INNOVATIONS WITHIN ISOLATION. REGRAMMATION AND/OR SUBJECTIVIZATION: LAT. *DE* IN ROMANIAN

MARIA M. MANOLIU

It is not surprising that Romanian, as an isolated area within the Romance world, has known specific innovations that brought further several developments known by all Romance languages, besides conservative trends, usually favored by contingent areal reinforcements,. One of these innovations is represented by the evolution of the Latin preposition DE 'from', 'of'. In all Romance languages, Lat. DE became a variety of markers, namely: (i) a preposed case marker and (ii) a connective combining with either another preposition or a conjunction. But in Romanian the preposition DE went beyond these functions. It has undergone a process of regrammation becoming a complementizer that introduces a subordinate clause with a finite verb in either the indicative or, rarely, the subjunctive. According to Andersen (2005), *regrammation* refers to a change by which a grammatical element, through reanalysis, is ascribed a different grammatical content (change within and among grammatical paradigms). The only semantic relational feature which could explain the astonishing diversification of Lat. DE in Romanian consists in its possibility of expressing a movement (physical or abstract) away from a starting point that is envisaged as being contingent with the moving object (physical or abstract) at its point of departure. Oral and areal tendencies for replacing nominalized forms of the verb with finite-forms could also provide favorable contexts for the use of DE as a complementizer. Additional pragmatic factors such as an implicature of strengthening the assertive illocutionary force of the preceding clause may account for the preservation in comparative and consecutive clauses in contemporary Romanian.

1. *DE* AS A PREPOSITION

In Old Romanian, the preposition *de* has a variety of functions: it may be a preposed free case marker (introducing attributes, predicative nouns, indirect objects or any other kind of Noun Phrase) or a part of a compound preposition. As in any other Romance language, it may express the following relations: agent,

RRL, **XL**, 1, p. 143–158, Bucureşti, 2006

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

origin (locative of provenance,)[1] 'whole/part' ('composition', 'inherent characteristics'[2]), quantifier[3], etc. In what follows we shall examine only those contextual values that are germane to those of clauses with a finite verb form, namely: attribute and adverbial phrases expressing purpose, goal or cause, comparative of superiority.

1.1. DE + N

(a) 'purpose, goal':

(i) attribute:

(1) *cuvinte foarte **de** folos şi **de** treabă către toţi creştinii*
words very of use and of need to all Christians
'words [that are] very much of use and need to all Christians' (Înv: 512)

(ii) predicative noun: 'goal: 'for', after the verb 'to be':

(2) *ce e **de** păcate şi **de** curăţie şi **de** prazdnice* (Coresi, CÎ: 16)
'what is for [repenting your] sins, and for cleansing, and for feasts'.

(b) comparative:

(3) Rom. *Şi dereptŭ şi mai mare **de** toţi oamenii* (Coresi, CÎ: 15)
'Both righteous and higher than all men' (noun modifier)

In Modern Romanian, comparative *de* has been replaced by its compound: *decât* (<*de* + *cât* 'how much'), which already occurs in old texts:

(4) *spre vrăjmaşii să avemŭ dragoste mai bună **decât** spre priatenii* (Înv: 515)
'we should have better love for [our] enemies than for [our] friends'

(5) *s-au făcut **decât** toate negrèţele şi **decât** toate întunèrecile mai negru şi mai întunecat* (Ivireanu: 118)
'he became blacker and darker than all the black things and than all the dark ones'.

[1] 'locative: of provenance':
O. Rom. *domnii **de** Ardeal* (Costin: 28) vs. *domnul Ardealului* (Costin: 25)
'The Kings of Transylvania'. king.the Transylvania.the:GEN
'the King of Transylvania'.

[2] (a)'composition':
O. Rom. *oameni cu inimă **de** ţărână* (Coresi, CÎ: 6)
Men with heart of dust
'men with a heart of dust'

(b) 'an inherent characteristic':
Rom. *un om tare **de** cap*
a man strong of head,
'a hardheaded man'.

[3] 'quantifier':
Rom. *3.000 **de** oameni* (Costin: 63)
3,000 of men' , i.e. '3000 men'.

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

1.2. Verb + DE + NP

As a verb modifier DE could introduce an indirect object, an agent complement, or an adverbial phrase:

(a) When introducing an indirect object, DE remains the preferred preposition till the present time:

(6) O. Rom.. *să- ş aducă aminte **de** Dumnezeu* (Înv: 525)
that- REFL:DAT remember of God
'to remember God'

Similar constructions can be found in other Romance languages (see: (7)).

