemir and thereby he accu-

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<sup>4</sup> E. Vasilescu, *Apologeți creștini. Români și străini*, București 1942, p. 128.

<sup>5</sup> N. Chițescu, *Ortodoxia în opera lui Dimitrie Cantemir*, p. 1100.

<sup>6</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Divanul*, ed. V. Căndea, București 1969, Cartea III, p. 358–360.

mulated a brilliant intelligence, love for work, willpower and patience in a favorable cultural environment.<sup>7</sup>

Beyond all this, Dimitrie Cantemir cannot forget his apologetic mission in the context of the true confessions of faith of the Orthodox Church. A very important example is his struggle to promote the Orthodoxy in front of the rational *influences of the occidental scholastics*. The cultural and academic status that he achieved is in fact a living confession of faith in the historical context of his time. His intellectual formation is in part related to the Renaissance period and to the occidental spirit. For all these, his apologetic attitude remains favourable to the orthodox creed and to the cultural byzantine tradition. In this regard Cantemir expresses himself very emotionally about the Orthodox Academy from Constantinople, saying that “In this Great School you can learn the philosophy and its parts as well as the other science, all of this in the pure and antique Greek language”. Therefore, he is very proud to learn in the place where they learned Joseph Carofilu, theologian and philosopher, Blasiu Schaevofilax, the famous preacher, Antoniu and Spantoniou, all of them peripatetic philosophers. From Iaconiniu Dmitry Cantemir learned also philosophy and from Alexander Mavrocordat he understood the mysteries of medicine, science and the beauty of theology.<sup>8</sup>

In consequence, one can say that the theological and cultural value of Byzantine tradition, pieces of his polyvalent intellectual formation, represents the basis of his apologetic beliefs. In this way, knowing the occidental valences from his education, Cantemir had demonstrated that “the purity of orthodoxy” is much more precious than the autonomous rationality of the medieval scholastic. This reality denotes a lot of concrete examples taken from the religious history of his people, showing that Moldavia “has never seen a heretic or a heresy and much less it cannot develop something like that, probably because this people didn’t want to know about the scholastic theology and about the other sophistic crafts of dialectics, but they believed that the simple words of *Scripture* and

<sup>7</sup> C. Mihălcescu, *Umanistul Dimitrie Cantemir*, în Revista „Mitropolia Olteniei” 9–10 (1973), p. 736.

<sup>8</sup> Ș. Reșceanu, *Ortodoxie și gândire religioasă*, p. 147; E. Țarălungă, *Dimitrie Cantemir*, București 1989, p. 56.

the teaching of the *Holy Fathers* are enough even without school for the salvation of soul".<sup>9</sup>

Related with this aspect, we will try to analyze firstly the theological thesis of Dmitri Cantemir. His work uses many elements of: *Dogmatic* (in his "Metaphysic", "The Description of Moldavia" and "Loca Obscura"), of *Moral* (in "Divanul" and "Letter to Count Golovkin about Conscience"), *Apologetic* and *History of Religions* (in "Sistema", "The Curan" and "The Panagiric").<sup>10</sup> Likewise are and the rest of his writings: "The Sacrosanctis", "The Logic", "The System or the Drawing of the Islamic Religion", "Loca Obscura in Catechisi". The last one is a veritable catechism about the teachings from the Catholic Reform.

#### BIBLICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL CONFLUENCES IN THE THINKING OF DMITRI CANTEMIR

In the thinking of our great scholar Orthodoxy remains always *the unwavering philosophy*. To demonstrate this reality he looks always the letter of the Holy Scripture. Almost in each of his works he uses the word of Bible to sustain and demonstrate the reality of "Truth". More than that, Cantemir understands the interpretation of the Scripture in the language of the people, "a fact of absolutely necessity. That is why he praises Vasile Lupu who, founding the Romanian typography, allowed the reading «in his country language starting with the Gospels and the apostolic writings and after that with the Holy Liturgy»<sup>11</sup> ... Cantemir

<sup>9</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, p. 339. In this context, Rev. Professor Ștefan Reșceanu consider that the interconfessional evaluation of Cantemir are sustained firstly through the doctrine elements. Therefore, he know very well the differences between the Orthodox and Catholic Church (see: Ș. Reșceanu, *Ortodoxie și gândire religioasă*, p. 152).

