At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century Bessarabian Gagauz people went through an intensive assimilation process of Christian written culture that is connected with the increase of their religiousness and strengthening of their language and ethnic identity. Till the beginning of the 20th century they lacked any kind of literature in their native language including religious one. During their stay in the Balkans and a long period of time after they had moved to Bessarabia, the main source of knowledge about Christian history and dogmas for the Gagauz people were books in Karamanli language (written in Turkish language using Greek alphabet). Still these books cost much and few could afford them to buy and read.

On the territory of Bessarabia, Gagauz people met the lack of religious knowledge and literature with the help of books and handwritten religious texts primarily in the Moldavian language. Beginning with the second half, and mainly the end, of the 19th century, in the archival sources appear evidences that a small part of the population of some Gagauz villages (especially men) have knowledge of Moldavian language and less of Russian one. According to historiographical data, at the end of the 19th century among Bessarabian Gagauz people was spread the apocryphal text *The Dream of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus* in the Moldavian and Russian language.

At present it was possible to find some handwritten compilations of religious content in Gagauz language written in the Cyrillic script. Field material was collected during individual ethnographical researches in 2008–2011 in Gagauz villages and towns situated in the south of the Republic of Moldova: Ceadir-Lunga district (town Ceadir-Lunga, village Gaidari, village Cazaclia, village Beşghioz) and partially Comrat district (village Beşalma). The material was collected from the representatives of orthodox belief – people of old age, committed Christians, who systematically attend church and perform the whole range of religious rites.

It should be mentioned that in the collected handwritten compilations, depending on the interest of holder, are present different apocryphal texts: “The Epistle of Jesus Christ”, “The Epistles of Jesus Mother”, “The Ordeal of the Virgin Mary”, “The Dream of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus”, “A Tale About 12 Fridays”, “The Meeting of the Archangel Michael with Avizuh, with Satan’s Wing” and others. Nevertheless, the first free texts are present in all collected compilations. (Non-abridged texts and their variants will be...
published in the monograph research “The Apocryphal Texts Through The Religiousness of Gagauz People”. Some of them can be found in the supplement of the published monograph.

In this article we will analyze one of the most widespread among Gagauz people apocryphal tale of the New Testament – The Epistle about Lord’s Day (“The Epistle of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Sent From Heaven by God”). This apocryphal text is well known by many Christian nations. In this text Jesus prescribes us to live righteously and honor Sunday because on this day took place many important events: the Annunciation, the Baptism of Christ and His Resurrection, also on this day the Doomsday will come.

The Roman variant is considered to be the earliest one because it was mentioned in Jerusalem epistle. The time of its appearance is attributed to the 5th – 6th century, while the creation of Jerusalem variant (the original text in Greek language) the scientists refer to the 7th century. The first variant is translated from Greek into Bulgarian in the 11th-12th century, and the second in the 13th-14th century. In Slavic book tradition the most widespread is the Jerusalem variant. There are known some redactions that appeared at different times (Russian and South Slavic). The Bulgarians have both variants of this epistle „Епистолия за неделя“; overall they count more than 60. The Russian scientists attribute the appearance of Russian epistles about Lord’s Day to the 15th century. The apocryphal became widespread in the Ukrainian written tradition. The plot influenced the Ukrainian and Belarusian folklore and Russian spiritual poems.

Beginning with the 16th century The Epistle about Lord’s Day became widespread among Moldavians and Romanians. The epistle is known under different titles: “Епистолия Домнului nostru Iisus Hristos ce a trimis-o Dumnezeu din cer” / “The Epistle of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Sent From Heaven by God”, “Епистолie din Cer pentru respectarea Zilei Domnului” / The Epistle From Heaven to Venerate Lord’s Day”, “Епистолie din Cer pentru respectarea Zilei a Dumnícici” / “The Epistle from Heaven to Venerate Sunday”, “Епистоля lui Hristos pentru paza Dumnícici” / “The Epistle of Christ to Protect Sunday”, “Legenda Dumnícici” / “The Legend of Sunday”. Even today, according to Romanian researchers, the epistle and other apocryphal texts (for instance “The Dream of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus”) have a wide circulation, as a talisman, on the given territory.

