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SACRED SCIENCE AT DIMITRIE CANTEMIR
MODERN APPROACHES ON KNOWLEDGE

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Summary

Key words: Cantemir, Sacrosanctae, science, knowledge, contemplation

Objective and methods. The title of this doctoral thesis is suggestive for the objective envisaged, as a deep research on the concept of „sacred science”, a concept formulated by Cantemir himself in his masterpiece *Sacrosanctae Scientiae Indepingibilis Imago*, as also in other papers. This objective is also relevant for the way in which the knowledge is considered within modern philosophy, particularly on the two dyes, that rationalist (Leibniz) and respectively sensual (Locke). At the same time, the objective above mentioned involves the way in which Cantemir understands the sacred science within the disputes on knowledge during the modern epoch, the possibility of a ranking in the prince vision of various degrees of knowledge until sacred science, ranking also able to produce an evaluation of different forms of knowledge. Moreover, taking into account that this research also is looking for the thesis that his ideas on knowledge and its ranking are not dogmatical, on contrary, the author allows, even urges the reader to evaluate each type of knowledge by himself and to position himself in relation to them.

In this respect, the method has been adapted to a „pluralism of knowledge”, as an object of research, mainly considered at two levels. At the first level have been highlighted the methods adapted to each perspective on knowledge; here we tried to evidence different methods (rationalist or sensualist, etc.) and to show how they are compatible in Cantemir vision and, as a result, how they can be analyzed in a common context – that of discussion on knowledge in a *wide sense*, able to include other ways than those frequently encountered in the epistemology. At the second level of the approach, we distinguished between what Cantemir transmitted about sacred science and knowledge in modern style, on one hand, and on the other hand a referencial was scheched which had as a background the classicalcontemporary conception of knowledge.

Synthetizing, what we had in view was a mixing of analytical method – or of a conceptual analysis – withhistorical method, in the sense that they do not work „isolated” (on a portion – with Locke – will be put in work the hystorical method, and on another portion – as it is the current conception of knowledge, the analytical method would be used). We applied these methods alternatively and sometimes together, in the sense that the positioning of Dimitrie Cantemir was brought at light, while at the same time having associated a careful

analysis of knowledge concept and that of sacred science in the given context, including its position in contrast with contemporary thinking way of these problems.

The first chapter is devoted to analysis of the concept of contemporary knowledge. Such an analysis was needed as this contemporary knowledge concept was taken as a referential for evaluation of modern knowledge concept and, particularly, of way in which Cantemir understood the sacred science – from our nowadays perspective. This contemporary concept expresses the level at which the knowledge concept is studied in modern epoch and also the concept on sacred science of Moldavian prince.

This incipient chapter of paper has a marked methodologic character and at the first lecture it seems to be quite consistent, the concept of knowledge being investigated in detail. Otherwise expressed, the chapter is divided in four subchapters, out of which the first concerns necessity to also insert into analysis the contemporary classical concept of knowledge. This necessity consists in the fact that it helps to clarify the point of view from which we analyse Cantemir ideas and those of modernity. More precisely, in this chapter the highest interpretive level is envisaged, that in which our research is placed. These clarifications will facilitate the analyses devoted both to Cantemir and to modern philosophy.

The second subchapter is dedicated to the analysis of the contemporary concept of knowledge in its standard form, namely based on the satisfaction of three requirements: the existence of an opinion, the truth of the opinion and the foundation of its truth. We will also discuss the two requirements of scientific knowledge: intersubjective communication and intersubjective verification. Attention will be directed to the construction of a model by which we represent our knowledge today, so that by using it we have the necessary tools to analyze modern positions on knowledge, including Cantemir's. This model has only a guiding role and, being in this position, reporting the analyses of modern philosophy to it should not be interpreted as a categorical evaluative approach, but also as a way to orient our research and support about modern positions.