(7) Fr. *Je me souviens **de** Paul*
Sp. *Me acuerdo **de** Pablo*
'I remember Paul'

(b) agent in a passive construction:

(8) Rom. *ce-mi erà dăruitŭ **de** Dumnezeu* (Coresi, CÎ: 6)
'that was given me by God'

(9) *care este **de** dânsul isprăvită* (Neculce: 40)
'which is finished by him'

(c) cause:

(10) O. Rom. *eu pieri **de** foame* (Coresi, CÎ: 21)
'I am perishing of hunger'

After verbs of feelings *de* can introduce the external cause of the feeling:

(11) '*Bucură-te, suflete, că eu mă bucur **de** tine*' (CS: 247)
'Rejoice, [my] soul, because I rejoice in you'

Compare also:

(12). Rom. *plângea **de** durere* Pg. *chorava **de** dor* Fr. *Il/elle pleurait **de** douleur*
'(s)he was weeping because of the pain',

where *de* introduces an NP referring to a physical cause.

If, after verbs of motion, other Romance languages also choose to introduce the point of departure by the reflex of *de*, Romanian prefers the compound *de la*. Compare (13) and (14), (15):[4]

(13) Fr. *Je viens de Madrid* Pg. *Venho de São Paulo*
Sp. *Vengo de Madrid* 'I come from São Paulo'
'I come from Madrid' .

(14). O. Rom. *Pasă **de la** mine, Satană*! (Înv: 523)
'Depart from me, Satan!'

[4] But see also the preposition *de* 'from' introducing an adverbial locative:
*şi depărtează omulŭ **de** Dumnezeu* (Coresi, CÎ: 15)
'and takes man away from God'.

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

(15) Rom. *Vin **de la** Bucureşti*
'I am coming from Bucharest'.

1.3. *De* in compounds

De also co-occurs with other connectives (prepositions, conjunctions or relative pronouns):

(16) Rom. *de la* (<Lat. *illac* 'there') 'from', *de* + *ca* (<Lat. *quia*) > *deaca, dacă* 'if', *de* + *şi* > *deşi* 'although', *de* + *ci*/ *ce* > *deci*/ *dece*, 'therefore'.

Cf. also Lat. *de unde* > Fr. *dont* 'of what, 'whose' (relative pronoun); Sp. *donde* 'where'.

In addition to the compound conjunctions, *de* forms part of a significant number of periphrases:

(17) *de ce* 'why', *de unde* 'from where', *de departe* 'from far away', *de demult* 'since long ago', etc.; Sp. Pg. *antes de* 'before', etc.

2. CONTEXTS FAVORING THE SPREAD OF *DE* AS A COMPLEMENTIZER

In Romanian, the preposition DE also became a clause connective, spreading from constructions where it introduces modifiers of nominalized variants of the verb (long infinitives, agentive nouns derived from verbal stems, past participles / adjectives) to constructions in which it precedes a non-finite verb (infinitive, supine) and then to constructions where it functions as a complementizer introducing a subordinate clause with a finite verb form in the indicative.

2.1. *De + N after nominalized forms of verbs*.

(i) Nominalized long infinitive + DE + N:

(18) ***iubirea de** dulceaţă* (Coresi, CÎ: 12) *vindecare **de** păcate* (Coresi, CÎ: 23)
'love of sweetness' 'healing of sins'

(ii) Agentive derivates with the suffix *-tor*, *-toare* + DE + *N*:

(19) *această* *folositoare* ***de*** *sufletŭ* *carte* (Coresi, CÎ: 2)
this useful of soul book
'this book useful for the soul' Cf. the verb *a folosi* 'to be useful to'

(20) ***de*** *oameni iubitoriulŭ* *Dumnezeu* (Coresi, CÎ: 23)
of people loving.the God .
'God the one who loves people' Cf. the verb *a iubi* 'to love'

(21) *pohtitoriul* ***de*** *bine* (Înv: 511) *făcătorĭul **de** minuni* (Ivireanu: 119)
'the one who wishes goodness' 'the doer of miracles'

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

Cf. *a pohti* ‘to wish / to desire’. Cf . *a face* ‘to do’

(iii) Past participles (passive) / adjectives +DE +N:

(22) *scos* ***de*** *Miron Costin* (Costin: 53)
‘issued [i.e. written] by MC’.

2.2. *De + infinitive*

Unlike in other Romance areas, *de* followed by an infinitive clause is already very rare in Old Romanian. In (23), *de* introduces an infinitive preceded by the preposition *a* ‘to’, which became the regular preposition preceding the infinitive (cf. Engl. *to* + INF):

(23) *ce nu e putere* ***de-a*** *spunerea* (Coresi, CÎ: 4)
that not is ability of-to say: INF.the
‘that it is not possible to say’

In other Romance languages *de* followed by an infinitive after either a noun or a verb is quite frequent, but in Romanian it was replaced by a subjunctive construction even when the subjects are coreferential. Comp. (24) a and b:

(24) a. Fr. *J’ ai le devoir de lui dire*
I have the duty of him:DAT tell:INF
‘It is my duty to tell him.’

but

b. Rom. *Am datoria* ***să-*** *i spun*
have.I duty that him: DAT tell:SUBJ.I
‘It is my duty to tell him.’

