LANGUAGE TRAITS OF THE WALLACHIAN CHRONICLERS

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Abstract: *The present research proposes the analysis of matters related to the traits of the popular language of the Wallachian chronicles from the 17th and 18th centuries. It has been revealed, whenever possible, the beauty of the old Romanian language, entirely kept in the chronicles that do not cease to fascinate us. It has been noticed the evolution of the Romanian language, under the form of the Wallachian dialect, to a cultural language status. There are analysed the archaic features from the old texts, due to the great frequency of archaisms, but a special characteristic lies in the use of complicated sentences, with artificial syntactic connections which leads to a non-popular, fake-scholarly character. It is also emphasized the great number of neologisms, as part of the vocabulary, apart from the current language basic stock. The entrance of these lexical items is due to the political, cultural and economic relationships with certain Central European countries but also with Poland and Russia, in which reflexes of the Occidental culture can be found, and on the other hand, with countries from the Balkan* Peninsula*, under the conditions of the Romanian Provinces dependence on the Ottoman Empire. Many of the age chroniclers spoke Greek and Slavic quite well. Among them there were also speakers of Turkish and Italian. This is why Greek and Slavic words can be found in the Wallachian chronicles, words that have not been assimilated by the Romanian language, but still, they are used within the administrative language. It has been found that these Wallachian chronicles are representative monuments of literary language, to a much greater extent than the Moldavian ones.*

Key words: *language, Wallachian chroniclers, High Steward.*

The Wallachian historiography in Romanian is as much as thriving as the one compiled by the Moldavian chroniclers. The oldest Wallachian chronicles written in Romanian appeared before Grigore Ureche's annals: two chronicles of Mihai Viteazul (Michael the Brave) (one manorial and the other official) and Mihail Moxa's chronograph (from 1620).

These chronicles are important because they were written in a period when the Romanian language had begun to be used predominantly in the religious literature, in the official documents and in private letters.

It is barely the following chronicles that they succeeded in establishing a tradition in the Wallachian historiography: The Anonymous Chronicle of Matei Basarab's ruling; Cantacuzene Annals; Băleni's Chronicle; Constantin Brâncoveanu's life by Radu Greceanu; the Brâncoveanu's ***Anonymous*** and Nicolae Mavrocordat's Chronicle by Radu Popescu. Beginning with 1854, their circulation during the respective age, as well as their being known by the contemporaries and the following generations are proved by the quite high number of the manuscript copies which continued to be made through the end of the 19th century.

The Wallachian chroniclers' language is singularized thanks to its popular features, some of them asserting over the course of time as supradialectal standard in the literary Romanian language, and some others being kept up to nowadays as

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regionalisms. Numerous archaisms are discovered within these texts, some of them being specific to the area, some others mechanically preserved in writing.

The numerous presence of the archaic traits in the older texts, by comparison to the genuine ones, represents a clue that the latter have gone through some modernisations, yet maintaining their genuine archaic features.

The vocabulary distinguishes itself by a significant number of neologisms, apart from the current language basic stock, neologisms that entered the language that period. This substantial number of neologisms of Roman origin represents also the beginnings of the cultural relationships with the countries from the Europe's Occident.

Phonetics

With regard to the phonetics, among the Wallachian chronicles, most of the archaic features are possessed by ***"Anonymous Chronicle of Matei Basarab's ruling"*** and ***"Cantacuzene Annals"***.

"Istoria Țărai Rumânesti" of High Steward Constantin Cantacuzino comprises numerous popular phonetisms and new items which shall be asserted as standard.

"Constantin Brâncoveanu's Life" and ***"Nicolae Mavrocordat's Chronicle"*** include numerous new popular phonetisms, some of them dialectal, but also archaic phonetic traits. Archaisms from the last two chronicles can be explained by the influence of the religious literature: the respective chroniclers, Radu Greceanu and Radu Popescu, were quite familiar with the religious texts, the first one even being an ecclesiastic books translator and the second one becoming a monk not long after he had begun to compile his chronicle.

A spelling issue is the presence of -u after consonant groups, in cases where the modern literary language has removed it. I.e.: **haraciul împărătesc (Cron. Bal.), au mersu, au ajunsu si la domnu, pa ascunsu, sintu, calul domnescu, s-au strinsu (Radu Pop.), auzindu, pe largu** (High Steward Cantacuzino) etc.

In some chronicles this -u appears very seldom (at High Steward Cantacuzino), while in others (at Radu Greceanu and Radu Popescu), is quite frequently used.