As it could be observed, the contemporary concept of knowledge, including that of scientific knowledge, even if for its realization it implies the call to experience, experiment, observation, etc., the concept as such ultimately refers to communicable, verbal knowledge, to those aspects that can be formulated in sentences and then coagulated in theories. But we cannot ignore the fact that, at the strongest level of knowledge, the scientific one, before formulating in sentences and especially before formulating in theories, researchers have a certain intuition, a sense of problems and even solutions. This is a component of knowledge whose importance

cannot be denied, and which has, at least in its first moments, a non-verbal character. It is that knowledge that Russell refers to by distinguishing between knowledge through description which is verbal and that through familiarization which is non-verbal. Our intention is to show that, in matters of knowledge, we must be more supple, more flexible than the legacy we have received from modernity - that which is mainly rationalist - and than the close legacy of the philosophers of Vienna and Berlin who have were the most important in formulating the concept that has become a classic of knowledge at the beginning and middle of the 20th century.

This flexibility of the concept allows at the same time an openness to other uses of the concept of knowledge - such as the use in Cantemir's language of sacred science - and at the same time admits a certain control over our claims. All these are dealt with in the third subchapter of the first chapter.

In the fourth subchapter we specify what is the contemporary concept of knowledge with which we work, which we use as a tool in the analysis of Cantemir's ideas and modern philosophy. It is a concept that has at its center the classical understanding of knowledge, but to which are added aspects related to a broader view of knowledge meant to include its own uses in fields other than science (for example, theology). We argue that reality, including that of the person, is more complex and offers us richer information about it than strictly scientific ones. The relationship with a friend is not always verbal, nor is it always subject to criteria of scientific knowledge, nor even always to criteria of common knowledge. It is easy to see that the expansion of the concept of knowledge that we practice is intended to capture in the multitude of ways of knowledge and that specific to the sacred science that Cantemir deals with.

In the second chapter we approached the modern concept of knowledge, the one with which Cantemir's ideas are closely related. It is a concept of knowledge that emphasizes the source of knowledge, as it is considered that knowledge can be founded on its source, on the fact that the source brings information, at the same time guaranteeing/founding their truth. The analysis will focus on the sensualist ideas of Locke (the first subchapter – Locke and the sensualist epistemology) and on the rationalist ideas of Leibniz (the second subchapter – Leibniz and the rationalist epistemology), with whom Cantemir was in direct relations. Each of the two great philosophers believes that the senses, respectively the intellect, do not deceive us, thus providing a basis for the truth of our claims. We will put the ideas of these thinkers in relation to the Cartesian rationalism that generates the corresponding tradition of thought, but we also refer to Kant, to the way in which he integrates history, at the same time overcoming

the previous model of thought. In short, Descartes, Locke, Leibniz use the context of genesis immediately in favor of the context of foundation. Kant is not so much concerned with establishing the truth of an opinion, *in abstracto*, as with showing how any knowledge is possible, or, more precisely, any relation to the object (third subchapter – Elements of Kantian epistemology). It can be said that Imm. Kant is only incidentally interested in the context of genesis, but precisely by making this separation, Kant shows us where it is possible to study, independently, the context of foundation (the introduction to the fourth subchapter – The modern concept of knowledge: its foundation on the source).

Locke responds to Cartesian rationalism with a sensualism, with a knowledge whose source is entirely represented by the external and internal senses. Compared to Locke, Leibniz is in continuity with Cartesian rationalism, but on a higher level. If Locke states that the intellect is "a blank slate", that there is nothing in the intellect other than what is brought by the senses, Leibniz argues that even if things were like this - which is not the case - outside of Lockean sensations and perceptions there would still be "intellect itself", i.e. a complex structure with specific faculties, able to work on the data brought by the senses. Obviously, however, as we will show, Leibniz goes even further, stating that in each monad is written not only its entire trajectory, but also its own way of relating to the environment of the other monads; in the case of the monad, which is the human soul, all ideas, all knowledge, the unfolding of life are inscribed, doing nothing but updating them.

We tried to show how exactly the transitions from Descartes to Kant are made in terms of shaping the modern concept of knowledge. Thus, with Descartes, the emphasis still falls on ontology, even on an Aristotelian definition of substance, the intensional substance: the soul exists separately from the extended substance, from bodies. As the senses presuppose - at least the external ones - an intense exchange (therefore possible) with the bodies, once Descartes defines the soul as a separate substance (and this is considered by man) he can only adopt innate ideas to justify intellectual knowledge. The cultural environment in which Locke works is one that gives much more importance to the corporeality and faculties of man thought as a whole, with body and soul. In Locke, the source of sensualism is on the one hand this already formed British tradition and which he will strengthen, and on the other hand the desire to overcome the difficulties of Cartesianism. Locke's philosophical position is also influenced by his religious attachment, as well as by that for the liberal ideas to which he contributed substantially. We have shown that all these conditionings worked together, that the British sensualist tradition went together with religion and liberal ideas; at least that is how it was with Locke.

