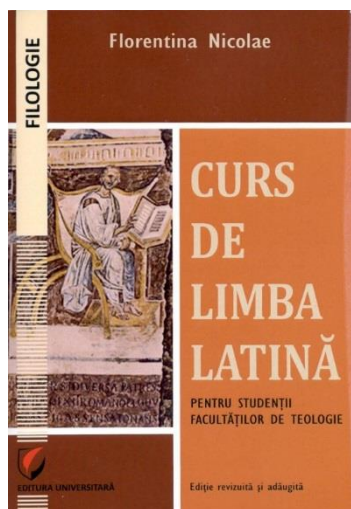


**Florentina Nicolae, *Curs de limba latină pentru studenții facultăților de teologie*, București, Editura Universitară, 2019, 255 pagini (Simona Sandu Pîrvulescu)**



The second edition of *Curs de limba latină pentru studenții facultăților de teologie* / ‘A Latin language course for theology students’ is intended to be a practical-applicative Latin language course for both students in theology and students in philology and history.

Demonstrating a special analytical spirit and a very well-developed synthesis capacity, the author manages to condense the history of Christian Latin by presenting the “peaks” of the “journey” of Latin towards the apogee of language in order to express the Christian dogma, reminding us that “*the ecumenical language of early Christianity in antiquity*” was the Greek language (Nicolae, 2019: 11), the use of Latin for expressing Christian ideology occurring later. “*As a result of the spread of Christianity, when more and more Latin speakers became Christians and continued to use Latin as their mother tongue, there arose the need to express Christian ideology in this language as well, especially in Rome and North Africa*”. (Nicolae, 2019: 11).

As we can intuit from the title, *The Latin language course* contains notions of Latin phonetics, notions of Latin grammar (morphology) - notions presented together with literary texts (excerpts from Christian texts) through which the “student” can practice the skills of written communication and of receiving the written message in Latin.

At the beginning of the *Course*, the author presents *Introductory notions from The phonetic system of the Latin language* and *Introductory notions from The morphological system of the Latin language*, continuing with the structuring of the work in “lessons” of morphology. A separate “lesson” is assigned to each part of speech, for example: *NOUN DECLENSION* (presenting *Declension I* and *Declension II* - based on the similarity of the declension pattern, here are also included the *Adjectives of Declensions I and II*; considered the core of communication, the verb is also present from the first lesson of the course with the categories: *Conjugation of the verb and the Present Indicative*). We notice that, from the first “lesson”, the author provides the necessary tools to decode the text attached to the “lesson”. The fragments of Christian texts are selected in such a way as to allow the practice and, implicitly, the consolidation of the knowledge of morphology presented in that “lesson”.

Each fragment of a Christian text is followed by a mini-dictionary in which the words occurring in the text are listed, thus facilitating the reader’s understanding of the text without making him (the reader) use another Latin-Romanian dictionary.

We notice the presence, at the end of each *lesson*, of some famous expressions or quotes gathered under the name *Verba memorabilia*, for example: “*Audīte disciplīnam et estōte sapiēntes! F]-/[ ]’ = Listen to the teaching and be wise! (Prov. of Solomon, 8, 33)*” (Nicolae, 2019: 90); “*Nihil sub sole novum. = Nothing new under the sun. (Ecclesiastes, 1, 4, 10)*” (Nicolae, 2019: 93); “*Stultus quoque si tacuērit, sapiēns reputabītur. = Even the fool will be considered wise if he is silent. (Prov. of Solomon, 1:28)*” (Nicolae, 2019: 101). These are expressions / quotes that many of us use without knowing where they come from.

The bibliographical references - numerous and diversified - demonstrate the anchoring of the work at the border between past and present, the author pointing out (throughout the course) problems of evolution of the Christian Latin language, for example: “6. *Under the influence of the Greek declension, the ending -on extends to nouns of the neuter gender: topazion, epinicion (Blaise 2000: 57).* 7. *Under the influence of the Hebrew language, plural forms in -im enter the Vulgata: Philistiim (-thiim), for Philistaei (Blaise 2000: 58; Gaffiot 1934: 1173).*” (Nicola, 2019: 26).

A special chapter is entitled *Essential Christian Texts* in which, by a minute selection, the author placed excerpts from texts that any Christian should know, for example: *Pater noster, Fidēi Christiānae professō, Beatitudines (Matth., 5, 3-12), Filii Patris vestri (Matth., 5, 43-48), Octavius (Marcus Minucius Felix, Octavius, V, PL III, 1884: 247-249), De oratiōne dominicā (Tertullianus, De oratiōne, II-III, PL, I, 1844: 1155-1157)*, texts written by famous authors such as Divus Cypriānus, Ambrosius, Commodiānus, Lactantius, Hieronymus, Paulīnus Nolānus, Aurelius Augustīnus. This chapter is intended to be a reminder of early Christian texts - which played an important role in the “light of knowledge” spread over the common people.