Writing -u, as in examples above, is a traditional spelling that has not been corresponding to a phonetic reality for a long time already. The very alternations previously mentioned explain the fact that -u does not have a phonetic value. There are removed situations where its presence is demanded by the postposition of a pronoun in its unstressed form, or of a reflexive pronoun. I.e.: **pre ascunsu-l otrăviră** (Let. Cant.), **venindu-le** (Radu Popescu). In these cases *-u* represents a phonetic reality.

A general archaic spelling in all Wallachian chronicles is the traditional writing adding **ii**, in the first syllable of the verb (of Slavic origin), **primi – to receive (priimi)**, in all grammatical forms, as well as in derivatives. I.e.: **priimi** (past simple), **priimise** - he had received (past perfect), **au priimit** – they had received (simple past), **sa priimeasca** he/they should receive (Radu Greceanu), **sa nu priimeasca** he/they should not receive (Anon. br.), **nepriimind** not receiving (Radu Popescu), **priiminta** (Radu Greceanu).

In several cases, under the assimilation action, certain innovations appear and they shall be asserted as supradialectal standard. A form such as ***"church"*** is often found in the Wallachian chronicles, although Radu Popescu prefers the archaising form ***"beseric"***.

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The verbs **to walk, to bloat, to fill** are used almost regularly at Wallachia's chroniclers, by comparison to older forms, used in the 16th century **(imbla, imfla, implea)**.

Sometimes *E* is alternated by *ă* whenever preceded by *ţ, ş, j*. Here, we also meet newer forms, with ă, except in Const. Cantacuzino's chronicle, where the old rule, by using *e* is followed. I.e.: **sa se inţăleaga** - so that this should be understood; ***oraşă*** - town, ***sădea*** - genuine, ***comişăi*** - drummer, ***stramosascul scaun*** – the ancestral throne, etc.

A strictly dialectal trait is the innovation ***"dupre"*** and ***"dupe"*** deriving from ***"după"*** - after, which it is alternated by: ***"după aceia – dupre aceia - dupe aceea, o ai măritat dupre Bogdan, dupe zisele lor"***- afterwards you had her married to Bogdan, according to their sayings.

The **dupre** preposition, together with its basic form **după**, has replaced the prepositional locution **de pre**, by a fake analogy, which entailed the reduction of **de pren** to **du pren**. I.e.: **hainele dupre ei** - their clothes of them; **alţii du pren alte mănăstiri** – some others from other monasteries; **tara du peste Olt** - the region across the Olt River, etc.

Morphology

The morphologic structure is much more unitary in the Wallachian chronicles. Certain language facts appear at an author only very seldom. Usually, we meet elements of the spoken language, elements with popular pattern.

Although there can be identified some phenomena that have almost disappeared completely, but also some vernaculars innovations, the texts do not offer a convincing material so as to be able to draft a convincing material during that period.

The Nominal Flexion

1. Articulation by the definite article of the proper names of persons: ***"Imparatul Nemţescu"*** - Nemţescu Emperor, ***"sol de la Rodolful"*** - emissary from Rodolful.
2. The lack of the enclitic article and the removal of gender, case and flexional class features for nouns showing degrees of kinship, followed by the possessive adjective: ***"nunta fii-sa Stancai"*** – his daughter Stanca's wedding, ***"Să puie pe fii-său Iordachie domn"*** – Least he should have his son Iordachie as a ruler.
3. The tendency to remove the definite article for masculine and neutral singular **"-l"** (In the Nominative-Accusative): ***"la Beci, la imparatu nemtesc Leopold"*** – in the German Emperor Leopold's cellar.
4. The use of the gender and number agreement forms of the possessive article and the rare presence of the invariable form ***"a"***, ***"oameni ai muntelui"*** – mountaineers, people of the mountains, ***"a carora lucruri"*** – of whose things, etc.
5. Ordinal numeral declination, especially when the construction has an attributive form and when it is not associated with an adjectival article, the frequency in the High Steward Cantacuzino's chronicles: ***"a trea decadă a adoăi carti"*** – the third decade of the second book.
6. The termination in ***"-a"*** of the imperfect indicative, third person plural: ***"era"*** – it was, ***"împingea"*** – he pushed, ***"stiia"*** – he knew, ***"zicea"*** – he said.