The transition from Locke to Leibniz was primarily due to the position affirmed by Leibniz himself to respond to sensualism by affirming rationalism. At the same time, we must keep in mind the speculative emphasis that will be characteristic to German philosophy starting from the time of Leibniz as we must remember that his interest in mathematics is impossible not to have influenced his position in matters of knowledge.

In the description of this evolution, the final point is the analysis of some ideas of Imm. Kant. Frequently, the Kantian philosophy of knowledge is presented as a kind of synthesis between empiricism and rationalism. This statement is not wrong, but we tried to specify how exactly it should be understood. The key position is that Immanuel Kant wants to determine how knowledge is possible; how knowledge is possible means something other than knowledge itself; if with Locke or even with Leibniz we can work with a proposition and we can say that the main claim of the two about the truth of this proposition is exactly what interests the respective philosophers, with Kant the main interest is how it is possible to formulate that proposition, and the truth is a secondary matter. In Locke, the sentence is possible because our senses provide it; as this is certain, the attention turns to the truth, on the foundation of the truth; with Leibniz, things are analogous, a proposition is certain on the path of reason, and attention is directed to the way in which its truth is founded by reason. The difference between how the truth is possible and whether the proposition is true exists, but it is not the most important one. In Kant, the emphasis falls on how knowledge is possible. This "how it is possible" presupposes both the senses, and the intellect, and the imagination; if we show how it is possible, we have achieved the main task, truth does not enter into Kant's main concern; its establishment is a successive operation. Or, to put it more simply, the process of knowledge in Kant is the same if we make a mistake and arrive at the false or if we work correctly and arrive at the truth. Kant is primarily interested in showing how process is possible, not how truth is realized. In these conditions, indeed, the senses, respectively reason, are conditions for the possibility of knowledge; but the way knowledge is possible is one thing, while the true or false result is another matter.

We showed that in Locke and Leibniz, the senses, respectively reason, were the basis of truth; in Kant they are only themes of the possibility of knowledge. At the end of the chapter, we try to specify the aspect that, mainly in Locke and Leibniz, philosophers' interest in the concept of knowledge is directed to the source of knowledge, to the context of genesis, but this context of genesis is relevant to the context of foundation in the sense that for sensualists, the senses guarantee the foundation of truth, that is, knowledge, and for rationalists, the intellect, reason gives this guarantee. Kant represents a rupture in this sense as well, to the extent that he

does not use the concept of genesis to strengthen the context of the foundation. From here onwards the analytical philosophy and the focus on foundation can begin.

The modern concept that we worked with as a tool to understand how Cantemir positions his sacred science is the one that assumes the source as foundation in the center, with the above specifications.

The third chapter (The Philosophical Relevance of Cantemir's Formation) studies how Prince Cantemir's life (especially the cultural and intellectual one) influences his philosophical formation and the ideas he proposes. In a first sub-chapter (Theoretical Positions) we study the more distant tradition, but very present in Cantemir's work, starting from the ancient Greeks, from Platon in particular, passing through several ancient Greek theologians and philosophers: Origen and Plotinus, Pseudo Dionysius, Prophyry, John Damascene. Then we refer to two Latin theologians, Augustine and Thomas, to conclude the analysis with some modern Greek philosophers and theologians: Georgios Gemistos (Plethon), Teofil Coridaleu and Ieremia Cacavelas. The second sub-chapter (Cantemir in his youth: the first cleavage – Orthodoxy and Islam) refers to the data that Cantemir gathers from the cleavage between Orthodox Christianity and Islam during his youth spent in Istanbul. The third sub-chapter (Moldavian Prince Cantemir) deals with Cantemir's evolution towards maturity due to the cleavage between Orthodox Russia and Catholic and Protestant Prussia (fourth sub-chapter: Cantemir at maturity: the second cleavage – Orthodox traditionalism and European modernity). We argue that Dimitrie Cantemir goes through a further development that expresses his attachment to Orthodoxy and his patriotism closely linked to this attachment, being at the same time subject to strong and largely different external influences. The work of the Moldavian ruler is really an intellectually filtered reflection of this multitude of aspects, making him a true universal spirit.