<sup>10</sup> In *Descriptio Moldaviae*, says Nicolae Chițescu, Cantemir analyses many liturgical, canonical or administrative problems. At the same time, in his writings „Monarhiarum physica examinatio” and in „Incrementa atque Decrementa”, he reach to the apologetic and historical subject. N. Chițescu, *Ortodoxia în opera lui Dumitrie Cantemir*, p. 1101.

<sup>11</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, transl. P. Pandrea, București 1956, p. 290.

himself, since childhood, was educated and learned from the Holy Scripture ... when he was young, in the evening, Dmitri standing beside his illiterate father «read them from the Holy Scripture or from the words of Saint John Hrisostom». <sup>12</sup> That is why all his writings prove a very good knowledge of the Scripture and also the permanent relation to the divine word”.<sup>13</sup>

His biblical preoccupation completes his vast culture that he acquired over the years. Cantemir is therefore known as an “exegete of the sacred books and of the Holy Fathers because, since 1712, when it was formed a commission for the revision of the Holy Scripture, Teofilact Lopatinski - rector of Theological Academy from Moscow, from 1710, and coordinator of this commission, that studied in Constantinople, colleague with Nicolae Milescu and friend with Dmitri Cantemir – proposed the tzar to put this commission «all the specialists in the old languages and inspired in the problem of biblical interpretation». Among them was also Dmitri Cantemir. His notes from the text of the Bible of Șerban were very important in that context”.<sup>14</sup>

In the work “The Fight of the wise with the world, or the fight of the soul with the body” (1698), Cantemir makes the best use of the letter of the Scripture in the religious-moral meaning offering to his readers a true example of Christian spirituality. In the context of his eve, this work was regarded like “the only original philosophical work in the old Romanian language, being filled with many biblical verses, forming a true handbook of Christian behavior”.<sup>15</sup> More than that, the work of the Moldavian prince can be considered as an authentic apology of the spiritual life. “The temptations that come from the world and from the body are healed through the word of the Scripture: «You do research in the holy Writings, in the belief that through them you get eternal life;

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<sup>12</sup> N. Iorga, *Istoria Literaturii Române în Secolul al XVIII-lea (1688-1821)*, vol. I, București 1969, p. 264.

<sup>13</sup> V. Mihoc, *Sfânta Scriptură în opera lui Dimitrie Cantemir*, „Studii Teologice” 5-6 (1973), p. 342.

<sup>14</sup> A. Ostapov, S. Socolov, *Dimitrie Cantemir și urmașii săi în Rusia, exemplu de demnitate și patriotism*, „Biserica Ortodoxă Română”, 7-8 (1974), p. 937.

<sup>15</sup> E. Vasilescu, *Apologeți creștini*, p. 128.

and it is those Writings which give witness about Me» (John 5, 39)»<sup>16</sup> Therefore, this was the direction that the wise prince used in his own experience. Putting his pleading in the context of an imaginary “faith”, he showed that: “the world is created by God”, that it had left the proximity of the divine grace through the original sin and from these reasons the wickedness and trouble had come and stayed in it. “*The world*: Am I not smart and full of all the conscience? *The wise*: Your wisdom is mere madness (I. Corinthians 3, 19). *The world*: You want likewise the answer to this problem? Am I not full of all the good? *The wise*: Yes you are, but I know that you are also “the vanity of vanities and all is vanity” (Ecclesiastic 1, 1). *The world*: Does, what kind of measure worse than all the evil you associate me with? That I receive the creation from the hand of God Himself, seeing that I was good? (Genesis 1, 31). *The wise*: That is also true that by this word of God you are good. Because God, the Almighty, didn’t make the evil in the world, but He did all his creation good. However, the man was beguiled by the beauty and the sweetness of the mortal tree”.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, the anthropological problem is evaluated from the Christological point of view. Cantemir shows that through the divine Incarnation, “the New Adam” unbound the original sin. Therefore, the internal transfiguration of man is extended in the external reality of cosmos and with him the entire world if laminated and warmed by grace. Beyond all this, “the faith” stays and the wise most keep himself awake in the front of “the danger of darkness” of the tempting world.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, “The Divan” has also a philosophical content. This aspect is developed by PhD Daniel Mazilu from the Christian University “Dmitry Cantemir” of Bucharest. According to him, the work of the wise Moldavian prince is “the first Romanian philosophical writings”. His opinion is that, “in contrast with the occidental literature, in which the tradition of Greek philosophy was received through many translations from Plato, since the XVII centuries, the Middle Eve was extended to us with the philosophical influence, from the end of the XVII centuries.

