

The role of function words in Moldavian Slavonic texts (15th - 16th centuries)

The Slavonic varieties used in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Romanian Speaking Lands represent an extraordinary scholarly interest both from linguistic and cultural perspectives. In our paper, we would like to present some results of our investigation on the evolution of Slavonic written varieties of Moldavia in the 15th – 16th centuries from the perspective of the use of function words of different origin. Our main focus will be the characterization of their occurrence in different types of texts.

Moldavia was, no doubt, linguistically and culturally more varied than Wallachia, absorbing the influences from Central, East and Southeastern Europe. The oldest Slavonic written variety surely used in Moldavia (since the late 14th century) was Ruthenian with a Galician-Bukovinian base. A serious language shift happened already in the first decade of the 15th century, when the Trinovitan (Târnovo) variety of the Middle Church Slavonic with East Bulgarian background was adopted as the cultural language. Besides that, also the Latin, German and Hungarian languages were used in written on the territory of Moldavia, while the dominant vernacular was the local dialect of Romanian. During the 15th and 16th century, the Slavonic writing was further impacted by the rising influence of mostly Wallachian-mediated South Slavic features as well as the Polish language, gaining gradually prestige in the Eastern Europe.

The function words, and especially the use of certain conjunctions, prepositions and particles, represent, together with the orthography, the most noticeable indicator of the variation of language elements of different origin. In the Moldavian Slavonic texts, we can thus find, often side-by-side the function words of Galician-Bucovinian (ѡже/аже ‘that’, цюбы ‘in order to’, коли ‘when’), Church Slavonic (ѡко ‘that’, иже ‘which’, аще ‘if’) South Slavic often borrowed through Wallachian Slavonic (ѡе ‘that’, ѡти ‘that’, кѡда ‘when’, за ,about‘) and Polish (иж ‘that’, прѡз ‘by, through’, кѡды ‘when’). Some of these function words are shared among more varieties, e. g. бо ‘because’, але ‘but’, ѡко ‘as’ in Ruthenian and Polish, оу ‘in’, цю ‘which’ in Ruthenian and Wallachian Slavonic, понеже ‘because’, како ‘how’ in Church Slavonic and Wallachian Slavonic.

The proportion of these language elements in concrete texts, naturally changing in time, characterize the local, functionally restricted, Slavonic varieties. Thus, in internal chancellery documents, Ruthenian function words can appear in the set formulas of *promulgatio* and in *dispositio*, while the Church Slavonic elements prevail, Wallachian (South Slavic) and Polish appear rarely. In the correspondence with Poland, the Ruthenian function words prevail, but they are gradually replaced by the Polish ones. In the correspondence with Transylvanian towns and some personal secular letters, the Ruthenian function words prevail in otherwise Church Slavonic texts being sometimes challenged by the Wallachian elements.