As for the philosophical relevance of Cantemir's formation, we^{6y7} aimed at certain aspects of his formation, i.e. precisely those cultural strands that had a major influence on the thinking of the Moldavian prince. Since this formation is usefully cut through the periods of Cantemir's life, we have adopted the distinction between the influences that his thinking received in his youth, respectively in his maturity. *Sacrosanctae...* is a work of his youth, but Cantemir did not revise his positions in this work throughout his life. He enriched them, nuanced them, but always kept the excellent position of sacred science.

We have shown that *sacred science* is a phrase with a specific history, one that deserves careful analysis beyond the purely linguistic layer. Precisely because the roots of modern knowledge with which Cantemir is in dialogue are much older, the first sub-paragraph of the

chapter is dedicated to the study of these roots and the way in which their developments intertwined to lead to Cantemirian thought. It is known to those familiar with this field of study that some of the modern or even contemporary positions may have the same roots in Aristotle, Platon, the Latin or Greek medievals, but that they intertwine in a way to lead to Descartes and in - another way to Kant; the refinements along this path are essential for the correct understanding of what Cantemir conveys in *Sacrosanctae*...

Thus, in the first subchapter we systematically started from the ancient Greeks, in particular from the Platonic knowledge through contemplation; then we went through the analysis of Greek and Latin theology from the first centuries of Christianity and through the analysis of the ideas about knowledge of philosophers from the end of antiquity and the Middle Ages. In the order of Cantemir's training, we must also have considered the Islamic context, within which - not only geographically, but also culturally - he wrote his work. At the end of the subchapter, we paid more attention to Greek thinkers, theological philosophers who, starting with Georgios Gemistos (Plethon), passing through Theophilus Coridaleus and ending with Ieremia Cacavelas, were all equally interested in their Greek philosophical heritage, but also the way in which Western Latin thought developed, starting from the same Greco-Roman heritage.

The second sub-chapter tells about the youth stage of Dimitrie Cantemir's education - period in which the future prince is in Constantinople (an Orthodox Christian prince sent as a pledge in the most important Islamic country of the time); a particularly important period for him, because, behind the apparently quiet life that reconciles very well the double training at the Academy of the Sultans and that of the Orthodox Patriarchs, there must be the incompatibility between his Orthodox faith and his dependence on the Turkish Islamic environment.

Seen from this perspective, *Sacrosanctae*... is not only a youthful work of a philosopher with an Orthodox Christian religious attachment, but it is even a declaration of disobedience, of patriotism, of adherence to the essential features of the Romanian people: before to be a prince and to fight with the Turks, is like a declaration of independence and spiritual identity of the Moldavian ruler. In this subchapter, we have analyzed the disciplines studied in the two schools followed by Cantemir, with the main purpose of showing how these schools and these disciplines found an echo not only in his philosophical production from that period, but also in the later life period.

Methodologically, our analysis was based on this antinomian dualism between an Orthodox Christianity and a Turkish Islam. This positioning allowed us to highlight the

communications and communication difficulties between the two planes in which the scholar ruler moves and the way in which he solves the problems of this difficult dialogue.

The third sub-chapter was dedicated to some references to Dimitrie Cantemir as a Moldavian prince who institutes the philosophical language in the Romanian Countries and shows his patriotism including through weapons.

The fourth sub-chapter concerned the period of maturity of the Moldovan ruler's thinking and analyzes the way in which he positions himself towards Russian culture, respectively towards the Western culture, particularly Prussian, within the Berlin Academy. And here Cantemir moves in two planes, that of Russian culture which has Orthodox Christianity at its center, to which he himself is committed, respectively that of German culture with its mystical and contemplative tradition, which, however, in Cantemir's time is markedly rationalist and speculative. There is, however, an essential difference between the development of Cantemir's activity in his youth between two planes that are practically incompatible in depth, but with efforts to coexist, respectively the development of his mature life, between two planes, the Russian and the Prussian, where at least the Russian elites make an effort to Europeanize precisely at the expense of Germanic culture. In our analysis we pointed out the remark, however, that even between these two last plans, in depth, it is about a difficult relationship between Orthodox and Catholic or Protestant Christianity.