Compare also Rom (25) and (27) with (26) and (28):

a) after verbs of feeling:

(25) Rom. *mă bucur să te văd*
me:ACC am.glad that you:ACC see.I: SUBJ

(26) Fr. *Je me réjouis de te voir*
I REFL.1 rejoice of you:ACC see.INF
‘I am glad to see you’

Sp. *Me allegro de verte*
REFL.1 rejoice of see: INF.you
‘I am glad to see you’

It. *La donna si accontentò di guardarlo*
The woman REFL.3 was.content of see:INF-him
‘The woman was content to look at him’

b) after verbs of saying:

(27) Rom. *I- am spus să vină mâine*
He:DAT have said that come:SUBJ tomorrow
‘I told him to come tomorrow’

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

(28) Fr. *Je lui ai dit de venir demain*
I him:DAT have told to come:INF tomorrow
'I told him to come tomorrow'
It. *Disse al contandino di aspettare*
Told.he to.the peasant to wait:INF
'He told the peasant to wait'.

2.3. DE + Supine

The occurrence of DE has to be also related to the replacement of the infinitive with a verbal noun reminding the Latin supine, which is also introduced by *de*.[5] Though very rare in Old Romanian, the supine construction shares with other DE-constructions several relational meanings that presuppose a movement from a certain point onward, such as:
– 'purpose':
(29) *apă* ***de*** *băut*
water of drink:SUP
'drinking water'
It can occur in verbal periphrases expressing imminence:
(30) *Petru are* ***de*** ***scris*** *un articol*
Peter has of write:SUP an article
'Peter has to write a report'
– after aspectual semi-auxiliaries expressing the end of an event:
(31) *Petru a terminat* ***de*** ***scris*** *noul său roman*
Peter has finished of write:SUP new.the his novel
'Peter has finished writing his new novel'.
Cf. Fr. *Il a fini* ***d'*** *écrire son nouveau roman*
He has finished of writeINF his new novel
'Peter has finished writing his new novel',
where the infinitive is also introduced by DE.

3. *DE* AS A CONJUNCTION

The 17th-century texts display a variety of subordinate clauses introduced by *de*, among which consecutive clauses are the most frequent. The spread of DE as a

[5] Cf. Lat. supine after verbs of movement:
Romam ad senatum ueniunt
Rome:ACC to senate:ACC came.they
auxilium postulatum, Caesar, B.G. I, 31
help:ACC ask:SUPINE
'They came to Rome to the senate to ask for help'
or after impersonal expressions such as *opus est, fast est*, etc. (see Manoliu 1985: 324 and 1994: 111-178),

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

complementizer was favored by Latin oral tendencies that were supported by similar areal typological phenomena.

(i) *Latin oral and areal tendencies*. The replacement of the infinitive by finite-verb constructions has been connected with a general oral tendency and with similar Balkan, especially Greek, phenomena (see Rosetti 1986: 236-237). This tendency can explain the replacement of the infinitive with the finite-forms after verbs of volition or verbs of feeling, which, in fact, was already possible in Latin (see Ernout, Thomas 1993: 297-298). Compare (32) where *uolo* 'to wish, to want' is followed by infinitive + Accusative, with (33) where the complement clause is in the subjunctive:

(32) *uolo* *me* *placere* *Philolachi* (Plaut, *Most*: 167)
want.I me:ACC please: INF Philolacus: DAT
'I want to please Philolacus'

but

(33) *uolo* *ames* (Cicero, *Att*.2:10)
want.I love.you: SUBJ.PRES
'I want you to love'.

The same construction can occur after a verb of feeling such as *dolere* 'to suffer':

(34) *dolebam* […] *quod* […] *consortem* *amiseram* (Cicero, *Brut*. 2).
I suffered:IMPF because partner:ACC lose.I:IND.PPF
'I was suffering […] because […] I had lost my partner'.

(ii) *Modal variations*. In order to explain the use of the indicative after DE it is necessary to bring into the picture the more general tendency of alternating the subjunctive with the indicative in certain contexts such as consecutive or causal constructions, which was also possible in colloquial Latin after *cum* or *ut* and even after *quod*, if the cause was presented as a real event or, as Bennett puts it, "when the reason is that of the writer or speaker" (see Ernout Thomas 1993: 298; 347, Bennett 2004: 185):

(35) *Si quid possumus eo possumus, quod respublica nos* ***coniuxit*** *cum bonis* (Cicero, *Pro Mil*., 21)
'If we can do something, we do it, because the republic connected [IND] us with good [people]'.

