Reflections on *Norms of the Literary Language in the Bible of Bucharest (1688)* by Vasile Arvinte

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Biblia de la București *est un livre fondamental de notre culture, contribuant au développement de la langue roumaine dans l`espace carpatique-danubiano-pontique, étant dans le même temps aussi un signe de l`unité spirituelle des Roumains.* ***Les normes de la langue littéraire dans la Bible de Bucarest (1688)*** *par Vasile Arvinte constituent l`un de plus importants études de l`histoire littéraire, un livre de chevet pour tout linguist réalisé sous la forme d`un étude systhématique, dans lequel les normes de la langue roumaine sont analysées sous divers aspects: phonétique, morphologique, synthtétique, lexical. L`élément de nouveauté est donné par l`étude stratigraphique du lexique de Biblie, l`auteur envisage les trois éléments de la langue roumaine: le substrat autochtone, le strat latin, l'adstrat slave et les diverses influences exercitées par les langues: grécque, hongroise, allemande et turque.*

Mots-clés: la norme littéraire, La Biblie, Vasile Arvinte.

The second half of the seventeenth century is characterized by the coexistence of two important ways of literary Romanian language: the Northern, specific to Moldavian dialect and the southern, specific to Wallachian dialect, representing aspects of the same language, transposed in the texts that will influence Romanian spirituality until today.

The Bible of 1688, entitled *The Divine Scripture of the Old and New Testaments*, is the first complete translation of *the Bible* into Romanian language, printed during the rule of Șerban Cantacuzino, from 1687 to 1688, with the contribution of scholars as: Ghermano de Nisa, Sevastos Kymenites and brothers Radu and Șerban Greceanu.

In our century, this text was reissured under the guidance of Concept Foundation, as part of the collection Fundamental books of Romanian Culture, by the Publishing House of „Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, an encyclopedic edition, in two volumes, elaborated by a group of notorious philologists of the language school in Iași, led by prof. dr. Vasile Arvinte. (The 1st Volume: the text of the edition was set and edited by Vasile Arvinte and Ioan Caproşu; text transcription by Alexandru Gafton and Laura Manea, the linguistic

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study, the index and the bibliography by Vasile Arvinte, comment on the edition by Vasile Arvinte, Ioan Caproşu and Alexandru Gafton and for theachieving of the second volume there joined N.A.Ursu. The 2nd Volume includes two philological studies: *New information concerning the signature manuscript and Therevised text of the Old Testament translated by Nicolae Spătarul*, N.A.Ursu and the study entitled *The relationship between the New Testament from Belgrad (1648) and The Corresponding text from the Bucharest Bible* prof. dr. Alexandru Gafton.

The intervention of the linguists from Iasi was quite difficult, as Vasile Arvinte noted at the launch of the critical edition of *The Bible from Bucharest* (1688): „The difficulty was given by transposition of Slavic text into a Latin one and the establishment of the literary language norms, as they reflected in the about 1,000 large pages text, arranged in two columns, of *the Bucharest Bible*, a work which has not been examined in the course of over 100 years of Romanian philology. Researchers were impressed by the scale and the complexity of the text concepts and notions of ancient Greek and Hebrew language, which the eighteenth century Romanians attempted to formulate in their own language" (Vasile Arvinte).

Originally published in 2001, at the end of the first volume of the *Bible of 1688*, then in 2004, in a separate volume, Vasile Arvinte's study entitled *The norms of literary language in the Bible of Bucharest (1688)* is an elaborated text of more than 180 pages, which analyzes the first five books of Moses („Genesis", „Exit", „Priesthood", „Numbers", „The Second Law") based on three comparative versions: *The Bucharest Bible* (The Bible of Radu and Şerban Greceanu brothers), the manuscript 45 (belonging to Dumitru from Cîmpulung) and the manuscript 4389 (belonging to Daniil Andrean Panoneanul). Each of the three texts contains specific elements belonging to the two variants of the literary language: Nordic version, Moldovan (manuscript 45) and the southern variant, Wallachian (4389 manuscript); *The Bible of Bucharest*, is, actually, a combination of the two norms: southern and northern.

Marking an essential moment in the evolution of Romanian culture and history, this work is at the same time ,,a summary of the most important phenomena specific to literary norm of BB" (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. II), where there are analyzed parts of the *Old* and *New Testament*, stating, right from the introduction, the manner of working: „The analysis I made is based on numerous examples of language and is accompanied by extensive discussions on etymological nature, with reference to older stages in the history of Romanian language ..." (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. II).