In this context, the question of primary importance is how apocryphal texts appeared in Gagauz milieu. In Gagauz handwritten compilations the title of the apocryphal text “The Epistle of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Sent From Heaven by God” has minor differences that are connected with translation style and use of religious terminology: „Епистолия Бизим Саббинин Іисус Христосу, ани ёллады Алах екетини“ (Ceadir-Lunga), „Епистолия Бизим Пайдахыымыс Иисус Христос, ани ёллады Аллах гёкти“ (Beşghioz), „Епистолия бизим Аллахым оолу Иисус Христос елады бизи гёкти“ (Gaidari), „Епистолия Саббинин Исусу Бизым Христозун, ани ёламиын Алла гёкти“ (Beşghioz).

In Gagauz handwritten tradition, the Jerusalem variant of The Epistle About Lord’s Day is widely spread. We could not find in archival and historiographical documents any evidence about the time of its appearance and spreading in Gagauz milieu, that makes it difficult to identify the time of appearance of Gagauz variant and determine “the first source” of the translation into Gagauz language of the mentioned epistle and other ones. Therefore, we found it reasonable to study peculiarities of epistles in Gagauz language in comparative aspect with analogical texts widespread among neighboring peoples first of all Bulgarians, Moldavians and Romanians. Due to this method we could identify textual differences of epistles in Gagauz language, the peculiarities of their style and writing, as well as the presence of foreign vocabulary. These aspects connected with Gagauz apocryphal texts are presented in some of our publications. This allowed us to make preliminary conclusions regarding “the first source” from which were made translations into Gagauz language.

While comparing the epistle in Gagauz language (it was taken the text from Ceadir-Lunga compilation as the most accurate and complete) with Bulgarian version it was found that although the plot and structure are in general the same, there are substantial differences not only in details but also in the content, a thing we can not say while comparing the Gagauz variant with Moldavian/Romanian ones. The translation of title of the Gagauz Epistle About Lord’s Day «Епистолия Бизым Саббинин Іисус Христосу, ани ёллады Алах гёкти» coincides completely with one of the titles used by Moldavians and Romanians to name the same epistle “Епистолия Домнului nostru Iisus Hristos ce ne-a trimis-o Dumnezeu din Cer” No less important is the fact that the sequence of epistles in Gagauz compilations (The Epistle of Jesus Christ, The Epistles of Jesus Mother, The Ordeal of the Virgin Mary) coincides with handwritten traditions of Moldavians and Romanians (Епистола lui Hristos, Епистола Maicii Domnului, Aceasta carte arată muncile creștinilor).
The comparison of content of epistles about Lord’s Day in Gagauz language with similar texts widespread among Moldavians and Romanians shows practically their complete identity. According to researches the oldest Romanian variant of „The Epistle of Christ” (Epistola lui Hristos) is also known under the name of „The Legend About Sunday” (Legenda Duminicii) presented in the collection of B.P. Hasdeu. For the comparison we used the epistle in Moldavian/Romanian language (transliterated variant) that we managed to find in internet: Epistolia Domnului nostru Iisus Hristos ce ne-a trimis-o Dumnezeu din Cer.

To identify stylistic and textual differences between Gagauz variants and Moldavian/Romanian ones, as well as to review elements of lexical borrowings, we have chosen the most important fragments from our point of view. For instance, in both variants of “The Epistle of Jesus Christ” the main stress is placed upon the criticism of Christians, who are called pagans because they do not pay attention to the outer forms of religiousness. Also one and the same terms are used: “împrăștiștii” and “păgîn”, that means pagan. O! râi, o! împrăștiștii și păgânii ce suneți voi / “Oh! You bad Oh! Filthy and pagan you are!”