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7. Presence of an ***"i"*** between the root word and termination, in the imperfect of the 4th conjugation verbs: ***"auziiam" (first person singular)***, ***"Impartiia" (third person singular), "ştiia" (third person plural).***
8. The use of the auxiliary ***"au"*** and for third person singular: the past tense of the indicative: ***"au inceput"*** – they started, ***"au supus"*** – they subjected, ***"s-au dus"*** – they left.
9. A high frequency of the presumptive forms: **"Acum dară cât va fi fost de lung si ce pod va fi fost, socoteasca cine pofteşte si iaste grijiuliv ca la acestea a sti"** – (High Steward Const. Cantacuzino); **De nu vor fi mers boieri alții la Odriiu, tu sa dai aceste carti, iar de au trimis boieri acolo, si vor fi vrind numai sa-si riza de mine, tu sa dai aceste carti.**
10. The archaic plural-like appearance of the numeral ***mie***: ***trei sute de mie*** – three hundred thousand, ***optzeci de mie*** – eighty thousand.
11. The use of the relative pronoun ***care*** as demonstrative pronoun and having attributive function: ***care Decheval cu mari puteri s-au sculat; Carei ducinu-sa acolo la Tarigrad au umblat cu mesteşug.***
12. Articulation of the relative pronoun ***care***, in the nominative-accusative. I.e.: ***nici iaste dogma carea sa nu o credem; boierii cei mari si ai doilea, carii sa intimplase in Bucureşti etc.***

Verbal Flexion

1. The presence of some older forms for certain persons of the present indicative of the verb to wish: ***va, vom, vor.*** I.e.: ***cine va, grăieşte cu dinsul; Toți vom, carii jafuiesc fara dreptate cum vor.***
2. The very low frequency of the archaic past tense simple of ***ziş*** type.
3. The reflexive form of the verb having passive value: ***Decheval biruindu-se, au fugit; tot Dachi...de multi sa numiia.***

The inflexible parts of speech.

Less common archaic forms of adverbs: ***acea de apoi*** **"in cele din urma"** - finally: ***Insa, acea de apoi, vazind Traian ca in lung sat rage acest razboiu...s-au sculat de au venit...dinsu de dimineata: iata dinsu de dimineata incep razboiul dintr-amindoao partile...***

Numerous prepositions have distinct acceptation as compared to the current meaning: ***catra "fata de": catra crestini blind; de "de la": ei...scriu...numai pen auz si pen'trebari de cei ce umbla privind lumea.***

Syntax

Both the sentence and the phrase structure have a popular role. In certain chronicles (the Brâncoveanu's ***Anonymous***; the High Steward Constantin Cantacuzino) the phrase offers us relationships having artificial traits. We can exemplify certain typical constructions of the sentence syntax:

1. Adnominal dative construction (adjunct in dative): ***era nepot lui Traian, au ramas si ei stapanitori multori tari; Dionisie...fiind Cantacozinilor ruda.***

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2. Personal pronoun, the third person singular, feminine, unemphasized form, placed before the past tense of the indicative: ***"când o au facut", "Armenia toata o au luat".***

3. Use of gerundial constructions: ***"Insa trecand printipul pin tara, facand conace cat s-au putut, au tras la Ardeal si au mersu la Brasov". (Radu Popescu); Iar Mihaiu spatariul fiind la satu lui, la Cozleci, intelegind cum ca vine Nicolae-voda domn, si cuscra-sau Mihai-voda nu, au fugit sa treaca la nemti, iar plaiasii l-au prins si l-au intors indurat.***

4. Case agreement of the apposition with the modified noun: ***aflind trupul lui Cheve voevodului; craiule Atilo; o, ticăloase Radule.***

5. Topic with the adjectival attribute placed before the noun: ***grija inca avind de cei nedomoliti oameni; iel insusi cu toata romana putere s-au sculat; de obste iaste orbul noroc***, especially in the High Steward Cantacuzino's chronicle.

6. Use of the construction: adjectival attribute + noun with indefinite adjective, but with noun accompanied by the definite article: ***pomenire de mari si de puternice faptele lui*** (here we can notice the construction *de* + noun, as a substantival attribute in the genitive).

7. Use of the infinitive in a series of syntactic functions, the construction in the subjunctive being achieved later on: ***asa lucrul fiind, ce a face eu n-am, fara cit iata..., caci si vremea prelunga imi va fi a cheltui, direpт aceia nici pe acel Carol a mai trai au vrut.***

8. Preference of the High Steward Const. Cantacuzino for sentences with the predicate placed at the end: ***Decheval inca nu intr-un loc sedea, nici fara de mare grjja sa afla, ci si el cu toate puterile cite avea, si tare sa apară, si de multe ori si izbandira.***

Phrase Syntax

The complex and artificial traits of certain blunt phrases made up of many secondary clauses, with gerundial constructions, are required by the aspiration of some self-taught chroniclers to write in a scholarly manner (I.e.: The High Steward Constantin Cantacuzino). We need to note the influence of the Romanian religious literature style, literature which is well known by all our chroniclers. In addition to this, there is the influence of the Romanian religious literature style, literature that is well known by all our chroniclers.