Throughout the 180 pages there are presented different linguistic phenomena important for the knowledge of literary language norms of the era, in phonetics (emphasis/stress, vocalism, consonantism), in morphology and syntax (grammatical categories: the noun, the article, the adjective, the pronoun, the numeral, the verb, the adverb, the preposition, the conjunction, the interjection)

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and the stratigraphic and etymological analysis of the vocabulary (elements of Latin, Slavic, Bulgarian, German, Turkish, Hungarian).

The linguist addresses three key issues in the analysis of literary norm, in the phonetic field, connecting to the text of *The Bible from Bucharest* and to Manuscript 45, more precisely: the accent (the oscillation of the intensity stress „míriște – miríște", emphasizing the names of countries of regions or of towns ending in *ia* on the penultimate syllable, as in Latin: *Asíia* (BB), after the Greek model, with the emphasis, stress on the penultimate syllable *Siría*; vocalism: *ia* diphthong passage in *ié, i* weak: *înviiarea, înviere*; the spliting of *iá (>ia): viiață <lat. vivitia* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. V); lat. *á+n+*voc: first with the forms of *-ă-*: *călcăiu* (the Moldovan variant), -î- *călcîi* (the Wllachian variant); sound *u* in final position: *să facu, întinsu* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. VII); consonantism: palatalisation, phenomenon met in BB, especially in the case of *f+i, -i*, palatal spiral *h* that turns deaf, especially common situation in Moldova: *hiară* for *fiară* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. VIII); phonetic accidents: propagation of *n* (Northern variant, contemporary literary): *genunchi, mănunchi* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XXII).

Wanting to make a comprehensive study, Vasile Arvinte shows many aspects about morphology and syntax, presenting specific situations for various flexible and unflexible parts of speech. Regarding the noun, Vasile Arvinte analyzes the situation of oscilations for grammar categories: declination: *mînă* (ms. 45); sg. *mînă*, pl. *mîni* (*BB*); observing the genre of the noun *pustiu* that presents oscillation gender: neutral in the 2nd declension and *pustie* feminine in the 3rd declension (*BB*); the plural noun with its feminine endings in *–i (pietri, pietrii*), neutral plural *-e* (*brîne, brăie*), neutral plural – *uri (inuri, cîmpuri*), the oscilation in sg. *ă* acc. to plural (*țară-țări*) and the cases: dative with *-a*: *Le măsură grîu Iosif și ... a toată casa tătîne-su* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XXV); the vocative in *-e*: *Împărate*!; the vocative of masculine proper names in *-e: Adame*!, and proper names that after desinence they look like feminine, have the vocative în *-o*: *Iudo!* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XXV). There is, also, analysed the situation of the definite article: feminine proper names make in old Romanian language with the genitive-dative in *-ii, ei, îi,i, a*: *ii Rahil* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XXVIII); the masculine article proclitic *lui*: *lu Iacov* (*BB*), which we cannot find in manuscript 45; the forms of the genitive-possessive article *al, ai, a, ale* are used in accordance with the current norm, sometimes in manuscript 45 the form of masculine plural *ai* and feminine plural *ale* are replaced with the invariable form *a*: *a lumii, a oilor* (Arvinte, NLL, p. XXIX).

Vasile Arvinte presents the elements specific to adjectives (the comparison, the superlative expressed by construction: *mult foarte* or only using the adverb *foarte*; the pronouns: the pronoun *o* placed after the verb: *Vei lucra-o* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XXXI) or before the auxiliary: *o am dat*; of numerals: ordinal *a patra* (*o pătrime*), collective: *tustrei, cîțeșitrei*, multiplicative *înseșit, îndoit*, adverbial *o mie de părți mai multu* („multiplicat printr-o mie''), and noun: *încincelă* („a cincea parte") (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XXXIX).

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Among the old Romanian language-specific phenomena there are recorded such as: verbal forms iotacizante: in popular dialects, especially the southern, Wallachian verbs in indicative, present subjunctive and gerund, have in their structure *t, d, n, r: eu scot, eu cer* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XL); we mention here some of the periphrastic constructions in present indicative: *a fi* + gerund*: Pământ care iaste curînd lapte și miiare* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XLI), imperfect verb *a se face* + gerund: *Și norul Domnului se făcea umbrind zioa preste ei* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XLV); imperfect: the verb *a fi* + gerund*: era stînd* „stătea'' (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XLIV); periphrastic perfect compound composed of perfect compound of the verb *a fi* + gerund*: au fost urîndu – au urît etc.* and some other forms, adverbial forms from the biblical text: *aici(a), acii* and *acolea, acum* (*BB*), *acmu* (manuscript 45), *amu* (in Moldova), and *acum* (in Muntenia); *aiave* („întocmai, în realitate"), c*ăce* preceeded by *pentru* („de ce"), *cîtinel* („încet"), *de curîndu* („nu de mult timp"), *dară* („oare"), *de* („decît"), *de-aicii* („apoi", „după aceea"), the adverbial phrase *de-a diriapta* („din dreapta"), *decinde* („dincolo de"), *dempreună* („împreună"), *mainte de* („in the northern version"), *măcar(ă)* („cel puțin", „încaltea"), *niciodinioară* („niciodată"), *pretutindinea* („peste tot", „în toate părțile").