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<sup>16</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Divanul*, București 2004, p. 25; reproduced by Dimitrie Cantemir, *Opere complete*, vol. I, *Divanul*, ed. V. Căndea, București 1974.

<sup>17</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Divanul*, p. 36.

<sup>18</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Divanul*, p. 39.

It is a serious reason to consider the novelty character of this work. It is a work characterized by the same spirit of the Italian Renaissance in which Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola conceived the symbiosis between Plato and the Christian religion the start of a new eve, initiated by the neoplatonic Academy from Florența in the second half of the XV centuries. Even the style of the work of Cantemir is similar to the style of many books from the period of Renaissance. It is about an imaginative dialogue between a wise man and the *world*, on the model of Nicolaus Cusanus and Giordano Bruno (...) Also, in the same way as it happens in the works of Nicolaus Cusanus and Charles de Bouvelles, the intention of Cantemir is to give a conceptual and structural theme in the Christian religious battlefield”.<sup>19</sup>

In consequence, the work “Divanul” represents a valuable example in the dialogue between theology and philosophy developed within the junction between The East and the West. Dmitri Cantemir succeeds in, outstandingly, laying the word of the Bible in the context of contemporary necessities, revealing Him as the only way of transcending all these from the perspective of approaching the wise man of “the Truth”

“The dialog between theology and science” is another essential theme in the apologetic work of Cantemir. The writing “Sacrosanctae scientiae indepingibilis imago” (“The mystical image of the holy science”, written in 1700) reflects very well this dialog. Here Cantemir gives a theological interpretation to the most important coordinates of the natural knowledge, especially arguments from the Holy Scriptures. He shows that the purpose of each Christian is “the perfect knowledge, supernatural, that became possible through faith and that regards the incomprehensible word, being accomplished with the knowing of God and His will that is revealed in the divine Revelation”.<sup>20</sup> His theological beliefs about the role and the contents of the Revelation are described by numerous references in the *Account of Genesis*. Following an allegoric kind of interpretation, he fits his demonstration in the dialog with “the Old Wise Man” (that is in fact “the Creator of the world, the possessor of the true knowledge”).

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<sup>19</sup> D. Mazilu, *Influențe stoice și neoplatonice în “Divanul” lui Cantemir*, “Cogito” II 4(2010).

<sup>20</sup> N. Chițescu, *Ortodoxia*, p. 1102.

In this way, to show the logic of the creation, Cantemir uses “biblical and philosophical exegesis”. In this context, God is presented like “Creator of all the seeing and the unseeing things, because according to the doctrine of the truth, one is the author of the forms, one is the creator of the existence of things and one is the Father of the lights and the giver of life, that never will give His power to anyone; Yahweh is His name”.<sup>21</sup> He cannot forget neither of the prophet who confesses in the Holy Scripture about all of these. Therefore, the great Moses is named “supreme philosopher and theologian of the truth”.<sup>22</sup> In this context, we can observe the work of the great scholar hasn’t an original scientific character but moreover a metaphysical perspective. In their general content the Cantemir’s “Sacrosanctes” doesn’t have a direct purpose for the research of nature in a material direction, but rather “the research of God’s creation in the modesty of human intellect. The most important contribution of his writings isn’t the first anticipation of the modern science, but the act of defending the Orthodox belief with the arms of philosophy”.<sup>23</sup> This apologetic attitude of the Moldavian prince is very visible within a comparative evaluation between the prophane sciences and the discovery of the sacred science through which is “unlighted the labyrinth of science is unlighted and way we must prefer it”.<sup>24</sup>