In the three texts (from Cazaclia and Beșghioz compilations) is completely preserved the original language from which the translation was made, as we may think it is connected with the difficult character of the fragment to translate. The fragment was placed between brackets as an unclear specification, the omission of which was banned: “împrăștiștii” and “păgîn”, that means pagan. (ryilor ini yipri-loštiștior ede iin păgînilor ce sînteți voii”). In Beșghioz compilation this fragment is rewritten without translation but with significant distortion: “împrăștiștii” and “păgîn”, that means pagan. (пилар ини ипприлоштиций или пъгънило че сънятъ вой”). In Beșghioz compilation this fragment is rewritten without translation but with significant distortion: “împrăștiștii” and “păgîn”, that means pagan. (пилар ини ипприлоштиций или пъгънило че сънятъ вой”). In the text taken from Cezar-Lunga compilation in the result of translation the original language was preserved only fragmentarily: O финалар хем випрелестялар, хем теньерялар, нейсийис сис? / “Oh, malicious, filthy and pagan you are”. The text from Beșalma compilation has a free translation although the word “pagan” is preserved: Дымов ярдым едер сиз, ол булунер-сыйисе башка ишлерд, о финалар пъгънило / “The Devil helps you, and you find for yourself other things, o malicious and pagan”.

Another fragment, indicating “the first source” language of the Gagauz variant, is connected with the enumeration of sins. In the given fragment are used Moldovan/Romanian terms denoting family relationship:

Oh! Vai de nașul ce va face păcatul cu fină-la și finul ce va face păcat cu nașă-la; vai de cununtul ce va face păcat cu cununtă-la! / “Oh! Woe to godfather, who will sin with his goddayther and godson, who will sin with his godmother; woe to brother-in-law who will sin with his sister-in-law!”

In one text taken from Beșghioz compilation in the given fragment the “original language” is partially preserved (Ох-вай, о садыхча, ани япрае гънах кумишасынан, вай, о де кумптул, чине фаче покатул кү кумнетеса – Beşghioz), while in the other two texts this fragment is translated entirely into Gagauz language using Gagauz terminology of family relationship: нунча, кумнча, куми, кресинча, олагаинку, булно, еништя, балдыска.

Words of damnation are very frequently used in Gagauz epistles and are expressed with terms used by Moldavians and Romanians “бластемат”. While mentioning the ordeal to which sinners will be subdued, the lexeme “мунка” is widely used as in the Romanian variant:

Goni-l-voi de la Mine blestemăților, în focul cel de veci, cel nestins, în munca... și blestemă să fie aceel om care va lucra de Simbătă seara până Luni la răsăritul soarelui...

Гинин, бластематлар, вечника атешия, ани хич сюмим мунка...; хем бластемать олурса о адлы, ким шилярс джума[a] ертеш вечниядан сора та пазар ертеш гон дунунджа... (Cazaclia).

The lexeme “мунка” in the meaning of “ordeal” is frequently used in many variants of this and other Gagauz epistles. Only in texts from Cezar-Lunga and Beșalma compilations this term is substituted with Gagauz term of similar meaning “зетет”: Хем куртарым адальы жедженем зететян / “The person was released of the ordeal of hell”; вечника атешия, ани сюмим зетет / “To the ordeal of fire, that never dies out; биликсинча, ани джендемин мункаларга гидежисин / “and know, you will be sent to suffer the ordeal of hell” (Беşalma).

In the process of translation some foreign words and expressions were simply rewritten, a thing that might be connected with poor knowledge of Moldavian/Romanian language by translator. Later, the copyists distorted even more the words, that subsequently led to transformation of lexemes and of the meaning of the whole sentence (as an example can serve fragments that contain the word pedepsle and others).
So, in Moldavian/Romanian variant the given fragment reads as follows: *Atunci veți merge la mormintele morților și veți striga: „Leți voi morților din mormânturi să întrâm noi de vă, că nu mai putem răbdha muncile și pedepește ce ne-a trimis Dumnezeu”* / «Then you will go to the graves of the dead and you will cry: “The dead, come out of your graves to let us, those alive, to enter them as we cannot bear anymore the ordeal and punishment that God sent on us”».

As we can see in some Gagauz variants the given lexeme is almost unrecognizable. What concerns the translation, and then it coincides completely with Moldavian/Romanian variant presented above.