In most cases, phrases are clear, made up of few sentences or of relatively simple ones.

Vocabulary

Just as the Moldavian chronicles, the Wallachian ones, apart from the older basic stock and the newer scattered loan words from other languages, include Latin, Turkish and Greek neologisms. These entered the language due to the development of the political, economic and cultural relationships both with Central European countries (Poland, Russia), and with those from the Balkan Peninsula. Many of the Wallachian chroniclers were good speakers of Slavonic and Greek. Some of them even spoke Italian and Turkish.

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The Neo-Greek origin items represent a newer stratum, the circulation of some of them being limited to the narrow circles of the society: ***armada*** (feminine noun) "armata, flota" - army, fleet, ***catastih*** "condică, registru" - class book, register, ***poetic*** (masculine noun) "poet" - poet. Most of the Neo-Grrek origin terms can be found in the chronicles of Radu Popescu and Radu Greceanu.

At some chroniclers we can speak about an abuse of turcisms: i.e. ***alai*** – suite (and ***halai***) neutral noun ceremony; lei masculine noun governed by the province, ***ortac*** - helpmate masculine noun "tovaras" - fellow, ***zorba*** feminine noun "revolta" - riot (Radu Popescu and Radu Greceanu).

Latin origin neologisms appeared for the first time in the very Wallachian chronicles. I.e.: ***audientie*** feminine noun "audienta" - audience, "dicret" neutral noun "decret" – decree, ***meleon*** neutral noun "milion" – million, ***tarimonie*** feminine noun "ceremonie" - ceremony.

Unknown or uncertain origin terms: ***apesti*** (to linger, to delay), ***apristui*** (a obtain, a supply), ***beldie*** (stick, rod), ***cehlui*** (to shave one's head), ***grapa*** (steag bănesc) - flag, ***hindi*** (showman), ***nitel*** (a little bit), ***sirile*** (water pots), ***ticăit*** (pitiable, wretched), ***moaşa*** (grandmother), ***butuci*** (thick pieces of carved wood) etc.

In the Wallachian chronicles, just as in the Moldavian ones, Slavic and Greek words can be found; they have not been assimilated by the Romanian language, but instead they are used only in a few fields. Sometimes there are also reproduced expressions and constructions, or more elaborated quotes, originating from the same source. I.e.:

a) Greek: ***areti*** (courage), ***dikigeriai*** (instigators);

b) Turkish: ***halila, halila, halila*** "Praise God!"; ***medetu, medetu, gheaur bezebat*** **"vai, vai, ghiaurii ne-au călcat"** ***"sunet dugun"*** wedding.

Words formation

Derivation by suffixes is much more developed than that with prefixes, and regressive derivation, grammatical category change and composition are met quite rarely.

Suffixes: *-ar* **(bajanar, birar, cupar, lacatar, olacar, surlar, satrar)**; *-aş* **(armas, cetas, jacas, muzicas)**; *-ciune* **(robiciune, sperieciune, neuniciune)**; *-iala* **(bantuiala, invaluiala, opreala)**; *-ean* **(mărginean, mostean, mosnean)**; *-ie* **(craie, hainie, dăscălie, mărie, spătărie)**; *-re* **(mutare, oştire, sotiire)**; *-tura* **(amestecătura, impotrivitura, secătura, pecetluitura, zicatura)**; *-toare* **(privighetoare)**; *-tura* **(amestecătura, impotrivitura, pecetluitura, secătura)**.

Prefixes: *dez-* **(dezbate: a scapă de sub puterea cuiva)**, *ne-* **(necuvios: ce nu se cuvine, ce nu se cade)**, **in-**, **im- (ingloti: a se strange gramada, intepa: a trage in teapa, imponcisa: a se opune, a se impotrivi)**.

There are also met certain verbs with no prefix which on the way, shall be recorded as having a prefix: ***cerce, s-au plinit, va plini, veninati, destulise***.

Regressive derivation: ***razbun*** (peace, quiet).

Schimbarea categoriei gramaticale: ***multamita, multemita, multumita*** (**multumire**- feminine noun - satisfaction, from **multamit** – adjective - satisfied).

Composition: ***estimp*** adv. (during this time, this year), ***namar*** (drudgingly, with difficulty).

Although interrupted around 1730, the Wallachian historiography in Romanian will be recommenced and continued only towards the end of the 18th century, by writers

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such as Mihai Cantacuzino, Dumitrache Medelnicerul, Ienachita Vacarescu and others, but it will not reach the level of artistic expressivity of the previous chronicles ever again.

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