We argued that Dimitrie Cantemir knew how to gather from each of the two situations the aspects that interested him in order to specify his own thinking. His thinking and, in particular, that towards sacred science can be better understood if we notice that these two cleavages, between Orthodoxy and Islam, respectively between Russian and German culture are good tools to describe what is irreducible in Cantemir - the commitment his towards Moldova and one of its essential virtues, the defense of Orthodox Christianity - respectively what is the result of erudition and the influences of the cultures in which it moved.

Summarizing, the objective of our research up to this point was to show that, in Dimitrie Cantemir's conception, every person enjoys the freedom to know, including through contemplation, and everyone is free to hierarchically archeologically the various forms of knowledge; but that, as far as Cantemir is concerned, his (explicit) option is primarily for sacred science, which is defining feature for Orthodox Christianity and the Romanian people.

The fourth and last chapter of the work is also the most substantial. Dimitrie Cantemir's conception of knowledge and sacred science is considered here. The philosopher sometimes expresses himself metaphorically to suit the object of his work - *sacred science*. As far as we are concerned, we mainly used today's technical terms in order to have the necessary

rigor in evaluating Cantemirian ideas. In accordance with this idea, the first subchapter (Natural knowledge) is dedicated to the study of natural knowledge, either in its sensualist/empiricist form or in its rationalist form, as understood by Cantemir in *Sacrosanctae...* . The second subchapter (Supernatural knowledge) is probably the most sensitive because it deals with the meaning that Cantemir gives to sacred science, that is, with a concept of knowledge that goes beyond what is natural; in the case of this supernatural form of knowledge, the emphasis is on Revelation, on communion with God, on contemplation and on love. In the third sub-chapter (Dimitrie Cantemir's Perspective), what we consider to be our main original contribution is described, analyzed and formulated, namely the hierarchization of the forms of knowledge as we consider Dimitrie Cantemir conceives them. Then follows the argument that, in a spirit in which religious tolerance and modern research are in complete agreement, namely free investigation, the free will to research, Cantemir does not impose us his own hierarchies and evaluations. He describes his own position by making it, at the same time – this makes any philosophy – a referential for the free will of each of us, so that each of us can establish our hierarchies and evaluations in the knowledge of the cause.

It must be said that Cantemir's perspective expresses a metaphysical way of seeing sacred science, which is based on Cantemir's religious attachment. The structure of the work shows this: the philosopher starts from ontology, from the principles he calls theologo-physical to then move on to the way these principles work in the creation of the universe, following the course of creation, the work of nature; Cantemir dwells especially on the movement of place, duration and eternity, continuing with the study of life, that is, with the description of the fourfold form of things. Only at the end does he analyze the way in which sacred science presents itself, dealing with the preservation of things and the freedom of the soul. Cantemir has a language that combines metaphorical expression with the use of technical terms from philosophy and theology.

This procedure used by Cantemir is not due to the philosopher's youth or his inclination for poetry or excessive speculation. Just as the method must be adapted to the object of research, so that if the object, as is the case with science and knowledge, presents itself at several levels and in several forms and the method must adapt to this plurality, the same is the case with the language used in the exposition, as well as how and with the very order of the exposition.

What in a study of a scientific nature may appear as utterance devoid of clear meaning and reference, to a contemplative theologian and even to a speculative philosopher the same thing may appear as an adequate form of expressing that kind of knowledge which Cantemir

has in mind. We tried to show that the philosopher is aware of the complexity and difficulties he faces and finds a balanced solution to formulate his ideas.

The analysis of this chapter could have flowed step by step following the six chapters of Cantemir's work; perhaps it would have been an appropriate way to describe, to present the work of the ruler. But our research wants to show how Cantemir's thinking about knowledge and sacred science is presented for today's researcher, in the light of the contemporary concept of knowledge. Therefore, we chose to treat the matter according to an order that we thought was more appropriate, so that Cantemir's ideas, on the one hand, enter into a deeper dialogue with the modern concept of knowledge, and on the other hand, to also tell something to us, who are fed with the contemporary concept.