The theme of the natural knowledge is reevaluated by Dmitri Cantemir in his treatise of *Logic*, named also in Latin: „Compendiolum universae Logices institutiones” (cca. 1701). Starting from the etymology of the word, Cantemir shows the authentic core of the Christian logic. It starts from the notion of *Logos*, which, as the *Spring of the truth*, giving the man, the correct direction in discovering his own reality and existence. In this book, Cantemir offers a complete retrospective about the history of logic from a philosophical point of view. Its purpose and authentic value were neglected for many times. Therefore, associated it with “the universal syllogism” of “the five voices of Porphyrius”, the Cantemir’s logic is presented in the end like “a synthesis of the concrete existences”. In this

<sup>21</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Metafizica*, transl. N. Locusteanu, București 1928, p. 237.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem; V. Mihoc, *Sfânta Scriptură*, p. 343.

<sup>23</sup> D. Popescu, *Timpul creației sacre în „Sacrosanctae scientiae indepingibilis imago” de Dimitrie Cantemir*, „Filosofică” 1 (2014), p. 52–53.

<sup>24</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Metafizica*, cap. I, 4, 5.

way, our scholar puts it in the relationship with the human rationality, showing that “our intellect has many operations. Firstly, it is a simple one, because it conceives in a simple and abstract way the material or the immaterial things, or the one who are independent of any composed things, like: God, man. The second one is the composition or the division, such as: God is infinite, man is a rational being. In the end, the third is the intellectual speaking, like: God is like this, so is undefined. Man is like this, so is capable of understanding and science”.<sup>25</sup> In the first chapter of the third part, entitled *About the first and the highest category, meaning about essence or substance*, Cantemir proceeds with the most profound part of the philosophical interpretation. Therefore, he makes the difference between the existence *ens a se* (meaning the independent existence) and the existence *ens ab alio* (meaning the existence through another).<sup>26</sup> He goes forward and makes the difference between *essence* – “a thing that exists through itself, that it has no need of anything in its composition”, and *existence* – that defines “a thing that exists through itself having no need of anything in his composition, or something that cannot exist through itself and it has his existence in someone else”. Therefore, Cantemir says that “all these categories are different by the existence and however (like the one who has *supreme genre*, from which has the insignificant species and subaltern gens), the existence isn’t their kind because this genre share with the species not only the name, but also their definition”.<sup>27</sup>

The apologetic attitude of our great scholar reflects especially his position towards the protestant Reform. His entire orthodox confession is confirmed in the Latin writing *Loca obscura in cahechisi...* (1720), a polemical replay to a catechism published in the same year on St. Petersburg by the archbishop Pskov Teofan Prokopovici (1681–1736), with the title “The First Teaching for Children”.<sup>28</sup> The difference of approach is evident

<sup>25</sup> Dimitrie Cantemir, *Mic compendiu asupra întregii învățături a logocii*, București 1995, p. 98.

<sup>26</sup> About the philosophical concepts of *ens a se* and *ens ab alio* speaks the Romanian scholar Nae Ionescu in his *Curs de Filosofie Religiei*, ed. M. Diaconu, București s.a., p. 143–145.

<sup>27</sup> Dimitrie Cantemir, *Mic compendiu asupra întregii învățături a logocii*, p. 117.

<sup>28</sup> G. Mihăilescu, *Un apologet paradoxal al Ortodoxiei: D. Cantemir în Loca obscura*, „Tabor” 2 (2012), p. 70.