The subjunctive was used if the cause clause referred to a reason which is not viewed as that of the writer or the speaker (36):

(36) *Principes Treverorum de suis privatis rebus a Caesare auxilium petere coeperunt, quoniam civitati consulere* ***non possent*** (Cesar, *B.G*. V,3)
'The chiefs (princes) of the Treveri began to ask Caesar for help concerning their private affairs, because they could [SUBJ] not deliberate (decide) on matters of state'.

After verbs of feelings, the event expressed by the complement clause (referring to the external cause of the feeling) may be interpreted as being real and, consequently, falls outside the scope of the modality imposed by the main verb. Compare Latin (37) and Romanian (38):

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

(37) *Quid timeo rusticitatem meam, cum redemptor noster non oratores, sed piscatores **praelegit***, (Grég. De Tours, *Mart. Praef*, in Bonnet, 681; Ernout Thomas 1993: 347)
'Why am I afraid of my coarseness, since our Lord preached [IND.PRES] not to orators, but to fishermen'

(38) *ne mirăm că(ci) nu ne face Dumnezeu pe voia noastră* (Ivireanu, P: 85)
'we wonder why God does not act: IND.PRES according to our wish'.

See also Classical French:

(39) *Phèdre se plaint que je suis outragé* (Racine, *Phèdre*, III: 5)
'Phèdre is complaining about the fact that I am [INDIC] outraged'

and Colloquial French:

(40) *C'est embêtant qu'il est pas là* (BM 242, in Ball, 2000 : 91)
'It is annoying that he is [IND] not here'

and also:

(41) *je me réjouis **de ce** qu'il **est** là*
'I am glad that he is [IND here ' [if presented as a fact]

Note the fact that, in French, DE preserves its prepositional status since it introduces the pronominal NP (*ce*) modified by a relative-clause referring to the real external cause of the feeling. A similar modal variation may be found in Italian:

(42) It. *mi fa piacere che tu **sia venuto***
'I am pleased that you have [SUBJ] come'

but

(43) spoken It.: *mi dispiace che il treno **è arrivato** in ritardo*
'I am sorry that the train has come [IND] late'.

But let us now turn our attention to the type of clauses which could be introduced by DE in Old Romanian.

3.1. Consecutive clauses

17th c.:

(44) *Că frica lu Dumnezeu iaste izvorulŭ vieţiei, **de** face omulŭ **de** se fereaşte de lanţurile morţiei* (Coresi, CÎ: 26).
'Since the fear of God is the source of life, so it makes man avoid the chains of death';

18th c.:

(45) *aşa şi smereniĭa hrănĭaşte bunătăţile **de** cresc şi le ferèşte de toate primejdiĭle, ca să nu piară* (Ivireanu: 117)
'so in the same way humility nourishes goodness so it can grow, and it protects it from all dangers, so it shall not perish'.

In (46), the consecutive clause modifies an adjective:

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

(46) C*e* *mila* *dumnezeiască* *este* *mare,*
That generosity of.God:ADJ is great
de *bucură* *pre* *om* *cându* *nu gândeşte* (Neculce: 42)
of brings.joy to man when not thinks
'That God's generosity is [so] great, **that** it brings joy to man when he does not expect it'

As (44), (45), and (46) show, the consecutive clause is an argument for asserting that the event expressed by the main clause has a high degree of intensity or assertiveness (confirming its truth value). The point of departure for the spread of such constructions may be found in a construction with a comparative quantifier: *atât* (quantifier of equality) ... *de* 'of', i.e. 'so much… as'(see (47)):[6]

(47) *Atâta* *se* *elŭ* ***de*** *lăudà,* *câtŭ* *vrea* *să* *se*
so.QUANT REFL he of praised, as will that REFL
potrivească […] *nedreptăţiei* (Coresi, CÎ: 16)
matches.SUBJ injustice.DAT
'He praised himself so much that he would be ready to be unjust'.

A similar meaning is conveyed by an Italian construction where the preposition *da* is followed by an infinitive:

(48) It.. *Bevve* *tanto* ***da*** *ubriacarsi* (Maiden, Robustelli 2000: 377)
Drank.he so much that got.drunk:INF.himself
'He drank so much that he got drunk'.

In other words, the *de*-construction carries an implicature of 'intensity' attributed to the event referred to by the main clause. In Modern Romanian, in a pragmatically unmarked consecutive construction, the same idea is explicitly encoded by the correlative *atât de* S_1 *încât* S_2 'so S_1…that S_2' (see (50), which is a translation of (46) into contemporary Romanian (which we reproduce below as (49)):

(49) C*e* *mila* *dumnezeiască* *este* *mare,*
That generosity of.God:ADJ is great
de *bucură* *pre* *om* *cându* *nu* *gândeşte* (Neculce: 42)
of brings.joy to man when not thinks
'That God's generosity is [so] great, **that** it brings joy to man when he does not expect it'

(50) *Mila dumnezeiască este* ***atât de*** *mare* ***încât*** *aduce bucurie omului când nu se aşteaptă*.
'That God's generosity is **so** great, **that** it brings joy to man when he does not expect it'.