The chapter was divided into three subchapters; already from this structuring it will be understood that the language used by us is closer to the philosophical language of today and even to the modern one than to the Cantemirian complex language with theological and philosophical terms.

The first subchapter is dedicated to natural knowledge; he covers those parts of Cantemir that talk about natural work, about time, movement, etc. and even about life. It is a chapter in which we organized Cantemir's ideas by referring to the knowledge obtained through the senses and from reason as a natural faculty. But when we talk about nature and about the fact that the senses and reason participate in natural knowledge, we must keep in mind that we are doing this with reference to Cantemir, that is, to a thinker who, as can be seen from the sequence of ideas in his work, makes nature and, therefore, from the tools of knowledge that it makes available to us, a part of the divine creation. If we want to capitalize on the Cantemirian formulations, we can do it not only from our perspective, but also taking into account the position of the thinker.

The second subchapter is dedicated to the analysis of supernatural knowledge. The simple observation must be made that by using these terms we have tried to respect the way in which Cantemir, the theologian-physicist, positions himself. If we had used the term contemplation, it would have covered, for example, a Platonic philosophical type relationship with the principle, but it would have been less than what Cantemir intends to tell us. Sacred science has its basis in God, in the sense that he reveals to us, in various forms, through creation itself, through theophanies, through love, his own being and thus offers us a tool that goes beyond the senses, discursive arguments, etc.; but it is a knowledge that belongs to us no less, it is our own. The supernatural should not be understood as exceptional, as miraculous because with God the senses, reason or revelation are equally natural, they belong to what constitutes

our connection with him, with the accent falling theocentrically. What we are doing now is rational research, a research that respects the demands of logic and argumentation, but which cannot exclude - even taking God out of the discussion - the fact that it is in our human nature to ask ourselves these questions about knowledge in a broader sense.

In the last sub-chapter we mention the main objective of the research; we try to argue that, on the one hand, Cantemir makes a philosophical construction, but on the other hand, its finality is not in the fact that he, Cantemir, prefers the hierarchy of knowledge that has the sacred science on the highest step, nor in the fact that he offers us a philosophical theory. The finality that we consider that Cantemir pursues appeals to the person and his free will, to the fact that the Creator wanted us and made us in such a way that we are familiar with all these forms of knowledge and each of us be free to choose the hierarchy that He considers more grounded.

The conclusion of the research retains the results obtained: the description and analysis of Cantemir's position towards the sacred science; the presentation of the hierarchy of knowledge levels in Dimitrie Cantemir's conception; highlighting his commitment to sacred science, but also respect - promoted both by scientific research and by the freedom supported by religion - for each of us to establish our own hierarchies and valorizations in the matter of knowledge in an educated manner.

We repeat some remarks from the end of the paper about the path taken in the research, from fixing the contemporary concept of knowledge used as a working tool for the analysis of Cantemir's ideas about sacred science and knowledge, to clarifying the way in which the positions of modern philosophers (especially those of Locke and Leibniz's) outlined a concept of knowledge specific to the era (which today is mainly understood in terms of the foundation of truth on its source), in order to reach the core of the work, dedicated to Cantemir's position: devoted firstly to the way in which his life, carried out in complex situations, acquires philosophical relevance, and, finally, to the way in which Cantemir manages to combine his own commitments with the various assimilated cultural influences in his vision of sacred science.

One of the **novelties** of this research consists in the very justification of the Cantemirian attachment for a certain type of knowledge and in particular for sacred science. In addition, Cantemir's insistence on free will led to the support of a perhaps bolder, but, we think, solidly founded hypothesis: each person, knowing Cantemir's description of knowledge, is free to evaluate the levels of knowledge and their hierarchy, even if for the philosopher, sacred science is supreme. This is an unprecedented result in the research of the prince's work, but it is a

natural one to the extent that the research spirit of science and the tolerance genuinely preached by religion meet in recognizing everyone's right to evaluate knowledge.