in this work because the author is transposed from the beginning “in the position of defender of the doctrine and traditions of the Orthodox Church towards the Lutheran and Calvinist way of thinking and also towards the Catholic point of view”.<sup>29</sup> The answers and polemic developed by the Moldavian prince beyond the doctrinaire error promoted in the work of Prokopovici has a very strong theological basis, developing different themes about: the Decalogue, the worship of the Saints, of the Holy Angels, about the worship of the Holy Cross, of the Holy Icons, the veneration of the Mother of God, the worship of Saint Relics or about the theology of the Saint Sacraments in the Orthodox Church. Therefore, he shows that the doctrinal authority must always remain in the hand of the Church, that will “high and explain (the Law of faith) (...) because the Word of God is really the Word of God if his real and authentic meaning was shown by the Church”.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Cantemir shows that the understanding of the divine truths is directly related to “the written and unwritten tradition of the Saint Apostles and of the Church as well as the decisions of the universal and particular Councils”.<sup>31</sup> With this authority, the Orthodox Church permanently teaches the soteriological way of thinking that is shared to the believers from their childhood. That’s why, through this work, Dmitri Cantemir offers a very important and pedagogic hand book which is valuable until today. In his argumentation, he starts from the hypothesis that “from birth all the people are good and well-conceived, but that, starting from adolescence, according to the moral law, any man is subjected to the temptations and that is why we must learn them the Christian behavior, to listen theirs teachers, to trust in the words of the Church and *to keep the commandments*,<sup>32</sup> knowing that the one who says that he knows God, but doesn’t keep His commandments, is a *liar*,<sup>33</sup> because *the faith without facts is dead*”<sup>34,35</sup>

<sup>29</sup> T. Bodogae, *Dimitrie Cantemir, pedagog și teolog ortodox, comentariu la Dimitrie Cantemir „Loca obscura”*, transl. T. Bodogae, „BOR, 9–10 (1973), p. 1064.

<sup>30</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, p. 340.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem, p. 341.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. In. 14, 15; 15, 20.

<sup>33</sup> I In. 2, 4.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Iac. 2, 26.

<sup>35</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Loca obscura*, p. 1064.

In conclusion, the reaction of the Moldavian prince to the challenges of the occidental proselytism “is categorical and without holds barred”. He asserts openly that this movement must be forbidden in the Moldavian Church because it is a real danger especially for the young people.<sup>36</sup> His polemical spirit is therefore a very important characteristic of the apologetic profile. He is “not only an unconditional supporter of the dogmas, of the orthodox teachings and traditions, but also a humanist scholar, an excellent wielder of rhetoric and, not in the least, a brave polemist (knowing the privileged position of Theofan Prokopovici that was favored directly by tzar in the problems of doctrine and ecclesiastical administration)”.<sup>37</sup>

#### THE REASSESSMENT OF THE ROMANIAN SPIRIT

In the historical context the work of our great scholar may be considered, through the contents of its message, a real evaluation of the Romanian spiritual conscience. “With Cantemir starts the critical spirit”, says in one of his works the Christian philosopher Constantine Noica.<sup>38</sup> This important aspect of his work is developed mostly in „*Descriptio Moldaviae*” (1715). Therefore, between the most important characteristics of our people, Cantemir names “the orthodox religion and the hospitality”. The first one has always been the element of resistance in the struggle for liberty and happiness. Moreover, the orthodox faith was the depository and the amount of the spiritual and cultural values. At the same time, this spiritual ethos generated the resort of the linguistic features in the future Romanian estate. Likewise, beside the list with defects, that we can also find it in “*Descriptio Moldaviae*”, Cantemir says that “the Romanian people had known to conserve his civil and ecclesiastical laws”.<sup>39</sup>

The apologetic dimension of „*Descriptio Moldaviae*” describes the Romanian ethos. Dmitri Cantemir believes that the *steadfastness in the faith* is the most important characteristic of the orthodoxy. The subject

<sup>36</sup> Ș. Reșceanu, *Ortodoxie și gândire religioasă*, p. 162.

<sup>37</sup> G. Mihăilescu, *Un apologet al Ortodoxiei*, p. 74.

<sup>38</sup> C. Noica, *Pagini despre sufletul românesc*, p. 20.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 26.

