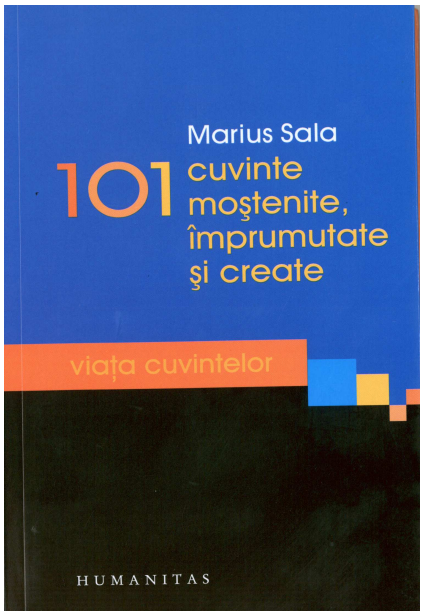
Marius Sala, *101 cuvinte moştenite, împrumutate şi create*, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 2010, 249 p. (Cristina Radu-Golea)



The book of Marius Sala, member of The Romanian Academy, *101 cuvinte moştenite, împrumutate şi create/101 inherited, borrowed and created words*, published by Humanitas Publishing House, in 2010, represents the "introduction" of a collection called *Viaţa cuvintelor/Words' Life*, as the author of the book and coordinator of the collection himself says (p. 10).

The first part includes general maters regarding the stages of word history – their birth, life and death. In fact, the author imagines "istoria, viaţa unui cuvânt ca pe o călătorie, cu o staţie de pornire şi una de destinaţie, care, în cazul nostru, este limba română"/"the history, the life of a word as a journey, having a point of departure and a destination, the latter being, in our case, the Romanian language" (p. 27). And the words "care au ca «staţie finală» limba română pot fi originare din limbi europene sau din limbi de pe alte continente. Nu este surprinzător că cele mai multe au provenit din latină sau greacă, cele două mari limbi care stau la baza civilizaţiei europene"/"whose 'destination' is Romanian can originate in European or non-European languages. It's not surprising that most of them derive from Latin or Greek, the two major languages which laid the foundation of the European civilisation" (p. 55). The link between language and society is very strong since "datele lexicului pot oferi informaţii cu privire la istoria populaţiei care vorbeşte limba respectivă"/"lexical data can provide information about the history of the population speaking that language" (p. 96).

The semantic fields method is used, being presented known words (inherited, borrowed or coined by using native elements) which are grouped into lexical domains – "pe de o parte, denumirile unor părţi ale corpului omenesc, denumiri de animale şi de culori, care sunt câmpurile semantice cel mai bine organizate şi mai conservatoare, dar, pe de altă parte, şi denumirile de mâncăruri şi denumirile obiectelor de îmbrăcăminte, care arată cât de strânsă este legătura dintre istoria societăţii şi istoria lexicului"/"on the one hand names of body parts, names of animals and

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colors, these being the best organised and conservative semantic fields and, on the other hand, names of foods and clothes, the latter showing the close connection between the history of human society and the lexicon history" (p. 97).

The destiny of the Romanian words that are selected and commented on is described by Marius Sala either by resorting to the direct etymology or to the indirect etymology (also called remote origin). Linguistic facts are well documented, the sources being first of all the Romanian language dictionaries, be they general or etymological, followed by Latin dictionaries such as Alfred Ernout and Antoine Meillet's *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine. Histoire des mots* (Paris, Librarie C. Klincksieck, 1959).

The exemplification of words' history is made in an elegant and comprehensible style, the charm of the presentation stirring the reader's curiosity and convincing him/her to read on, thus getting ever more interested in the linguistic details. For example, color names have an interesting history, which the author will make known to the readers by comparing the Romanian chromatic terms to those in other Romance languages. For instance, the Latin *ALBUS* was inherited in all Romance languages, but the meaning is different from the one it has in Romanian: Fr. *Aube*, It., Sp. *Alba* "dawn"; nevertheless, there is a Romanian expression where the word has the mentioned meaning: *intră alba în sat* (p. 120).

To linguists, the book provides essential details ("Limba tupí-guaraní este vorbită în Paraguay, precum şi în unele provincii din Argentina şi din Brazilia. În Paraguay, este limbă naţională alături de spaniolă; guaraní este limbă de comunicare, spaniola fiind limbă de cultură. Portugheza vorbită în Brazilia este puternic influenţată de limba tupí-guaraní"/"Tupí-guaraní is a language spoken in Paraguay and some provinces in Argentina and Brazil. In Paraguay, it is the national language together with Spanish; guaraní is the language of communication, Spanish being the language of cultural prestige. The Portuguese spoken in Brazil is strongly influenced by the tupí-guaraní language" – p. 90), the clarification of some etymological issues (the Romanian verb (*a*) *apuca* is considered to be the descendant of the Latin *aucupare* "to hunt birds by using traps" – p. 191), solution comparisons, the establishment of the status of some Romance words, the presentation of etymological doublets or the explanation of some word meanings ("*Stufatul*, mâncare din carne de miel, gătită cu fire de ceapă şi de usturoi verde; cuvântul este menţionat pentru prima dată într-un *Dicţionar român–german* al lui G.A. Polizu, apărut la Braşov în 1857"/"*Stufatul*, a dish made of lamb, green onions and garlic; the word is mentioned for the first time by G.A. Polizu, the author of a Romanian-German Dictionary/ *Dicţionar român–german*, published in Braşov in 1857" – p. 146).

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Marius Sala's book ends somehow atypically but on optimistic note, as it began, because the author suggests the readers to solve the exercises imagined by him: they are supposed to find the right solutions by using the information acquired while reading the book.

This volume, which is the first of a series of works on the lexicon, included in the collection *Viața cuvintelor/Words' Life*, is important because it provides synthetic information in an intelligent and pleasant manner. The perspective of the author on the presented material is rather large, since behind every 'story' we discover that Marius Sala, the specialist in Romance languages, is constantly doubled by Mariu Sala, the etymologist and historian.

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