Analyzing the modern concept of knowledge, the main conclusion we reached was that, with philosophers such as Descartes, Locke and Leibniz, in the concept of knowledge, in addition to the senses and intellect, in addition to what is controllable through them, is also included a faculty that refers to a metaphysical principle. Whether this faculty is divine veracity (Descartes), revelation of divine order (Locke) or pre-established harmony (Leibniz), we found that, in the modern model of knowledge (at least at the beginning of modernity), a certain faculty is included that gives access to divinity (through its collaboration with man); and this result, we think, represents a new element in exegesis.

The model of knowledge present in the above is the one we will also meet in Dimitrie Cantemir, where sacred science is added to the senses and intellect to ensure knowledge. The peculiarity of these modern philosophers lies in the fact of interpreting this last faculty as appropriate to the way in which they themselves conceive the metaphysical principle. Thus, with Descartes, with Locke and even with Leibniz, the invocation of the metaphysical principle and its knowledge by man has rather an exceptional character; the emphasis falls on the construction of natural knowledge, and the supernatural aspect intervenes only at the points where either the Christian religion must be assumed as a form of conformity (Locke), or a higher faculty is assumed due to the constructive needs of the respective system (Leibniz).

Regarding the unique modern concept of knowledge, another relevant acquisition consists in arguing that, already in Kant, the separation between a model of natural knowledge and a model of morality, which at least admits divinity as the supreme judge, is explicitly established. A major difference between the way Kant thinks in full modernity and the way analytical philosophy thinks today resides in the aspect that, in Kant, there is still a connection between natural and moral knowledge in that the same reason has a theoretical use in knowledge and a practical use in morality; the theoretical use of reason mainly considers speculative ideas as a framework for knowledge (sensitivity, intellect, imagination), but it is the faculty by which persons morally relate to each other as noumenons.

Analyzing the influence exerted by Dimitrie Cantemir's life on his ideas, the main finding we reached was that, in his case, as in other philosophers, his personal life and its events found a genuine echo in the plane of thought /creation. We have argued that we cannot understand *Sacrosanctae*... in the absence of a reference to the cleavage experienced by the prince in Istanbul between his Orthodox religion, education and training, on the one hand, and the dominant Islamic culture, on the other. If we remove the works of his youth from this

confrontation, which took place in the person of Cantemir himself, we risk considering, as regrettably not infrequently, the *Divan, Sacrosanctae...* as mere notes of a young scholar, if not even as meaningless texts. We then argued that, being in Russia, the Moldovan scholar is in the presence of another cleavage, that between modern Western science, which he knows as a member of the Berlin Academy, and his unwavering adherence to Orthodoxy. In this sense, we argued that, in the ruler's works, the Western method of description and analysis of facts is followed, but we also argued that, in Cantemir's view, these procedures do not affect his attachment to Orthodox thinking; on the contrary, at least in terms of the support of human free will, both by science and by religion.

Analyzing *Sacrosanctae...*, we showed that Dimitrie Cantemir criticizes pagan philosophy based on senses and calculating reason, as he also criticizes scholasticism too much under the influence of pagan thought. The most relevant novelty here consists in the description of the unique model of knowledge that Cantemir works with, a model in which the intellect is thought of as a mediator between the senses and sacred science; and the latter represents a mark of divinity in man, through which the divine Revelation is received and through which the intellect and the senses can be led to the Truth, that is, to God, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Formulating these arguments, we facilitated the understanding of the fact that, for Cantemir, orthodox thought is really orthodox, and the physics he proposes to us, as well as the ethics he proposes to us, is theologo-physics and theologo-ethics. Last but not least, another relevant novelty of the research undertaken resides in the idea that Dimitrie Cantemir is a strong supporter of free will, so that each of us has the freedom to exercise the model of knowledge either towards truth or falsehood: forced truth would be but worse than the fake, from Cantemir's perspective. This represents a useful lesson even for the contemporary understanding of epistemology, when researchers sometimes consider themselves too easily free of commitments.

The results of the present research can be constituted, we believe, including as an argument to first check on the mature works of the prince how exactly his model for knowledge works. In the content of the work, we made only a few vague references to this aspect that should be developed; as it should be developed, we think, and the few characteristic elements for knowledge listed at the end of the last chapter.