is developed in one special chapter, named “About the religion of the Moldovans”. Here he can find the description of the relationship between the orthodox tradition and other external influences over the time. None of it has accepted in the faith of the Romanian believers. Therefore, “the simplicity of the Gospel and the teaching of the Holy Fathers are enough for the salvation of souls”.<sup>40</sup> For the Moldovans “the Confession of Faith and the Orthodox Creed is used in the liturgical celebration in the way it was conceived by the Holy Fathers at the first Ecumenical Council from Nicaea and the wrong adding of Catholics *and from the Son* is removed. About the procession of the Holy Spirit, they believe just like Saint John the Evangelist says with the words of our Savior Jesus Christ. But, because they don’t want to accept the procession from the Son, because the Holy Scripture doesn’t say anything clear about it, just as little uses in their celebration the addition of Palamas: «from the Father alone». They have seven Sacraments. At the Holy Communion are held all the ordained by the Holy Fathers Basil and John Chrysostom. At this celebration they use only *leavened bread* and share with both elements: with bread and wine. They honor the icons of the saints, but not carved, but painted and also say that God’s only is worthy of religious celebration (...) Do not recognize the Purgatorial, but believe that the little sins can be forgiven after the death through the prayers of the Church and through the alms. They read the Holy Scripture in Church according to the interpretation of the seven interprets; they deny the version Vulgata and all the other interpretations. Are fasting, beside Wednesday and Friday, four times on year at the establish time”.<sup>41</sup> Dmitri Cantemir is referring here to the teachings of Saint Peter Movilă Confession of Faith, which was approved in the pan *orthodox Council from Iași*, in 1642. From there he takes the main coordinates of an authentic orthodox confession which puts them in practice in his life and also in his work.

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<sup>40</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, p. 159.

<sup>41</sup> Dmitry Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, p. 196–198.

## CONCLUSION

We can say that Dmitry Cantemir was a great humanist scholar and also an important theologian. Through his pedagogical example he gives to the Romanian people “the first phenomenon of crisis from our spirituality, until then blanched and peaceful; not satisfied with himself, but satisfied with his destiny”.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, his work represents a very complete apology of the orthodox faith and of the Romanian spirit, showing that God is the center of our universe, that He is the supreme Wisdom and the fundament of our existence. Moreover, we are entitled to say that “through his genial capacity of synthesis between East and West, Dmitry Cantemir remains an example for all the diligent Romanian young people”.<sup>43</sup>

**Abstract.** Great man of culture, history and science Dmitry Cantemir, the prince of Moldavia was also a grate apologist of the Romanian religious traditions. In our study we try to underline this aspect from his writings, especially from his work *Descriptio Moldavie*. Therefore, we had followed the apologetics ideas from his most important works, like: *Divanul*, *Loca Obscura*, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, *Metafizica* and also from his *Logica*. In this context, the cultural and theological contribution of the great Moldavian scholar is very important from the orthodox theology. In the actual context, Dmitry Cantemir shows the perfect example in the accomplishment and conservation of the Romanian authentic spirit over the centuries.

**Key words:** Dmitry Cantemir; Christianity; Apologetic Theology; Romanian Cultural Traditions; Religious Dialog; Orthodox Thinking.

**Streszczenie. Prawosławie i kultura, tradycja i rumuński duch na przestrzeni wieków. Idee apologetyczne w myśli Dymitra Cantemira.** Wielki człowiek kultury, historii i nauki Dmitrij Cantemir, książę Mołdawii, był także wdzięcznym apologetą rumuńskich tradycji religijnych. W niniejszym artykule zostaje ukazany ten aspekt jego działalności, obecny w jego pismach, zwłaszcza w jego pracy *Descriptio Moldavie*. Dlatego

<sup>42</sup> C. Noica, *Pages about the Romanian Soul*, p. 20.

<sup>43</sup> Daniel, the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, *Dimitrie Cantemir – umanist ortodox și savant european – model permanent actual al tinerilor studioși*, message addressed on the occasion of the anniversary of the Christian University “Dmitry Cantemir” from Bucharest, 22 of October 2010, in the “Lumina” Paper, from 22 of October 2010.

przedstawiono zasadnicze idee apologetyki z jego najważniejszych dzieł, jak: *Divanul*, *Loca Obscura*, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, *Metafizica*, a także z jego *Logiki*. W tym kontekście kulturalny i teologiczny wkład wielkiego mołdawskiego uczonego jest bardzo ważny dla teologii prawosławnej. W aktualnym kontekście Dmitriy Cantemir pokazuje doskonały przykład realizacji i zachowania rumuńskiego autentycznego ducha na przestrzeni wieków.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Dmitrij Cantemir; teologia apologetyczna; rumuńskie tradycje kulturowe; dialog religijny; myśl prawosławna.

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