Înăuntrul gîndigăriinței ʒëłoljarîn yënzîntarînya da bâ[a]-ranglensîn: ɬîkîn, ɬîkîrá, mëzâryn ichîndîn, girelim bîs – ɬîkîrá, zere daînámâ[ɜːrdь]nyys munîkara hëm rëpîntsîlarâ, anî ɬî[ɜː]lîyî bîs Alăa (Gaidari); Înăuntrul gîndigăriinței ʒëłoljarîn yënzîntarînya da bâ[a]-ranglensîn: ɬîkîn, ɬîkîrá, mëzâryn ichîndîn, girelim bîs – ɬîkîrá, zere daînámâ[ɜːrdь]nyys munîkara hëm rëpîntsîlarâ, anî ɬî[ɜː]lîyî bîs Alăa (Cazaclia) / «Then you will go to the graves of the dead and you will cry: “The dead, come out of your graves to let us, those alive, to enter them as we cannot bear anymore the ordeal and punishment that God sent on us”».

Although one text from old Beşghioz compilation is written with many grammatical mistakes, however mainly this word is written correctly having the ending that corresponds to the rules of Gagauz language – ɬêdêpëzalarâ.

The next fragment has in the text a special meaning. It represents an invocatory in which is explained the heaven origin of the letter and is stipulated the means it should be spread. In the fragment are preserved foreign lexemes (in the text they are underlined) that indicate “the first source” from which it was translated into Gagauz language: fiîi (‘cântărețele’), vor moșteni (‘cunoscute’).

Și să știți că această epistolă nu este țăcută din fierea pământescă, ci este din cer și am trimis-o pe la voi, creștinilor ca să vă părăsiți păcatele voastre și să faceți voia lui Dumnezeu, ca să fiți fiîi luminii; iar vai de preotul sau de călugârul sau dascălul sau diaconul care nu o va citi înaintea oamenilor, și să o scrie și să o aibe tot omul în casa sa și să o trimeță și pe unde nu va fi, că de mare folos este în casa omului; iar vai de acela ce o va scrie și va lipsi vreun cuvânt dintr-înșa, iar ferice de cei ce vor cumpăra această șfântă epistolă și o vor da de pomană: acelor oameni li se vor ierta păcatele și vor moșteni împărăția cerului de vor face poruncile lui Dumnezeu ca Avraam și ca Isaac și ca Iacob (mold./rom.).

What concerns the meaning of the given fragment that is present as well in Gagauzian epistles, then it almost coincides word by word with the Romanian text. In all variants are used lexemes such as – fiîiolj (‘sons’), moștînula oîlur (‘will inherit’) (Gaidari), fiîiolj, moștînula oîlur (Cazaclia), fiîiolj / moștînulînt oîlur (Beşghioz).

Xem bîlaynîn, kî bî niqat dî[ɜː]lîyî yamylîa topkàk ɬỳsyndîn iusîndan, amà ɬîkîn ɬî[ɜː]lîyî ɬîkînîn ˒îlîmâa, ˒îlîmîsî fiîiolj, dîon[ɜː][ɜː]dîa. Xem vai, o pokàzîn xem kâtûgûlî, xem o dëska, dïkonun dîjînîn, anỳgës tä […] oîlun xer bij adâmîn eîvîndîn dau ɬîkînîn neşëzyrdîn ɬîkînîn bîs biobîjîk faiîdîsîs vâr adâmîn eîvîndîn oîlun, xem gëni kîm ɬàjîràsîn propûstîs ɬàjîsîs, vai, bîr soîlo anîyîn iusîndan, ne mënum dîjînîn kîm sâmîn allûrsîs bû aștiyî kàhàdûs bû biablàsîs – o adâmîn eînàhàlsîs prost oîlur, da moștînîla oîlur ɬîkîn ɬî[ɜː]lîyî [dîyîdîa], xem tämâmîn mutàrsîs Al[ɜː]/lîxhîn laîflûrînî, Avrâm-lan xem Êisîsî, xem Êakîkîlan... (Gaidari) / «And know that this epistle is not written by man on earth, but sent to you, Christian people, to make you leave your sins and comply with God’s will to become sons on earth. Woe to that priest or monk or psalm-reader or deacon who will not read it to people. And it should be rewritten and it should be present in the house of each person and be sent to places that lacks it as it is of great use to the house of a person who has it. Woe to the copyist who will miss a single word. Blessed is the man who will buy this sacred epistle and will make it a present as all their sins will be forgiven and he will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven if they comply with God’s will as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob did”.