[6] In Old Romanian, as in other Romance areas, DE was already used for introducing an adjective or an adverb after a quantifier:
O. Rom. *cela ce-şŭ va dà şi jumătate* ***de*** *avuţiia lui* (Coresi, CÎ: 17.
'the one who will give even half of his possessions'
Cf. Fr. *la moitié de ses biens* 'half of his possessions'.

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

Examples of consecutive clauses introduced by *de* carrying the same implicature may also be found in 20th-c. literary discourse (51):

(51) *spre a-l irita, începuse să imite strigătul de luptă al apaşilor,* ***de*** *putea fi auzit şi de pe stadion* (Buzura, VN, 1998: 44).
'in order to aggravate him, he began to imitate the Apaches' war cry [which was so loud], that it could be heard even in the stadium'.

According to our hypothesis, the conservation of the consecutive construction until the present day must have been favored by its pragmatic value.[7] In (52) *de*-clause determines an elliptical predicative noun 'such as…':

(52) *Dumnezeu iaste* ***de*** *lucrează întru noi* (Coresi, CÎ: 16)
God is such that works.he within us
'God is such that he works within us'.

In a few cases, the consequence is a mere result of a succession of events which is usually expressed by a copulative conjunction such as *şi* [8] (see also below the alternation between *de* and *şi* after verbs of motion in (55) and (56)):

(53)a. *grăi glas din ceriu* ***de*** *dzisă aşa: 'Luați piatra*!' (CS: 237)
spoke voice from sky of said thus: 'Take stone.the!'
'he spoke from the sky and said thus: "Take the stone!" '

b. Mod. Rom. *a grăit din cer* ***şi*** *a spus aşa*:'
has.he spoke from sky and has said thus:'
Luați piatra!'
Take stone.the!'
'he spoke from the sky and said thus: "Take the stone!" '

3.2. Final clauses

As (54) shows, in Old Romanian, both the infinitive and the subjunctive can occur in free variation after verbs of motion in order to express purpose: in the first clause the verb of motion *nu venii* 'I did not come' is followed by the subjunctive but in the following coordinated clause the same verb of motion is followed by an infinitive clause *a chema* 'to call' :

(54) *Nu venii* ***să*** ***osândesc*** *lumea,*
Not came that condemn.SUBJ world.the
ce ***să*** *spăsescŭ lumea;*
but that save.SUBJ world. the
nu venii ***a chemà*** *derepții, ce păcătoşii la pocăință*!
not came to call.INF righteous.the but sinners to repentance
(Coresi, CÎ: 11)

[7] See Traugott, König (1991), Traugott, Dasher (2002), on the importance of the pragmatic change from neutral to subjective.

[8] For the evolution of *şi* (<Lat. *sic*) in Romanian see Manoliu (2004).

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

'I did not come to condemn people but to save people; I did not come to call the righteous but the sinners to repentance'.

In (55) *de* introduces a clause referring to the goal:

(55) *beaţi* ***de*** *vă veseliţi, şi de nevoia*
'drink of REFL.2PL enjoy.you, and of need
seateei voastre stâmpăraţi -vă! (Coresi, CÎ: 5)
thirst.GEN yours assuage.you: IND.PRES -you:ACC
'Drink to enjoy yourself and to assuage the need of your thirst'.

Final clauses occur rather frequently after verbs of motion and then the meaning of purpose is less salient, which explains the replacement of *de* by *şi* 'and' or by [*ca*] *să* + SUBJ:

(56) *Sculà-mă- voiu* ***de*** *mă voiu duce*
Rise-me shall of me.ACC shall go
către părintele mieu (Coresi, CÎ: 28)
toward father.the mine
'I shall rise to go to my father'

(57) *Iată se ducu îngerii* ***şi*** *slujesc lor* (CS: 244)
Look REFL go angels and serve them
'Look, the angels go and serve them'

After verbs of saying, DE can also signal a mere succession of events rather than a consequence or goal (58):

(58) *grăi glas din ceriu* ***de*** *dzisă aşa*: *'Luaţi piatra* !' (CS : 237)
spoke voice from sky and said thus: 'Take stone.the!'
'a voice from the sky spoke and said thus: "Take the stone!"