The linguist Vasile Arvinte observed the variety of prepositions and prepositional phrases specific to old language: the preposition *a-* in genitive-dative case or in construction as: *a+tot, toată*: „a toate jigăniile", or with the meaning of *la*: „calea a pustiiu"; *de (de cît)*, the prepositional phrase *de către* („de", „dinspre"), *den, după*, *prenpregiur* („împrejurul"), *prentre*, *preste* („asupra"), of the conjunctions and conjunction phrases: *cu prilej adecă* („sub motiv că"); *den vreamece* („după ce"), *drepta ceaea* („astfel"), *în ce chip* („după cum"), *pentru căce* („pentru că"), to the conjunction *și*. A special situation is represented by the conjunction *să* („dacă"), which has been adapted to the Southern literary norm, being gradually replaced by the conjunction *de*: „iar *de* să va afla" (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. LXIII).

From the category of interjection two of them in are highlighted: *amin!* (frequently used and replaced later by „fie!", „iată!") and *o!* (suggesting admiration or grief).

Analyzing the first five books of the *Old Testament (the Pentateuch*) and some parts of *the New Testament*, Vasile Arvinte examines the vocabulary stratigraphically, grouping the terms according to their origin: Latin terms which are archaisms today: *județ (giudeț)* – „1. Judecată, proces"; 2. „Hoșen" (<lat. *Judicium*); Italian: *căpitan* - „ șef militar care comandă 1000 de oameni'' (<it. Capitano), (*BB*), and in *the New Testament*, with the meaning of „tribune" (*tribun*): „Și apropiindu-se căpitanul zise lui'' (Arvinte, *NNL*, p. LXXIII); Slavic (of folk or religious origin) or new archaic terms; words with unusual meanings: *așiderea* (<+ slTakozde + re + a), term known in religious language; in *the New Testament*: *Făcu așijderea, Zise așijderea* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. LXXIV); *chit* - „balenă'' (vsl. Kitu) in *the New Testament*: „Cum au fost Iona înpîntecele *chitulu*", terms borrowed from Greek and considered, at that time, neologisms of

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old Romanian language, adapted or not adapted to Romanian phonetic system like: *argat* – „slugă", „șerb", „rob" and elements of Hungarian origin: *chip* - 1. Sn „idol" (Hungary *Kep Bild, Bildnis, Standbild, Angesicht, Gesicht*; the phrase „chip cioplit" *Gotzenbild (-idol)* in BB. 2. Place. Adv. „În chip, cu chip în mod evident, în mod clar, pe față", in BB; and in Turkish terms that refer to household items, clothing like: *cearșaf* – „giulgiu", „pînză albă pe pat" (<tc. Cearşaf <cf.ngr. alb, in *the New Testament*: „Luînd trupul lui Iosif îl învăli în cearșaf curat" and terms of Thracian origin, from the native hearth: *vatră, foyer, âtre*, Herd, (cf. alb.*Vatre*), in ms. 45" (Arvintel, *NLL*, p. XCIV).

Studying the *Bible from Bucharest*, Vasile Arvinte realizes the translator's preference for linguistic counting, manifested both at the lexical and grammatical „through this process, these translators tended to reproduce as faithfully as possible the meaning of the biblical biblicalin the aboriginal language of the holy book" (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XCIV). Initially used by Nicolae Milescu, linguistic calculation is a process of enriching the vocabulary in the text of *The Bible from Bucharest*, used with the aim of giving a new meaning to an already existing word, after the model of the corresponding term, from a foreign language: in gerund construction: *a amărî* – în construcția gerunzială *a fi amărînd* „a supăra'', „a exaspera'', „a irita'' (*BB*, ms.45): *Amărînd aț fost ceale de către Dumnezău* (Arvinte, *NLL*, p. XCVI).

The linguistic study *The norms of the literary language in the Bible of Bucharest (1688)* by Vasile Arvinte is a fundamental book for any linguist, a history language lesson for every language learner, an awareness that vocabulary, morphology and syntax of the biblical text are largely similar to those we have today.

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