The lexeme moșteni / moștînula is frequently found in other fragments and other variants of Gagauz epistles: Da ˒îlîyî ˒îmîisîsîm rai ñiçînî oîlun moștînîla vëñikàs; da moștînulîla oîlur ɬîkîn ɬî[ɜː]lîyî [dîyîdîa] (Gaidari); ˒îlîyî/dîyîsîs dalîsîs ñiçînî moștînîla oîlun vëñikàs (Beşghioz) and others / “I will send (that man, who will have the epistle) to Paradise and he will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven”.

In general, all epistles in Gagauz language are rich in lexemes and expressions that show connection with Moldavian/Romanian variants. Some of borrowed words with passing of time became part of Gagauz language and their meaning is clear to ordinary people. For instance to denote the concept of “witness” the Gagauz people widely use the term “mårîmpîr”. This lexeme is equally used in both Romanian and
Gagauz variant: *Pentru aceasta alergați la duhovnicii voștri de vă mâturiști pâcatele voastre iertate vor fi* (moold./rom.).

The content of this fragment is reflected in the Gagauz variant: *Да гезярсин духовны-ларны врачина, мартуриши просвещен гонахарыны* (Gaidari): *дал гезярсин духовники врачина, мартуриш едвясины гёнахарыны* (Cazaclia): *да гезерсин духовники врачина (?) ардына мартурис едвясины гёнахарыны* (Beşghioz) / „Go to your confessors and confess your sins”.

A special connection between Gagauz and Moldavian/Romanian Epistle About Lord’s Day can be seen in one text from Beşalma compilation. In it is presented the same formula of damnation addressed to Arianism as in Moldavian/Romanian text of The Epistle of Jesus Christ:

Аш оллас о адама кусар барсакларны рерызы / “Damned will be that man and will puke their guts as an Arian” (Beşalma).

*Анатема са фи ацел ом, си са се вере мателс сале ка але lui Arie*.

It is supposed that in more recent Epistles about Lord’s Day in Gagauz language the given fragment was omitted due to historical irrelevance and complete blur of meaning of the given fragment to religious people of new age. We would like to point out that according to one of the main thesis of Arianism, Christ was created by God, and as a result has the beginning of his origin and is not equal to God, that is to say Christ is not consubstantial with God. Arianism is a theological teaching of the 4th – 6th century AD. In 325, at the First Ecumenical Council, Arianism was condemned for heresy, and as creed (Nicene Creed) was adopted the doctrine about Trinity consubstantiality. Till the 6th century, Arianism was state religion of Germanic states.

The comparison of Epistles of Jesus Christ in Gagauz language (8 in number) show that almost in all of them are present Moldavian/Romanian terms and expressions. Texts from Ceadir-Lunga compilation have the most accurate translation. Many Moldavian/Romanian lexemes are substituted with Gagauz synonyms, for instance: зеем (instead of „лукча”), евлалымы (instead of „аныл”), ёмюр едињедеклар (instead of „моштина олур”) and so on. However, it still contains some Moldavian/Romanian words, as for example пёдяпсары and others.

Some meaning mistakes passing from one text to another were possible to identify with the help of Ceadir-Lunga and Moldavian/Romanian variants. Referring to “the first source” we can state that in Ceadir-Lunga texts sometimes are present expressions that are characteristic to Moldavian/Romanian language (мункада рясина), but as a rule they are accompanied by the translation of the meaning into Gagauz language. What concerns Russian words in Gagauz texts, we should take into account the fact that Moldavian/Romanian texts have the same amount of such words. On this basis we can say that one of the sources of Slavic vocabulary into Gagauz religious texts served apocryphal literature in Moldavian/Romanian language.