It is likely that this weakening of its meaning was the reason for combining it with *să* + Subjunctive (*de să*):

(59) *ce dedŭ lui şi ucenicilorŭ lui,* ***de*** ***să***
so gave.he him:DAT and followers:DAT his to that
tipărească această carte, *Evanghelie cu învăţătură* (Coresi: CÎ: 6)
print:SUBJ this book, *Evanghelie cu învăţătură*
'so he gave him and his followers to print this book, *Evanghelie cu învăţătură*'

But only the combination of ***ca*** (Lat. *quia*) + ***să*** followed by the subjunctive, already present in earlier texts (see (60)), became the standard final construction:

(60) *Că dereptŭ aceaia vine întru lume,*
'So, because of that comes.he into world
ca *păcătoşii* ***să*** *spăsească* (Coresi, CÎ: 29)
so sinners.the that save: SUBJ
'He therefore comes into the world to save the sinners'.

Cf. standard Cont. Rom.:

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

(61) *mă* *trimitea* *la* *ei*
me:ACC sent.he: IMPF to them
ca ***să*** *văd* *cum* *lucrează* (GA: 387)
sot that see.I how work.they: SUBJ.PRES
'he sent me to them to see how they work'

However, after imperatives of verbs of motion, the *de*-construction may still be found in the second half of the 19th century:

(62) *Ia* *dut'* ***de*** *-ți* *vezi* *de* *treabă*!
Now go of to-you: DAT see.you: IND.PRES of business
'Now, go to/and attend to your business (Eminescu, *O*.1: 174 in GA: 387)

and even nowadays in colloquial registers:

(63) *Du-* *te* ***de*** *vezi* *ce* *se* *întâmplă*!
Bring-you of see.you:IND.PRES what REFL happens
'Go and see what's going on'.

3.3. Conditional clauses

De in ***if*-clauses** occurs with the compound future (*va* 'will' +INF) or the conditional (*am* 'have' + INF). Its replacement, the compound *deacă* (<*de* + *că* (<Lat. *quod*)), is already present in 17th-c texts. Compare (64)-(65) and (66):

(64) ***de*** *nu* *va* *zidì* *Domnulŭ* *casa,* *întru* *deşertu*
of/if not will build God house, in vain
se *vorŭ* *trudi* *ceia* *ce* *o* *zidescŭ* (Coresi, CÎ: 13)
REFL.3rd will work those who it build
'if God does (lit. will) not build the house, those who build it will work in vain'

(65) *Dragilorŭ,* ***de*** *va* *zice* *cineva că iubeaşte pre Dumnezeu, iară pre fratele său uraşte, acela mincinos iaste* (Înv: 512)
'Dear [parishioners], if somebody says (lit. 'will say') that he loves God, but he hates his brother, that one is a liar.'

But see also:

(66) ***deaca*** *ne grijimŭ noi de ale trupurilorŭ noastre, datori sântemŭ mai vârtosŭ să avămŭ şi să grijimŭ de a sufletului* (Coresi, CÎ: 3)
'if we take care of our bodies, we are even more obliged to take care of [those things belonging to] the soul',

where the present indicative follows the compound hypothetical conjunction, *deaca*.

When co-occurring with the intensifier ***şì*** 'even' in the same clause, *de* carries the implicature that a contrary expectation is denied (cf. Engl. *even if*):

(67) ***de*** *vom* *face* ***şi*** *milostenie,* *toate*
'if shall. we give even alms, all
sântu *pierdute* (Înv: 522)
are lost
'even if we give alms everything is lost'.

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

De may be preceded by another conjunction *măcar* 'only' in order to activate the same implicature:

(68) ***măcară*** ***de-*** *am* *muri* ***şi*** *pentru Hristos* (Înv: 515)
only if would.we die even for Christ
'even if we died for Christ'.

Modern Romanian (19th century onwards) expresses the same implicature by combining *chiar* (< Lat. *claru-* '[it is] clear') and *dacă*:

(69) ***Chiar dacă*** *am muri pentru Hristos*
'Even if we died for Christ'

The modern conjunction *deşi* 'although' is the result of combining *de* and *şi*.

A conditional DE 'whether' could also introduce a complement-clause after negative verbs of knowing:

(70) *Dară nu ştiu* ***de*** *va înțelĕge aşa pre lesne* (Ivireanu : 209)
'But I do not know whether he would understand so easily'.

In 17th c. texts, *să* alone could introduce a conditional clause (71):

(71) *şi* ***să*** *vămŭ vedeà neştine că greşaşte, să nu-lŭ osândimŭ* (Coresi, CÎ: 18)
'and if we shall see anybody sinning, we should not condemn him'.

More often, ***să*** (co-occurring with the adverbial intensifier ***şì***) serves to express a denial of a contrary expectation: 'even if' (72):

(72) *iară cineş va osândi, sine şì munciei vinovatŭ se face,* ***să*** *va aveà* ***şì*** *lucrure bune multe* (Coresi, CÎ: 17).
'and whoever will condemn [his neighbors], will be guilty and condemned, **even if** he has done good deeds.'

(73) *că amu noi* ***să*** *vămŭ* ***şì*** *tăceà, elŭ ştie toată taina inimiei* (Coresi, CÎ: 19)
'because, you see, even if we keep [FUT] silent, he [still] knows the secret of the [= our] heart'.

Conditional *de* (+ conditional present) is still used in independent optative clauses:

(74) ***De-*** *ar* *veni* *vara* *mai* *repede!*
If would come summer more soon
'If only summer would come sooner!'

3.4. Complement clause: subject after impersonal constructions

(75) *Ce* *încă* *nu* *e* *de* *destulŭ* ***de*** *eaşŭ* *a lucrà,*
'That again not is of enough of would to work:INF
ce *trebuiaşte* *şi* *viiață* *dereaptă* *şi* *curată* (Coresi,CÎ: 4)
but it.is.necessary also life righteous and clean.
'Because it is not enough to work (i.e. to do good deeds), but there is also need for a righteous and pure life.'

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

The subject clauses occur often in folklore poetry after the impersonal construction with the verb *a se întâmpla* 'to happen' (see 76) or after the aspectual inchoative verb *a începe* 'to begin' (see (77)):

(76) *Dar al nostru împărat,* 'But our emperor,
Tot mergând pe la vânat, Going around hunting
Într'o seară s-a-ntîmplat, One evening it happened,
Pe la noi ***de****-a înoptat* **That** he remained at our
(Teodorescu, PP: 116 in GA: 387) [home] over night'

(77) *Ouşoare că scotea* 'So she was getting out little eggs
Şi-ncepea And she was beginning
De *le- mpărţea* To distribute them'
That them distribute.IND.IMPF
(Teodorescu, PP: 532 in GA: 387)

CONCLUSIONS

The only semantic relational feature which could explain the astonishing evolution of Lat. DE in Romanian consists in its possibility of expressing a movement (physical or abstract) away from a starting point that is envisaged as being contingent with the moving object at its point of departure (see Pottier, 1962).

As in any Romance area, in Old Romanian the preposition *de* has a variety of functions: it may be a preposed free case marker (introducing attributes, predicative nouns, indirect objects or any other kind of Noun Phrase) or a part of a compound preposition.

But, unlike in other Romance languages. in Romanian, the preposition DE also became a clause connective, spreading from constructions where it introduces modifiers of nominalized variants of the verb (long infinitives, agentive nouns derived from verbal stems, past participles/adjectives) to constructions in which it precedes a non-finite verb (infinitive, supine) and then to constructions where it functions as a complementizer introducing a subordinate clause with a finite verb form in the indicative: consecutive clauses; subject clauses, after impersonal constructions, and even in final clauses or in conditional clauses (especially with the analytical future: *va* 'will' + infinitive)..

The last stage of regrammation may be found in final clauses after verbs of motion, when the meaning of purpose is less salient. Consequently, DE becomes synonymous with a simple connective expressing a succession of events, which explains its replacement with the copulative *şi* 'and'. In order to express 'purpose' or 'goal' unambiguously, DE was replaced by ***ca*** (< Lat. *quia*) + ***se***, ***să*** (< Lat. *si*).

According to our hypothesis, the maintenance of the consecutive construction till the present time (as a pragmatically marked variant of the standard construction using the comparative marker *atât de… încât* 'so much as') must have been

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

favored by its pragmatic value of bringing an argument that validates the truth value of the statement in the main clause. DE is still the standard form for introducing another pragmatically marked construction, namely independent clauses expressing a wish (optative constructions).

De in *if*-clauses is less frequent even in older texts and its replacement, the compound *deacă*, *dacă* (< *de* + *că* (<Lat.*quod*)), is already present in 17th-c texts.

CORPORA

Buzura, VN, 1993: Augustin Buzura, *Vocile nopţii*. *Roman,* II [Biblioteca pentru toţi], Bucureşti, Editura Minerva, 1993.

Creangă, PAP: Ion Creangă, *Poveşti, Amintiri, Povestiri,* Bucureşti, Editura pentru literatură, 1965.

Coresi, CÎ: Diaconul Coresi, *Carte cu învăţătură* (1581), publicată de Sextil Puşcariu şi Alexie Procopovici, 1. Textul, Bucureşti, Socec and Co., 1914.

Costin: Miron Costin, *Opere alese. Letopiseţul Ţării Moldovei. De neamul moldovenilor, Viaţa lumii*. Texte stabilite, studiu introductiv, note şi glosar de Liviu Onu, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică, 1967 [16th c.]

CS: *Codex Sturdzanus*. Studiu filologic, studiu lingvistic, ediţie de text şi indice de cuvinte de Gheorghe Chivu, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 1993.