Multiple rewriting of texts and illegible handwriting very frequently became the cause for changing of the meaning and writing of foreign lexemes. In many compilations the illegible words were corrected by the copyist and instead of them were written words similar in sound to Gagauz ones that subsequently led to transformation of content of separate fragments which passed from text to text. As a result the texts were adapted through the prism of people’s mind taking into account moral and legal norms of Gagauz people.

Thereby, the lack of any kind of evidences in statements of local Bessaraban clergy about the existence of apocryphal texts in Gagauz language at the end of the 19th century proves the fact that the texts were translated into Gagauz language later. The presence of many foreign borrowings in Gagauz texts eloquently points out at „the first source” of translated Gagauz texts from Moldavian/Romanian language. Moreover, in one of Beşghioz compilations the title of The Epistle of Jesus Christ and The Epistle of Mother of Jesus is preserved in the Moldavian/Romanian language while the rest content of the text is translated into Gagauz language: „Еписпосия Домнулуй постру Ісус Христос че-о т[*р|й]мывч Душиюулу унису черю” / “The Epistle of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Sent From Heaven by God”, „Еписпосия Майка Домнулуйа” / “The Epistle of Mother of Jesus”. The form of addressing to Jesus Christ coincides entirely with the form in the Romanian variant: *Доамне Исусе Христосе, Домне Иисусе Христосе* and so on.

Data provided by different sources indicating that a part of Gagauz population spoke Moldavian language and did not other languages (partially Bulgarian language, and before the end of the 19th century beginning of the 20th century Russian language) as well as presence of foreign vocabulary in Gagauz texts point at ethnical environment from which these texts appeared as a result of intense ethnocultural contacts. Due to some objective factors the Gagauz environment happened to be a fertile ground that accepted and carefully preserved Moldavian (and Russian) apocry-
phal heritage. Despite the common structure and content of texts, Gagauz texts absorbed the peculiarities of Gagauz language and people’s views, representing independent variants of these monuments.

In general we can say that systematization and analysis of material in the frame of previously unexplored sphere of spiritual culture of Gagauz people gives us opportunity not only to study more profoundly their religious notions of good and evil, virtue and sin and of the other

References


4 http://old_russian_writers.academic.ru.


6 http://ro orthodoxwiki.org


9 http://biblior.net


11 Idem.

12 http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enc_philosophy/5505/%D0%90%D0%A0%D0%98%D0%90%D0%9D%D0%A1%D0%A2%D0%92%D0%9E

Cvilincova Elizaveta. LA VERSION GAGAUZE DE “L’ÉPISTOLIE SUR LE JOUR DU SEIGNEUR (DIMANCHE)” À TRAVERS LE PRISME DES INTERACTIONS ETHNOCULTURELLES.


Termes clés: culture écrite chrétienne, textes apocryphes, épistolie, manuscrits des textes religieux gagaouzes.

World, but also gives the possibility to look in a new light at the process of ethno-cultural interaction of Gagauz people with neighboring nations that took place on the territory of Bessarabia in the 19th-20th century.

Translator: Master of philology – Ivanca Orz

Елизавета Квилинкова. ГАГАУЗСКИЙ ВАРИАНТ “ЭПИСТОЛИ О ВОСКРЕСНОМ ДНЕ” СКОВЗЬ ПРИЗМУ ЭТНОКУЛЬТУРНОГО ВЗАИМОДЕЙСТВИЯ

В статье исследуется один из распространенных у гагаузов новозаветных апокрифических сказаний – Эпистоля о воскресном дне. В основу исследования положены материалы, собранные в ходе индивидуальных этнографических исследований автора (2008-2011 гг.) в гагаузских селах юга Республики Молдова. Делается вывод о том, что на территории Бессарабии недостаток религиозных знаний и литературы гагаузы восполнили с помощью книг и рукописных религиозных текстов в первую очередь на молдавском/румынском языке. Отмечается, что эта традиция продолжает функционировать среди гагаузского населения Республики Молдова и в настоящее время.

Ключевые слова: христианская письменная культура, апокрифические тексты, эпистоля, гагаузские рукописные религиозные тексты.