Eminescu, *O*, 1: Mihai Eminescu, *Opere*. Ediţie îngrijită de Perpessicius. Vol.1, Bucureşti, Fundaţia pentru literatură şi artă, 1939 [2nd half of the 19th c.].

Ivireanu: Antim Ivireanul, *Predici*. Ediţie critică, studiu introductiv şi glosar de G. Ştrempel, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei, 1962 [18th c.].

Înv: *Învăţături preste toate zilele* (1642), 1-2. Edited by W. van Eeden, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 1985.

Neculce: Ion Neculce, *Opere. Letopiseţul Ţării Moldovei şi O samă de cuvinte*, ediţie critică şi studiu introductiv de Gabriel Ştrempel, Bucureşti, Minerva,1982 [18th c].

GA: Graur, Alexandru, Mioara Avram şi Laura Vasiliu (editori), *Gramatica limbii române,* I-II, ediţia a doua revăzută şi adăugită, tiraj nou, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei, 1966.

Teodorescu, PP**:** *Poezii populare române*, [culegere de] G. Dem. Teodorescu, ediţie critică, note şi tabel cronologic de George Antofi, prefaţă de Ovidiu Papadima**,** Bucureşti, Minerva, 1985 [Biblioteca Pentru Toţi; 1235-1237].

REFERENCES

Andersen, H., 2005, 'Grammation, regrammation and degrammation – Tense loss in Russian', paper presented at the XVIIth ICHL, July 31- August 5, 2005, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Ball, R., 2000, *Colloquial French Grammar. A Practical Guide*, Oxford / Maiden, Mass, Blackwell.

Bennett, C. E., 2004, *New Latin Grammar,* Wauconda, Ill., Botchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc.

Bonnet, M., 1890, *Le latin de Grégoire de Tours*, Paris.

Buridant, C., 2000, *Grammaire nouvelle de l'ancien français,* Saint-Juste-la Pendue, Sedes.

Cuesta, P. Vazquez and M. A. Mendes da Luz, 1980, *Gramatica da Lingua Portuguesa*, Lisboa, Editorial Império, Lda., Ediçoes 70.

Ernout, A., F. Thomas, 1993, *Syntaxe latine,* Paris, Klincksieck.

Maiden, M., C. Robustelli, 2000, *A Reference Grammar of Modern Italian*, Chicago, NTC Publishing Co.

Manoliu, M. M., 2004, "Vanishing Discourse Markers**:** Lat. *et* vs. sic in Old French and Old Romanian", in: M. Fortescue, E. Skafte Jensen, J. E. Mogensen and L. Schøsler, *Historical*

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)

Linguistics 2003. Selected papers from the 16th *International Conference on Historical Linguistics*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 159–177.

Manoliu-Manea, M., 1983, "*Că nu-s fată de găsit*. Le supin et la voix en roumain", in: E. Roegist, L. Tasmovski (eds), *Verbe et phrase dans les langues romanes. Mélanges offerts à Louis Mourin,* Ghent, University of Ghent, 247–253.

Manoliu-Manea, M., 1985, *Tipología e historia: Elementos de sintaxis comparada románica*, versión española por Sarmiza Leahu y Mónica Nedelcu, Madrid, Gredos.

Manoliu-Manea, M., 1994, *Discourse and Pragmatic Constraints on Grammatical Choices*, [North Holland Linguistic Series 57], Amsterdam, Elsevier Science Publishers.

Pottier, B., 1962, *Systématique des éléments de relation*, Paris, Klincksieck.

Price, G., 1975, *The French Language: Present and Past*, London, Arnold.

Puşcariu, S., 1905, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der rumänischen Sprache,* 1. *Lateinisches Element, mit Berücksichtigung aller romanischen Sprachen,* Heidelberg, K. Winter.

Rosetti, A., 1986, *Istoria limbii române*. *De la origini pînă la începutul secolului al XVII-lea,* ediție definitivă, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiințifică şi Enciclopedică.

Touratier, C., 1994, *Syntaxe latine* [Bibliothèque des cahiers de l'Institut de linguistique de Louvain, 0779-1666; 80], Louvain-la-Neuve, Peeters.

Traugott, E. Closs and E. König, 1991, "The semantics-pragmatics of grammaticalization revisited", in: E. Closs Traugott & B. Heine (eds), *Approaches to Grammaticalization,* 1. *Focus on Theoretical and Methodological Issues,* Amsterdam / Philadelphia, Benjamins.

Traugott, E. Closs and R.B. Dasher, 2002, *Regularity in Semantic Change,* [Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 96], Cambridge, UK / New York, Cambridge University Press.

Received January 2006

BDD-A267 © 2006 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.42 (2026-11-15 19:43:03 UTC)