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## THE EARLY ETHNIC HISTORY OF BULAESTIAN DIALECT SPEAKERS THROUGH THE ISSUE OF ASYNCHRONOUS VN-REFLEXES IN THE UKRAINIAN DIALECTAL CONTINUUM

### Rezumat

#### Istoria etnică timpurie a purtătorilor graiului bulăieștean în contextul problemei VN-reflexelor asincrone în continuumul dialectal ucrainean

Manifestările VN-reflexelor asincrone (ca exemplu al cărora servește cuvântul bulăieștean *ч'індрей* 'generos') în continuumul lingvistic ucrainean au fost detaliat studiate de P. Grițenko. Acestea, fără îndoială, trebuie explicate ca „polonism fonetic”. Dar în ce mod și când acest fenomen a apărut în graiul bulăieștean? Trebuie să luăm în considerare următoarele circumstanțe: 1) în graiul bulăieștean polonismele sunt prezentate, în genere, ca un strat de împrumuturi foarte timpurii; 2) cea mai mare parte a polonismelor, prezentate în alte graiuri ucrainene, lipsesc în graiul bulăieștean; 3) cuvântul polonez *szczodry*, 'generos' demonstrează lipsa VN-reflexului; 4) observăm un șir de analogii (*шандрий*, *чандрий*) și în alte dialecte ucrainene sud-vestice; 5) este puțin probabil ca aceste forme analogice să fi apărut absolut independent (cel puțin *чандрий* și *чендрій*); 6) în orice caz, forma bulăieșteană, evident, nu poate fi dedusă nici din *чандрий* (invers, *чандрий* – este forma apărută din *чендрій* ca rezultat al tranziției /e/ în /a/), și nici din *шандрий* (unde, în plus, urmărim dispariția /ч/ din inițialul /шч/).

Prin urmare, apariția cuvântului bulăieștean *ч'індрей* marchează etape timpurii ale istoriei etnice și lingvistice a purtătorilor graiului bulăieștean.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** VN-reflexe, dialectologie, etnologie, istorie, ucraineni, Moldova, Evul Mediu.

### Резюме

#### Ранняя этническая история носителей булаештского говора в контексте проблемы асинхронных VN-рефлексов в украинском диалектном континууме

Проявления асинхронных VN-рефлексов (примером которых является и булаештское *ч'індрей* 'щедрый') в украинском языковом континууме были тщательно рассмотрены П. Е. Гриценко. И их, безусловно, следует объяснять как «фонетический полонизм». Но когда и каким образом этот феномен появляется в булаештском говоре? Мы должны иметь здесь в виду следующие обстоятельства: 1) в булаештском говоре полонизмы представлены в основном очень ранним пластом заимствований; 2) основная масса полонизмов, представленных в прочих украинских говорах, в булаештском говоре отсутствует; 3) польское *szczodry* 'щедрый' демонстрирует отсутствие VN-рефлекса; 4) мы видим ряд аналогий (*шандрий*, *чандрий*) и в не-

которых других юго-западных украинских диалектах; 5) маловероятно, чтобы эти аналогичные формы возникли совершенно независимо (по крайней мере, что касается *чандрий* и *чендрій*); 6) в любом случае, булаештская форма, очевидно, не может быть выведена ни из *чандрий* (наоборот, *чандрий* – это форма, возникшая из *чендрій* в результате перехода /e/ в /a/), ни, тем более, из *шандрий* (где, вдобавок, мы наблюдаем исчезновение /ч/ из инициального /шч/).

Следовательно, возникновение булаештского *ч'індрей* маркирует ранние этапы этнической и языковой истории носителей булаештского говора.

**Ключевые слова:** VN-рефлексы, диалектология, этнология, история, украинцы, Молдова, Средние века.

### Summary

#### The early ethnic history of Bulaestian dialect speakers through the issue of asynchronous VN-reflexes in the Ukrainian dialectal continuum

The asynchronous VN-reflexes (Bulaestian *ч'індрей* 'generous' presents a clear example) in the Ukrainian dialects were in depth considered by P. E. Hritsenko and were clearly explained as a "phonetic polonism". Well, the question is when and how this phenomena appeared in the Bulaestian dialect? We should consider the following facts here: 1) in general, polonisms are presented in the Bulaestian dialect by some early examples mainly; 2) the great part of polonisms known in other Ukrainian dialects are absent in the Bulaestian one; 3) Polish *szczodry* 'generous' do not demonstrate any VN-reflex; 4) we see some analogies (*шандрий*, *чандрий*) in some other south-western Ukrainian dialects; 5) it is unlikely that these analogies appeared independently at all (at least that concerns the forms *чандрий* and *чендрій*); 6) anyway, it is obviously impossible to get the Bulaestian variant neither from *чандрий* (conversely, *чандрий* appeared as a result of /e/ to /a/ transition from *чендрій*), nor, more over, from *шандрий* (as it demonstrates, in addition, a loss of /ч/ from the initial /шч/).

So, the phonetic form *ч'індрей* is an archaic one and reflects some early times of ethnic and linguistic history of Bulaestians.

**Key words:** VN-reflexes, dialectology, ethnology, history, Ukrainians, Moldova, Middle Ages.

Considering the issue of atypical reflexes of for-Slavic nasal /ɛ/ in the Ukrainian dialectal continuum, P. E. Hritsenko paid a particular attention to the "cases of so called "non-etymological" (i. e.,

not caused by the previous stages of phonetic evolution of the sound) sonant after /e/, i. e. – the cases of replacement of /e/ to /en/, /em/ in the position, which is not related with the for-Slavic nasal /e/” [1, p. 203]. That is to say, it means the cases of asynchronous (as he refers to them) VN-reflexes (where the V- is vowel, and N- is sonant /n/ or /m/).

The clear example of asynchronous VN-reflexes presents the Bulaestian /ч'індрей/ 'generous'. Nowadays, this word is used in the Bulaestian carol /ч'індрей веч'ір/ only. Boys (of 13-16 years old) sing this carol on the evening before the so called “Old New Year”, i. e., on the evening of January 13.

The more archaic phonetic form /ч'єндрей веч'ір/ existed among the Bulaestians until recently.

It should be mentioned here that P. E. Hritsenko discussed in this context also the phonetic form «шчендрій, шчендрувати from шчедрій, шчедрувати» [1, p. 203] in an East-Podolian micro-dialect (he means here a dialect of Pisarevka village (Kodyma district of Odessa region)).

The appearance of asynchronous VN-reflexes in the Ukrainian dialectal continuum is evidently caused by the Polish influence. So, this is a “phonetic polonisms” (using a term of N. O. Onyshkevich; VN-reflexes of for-Slavic nasal /e/ «are typical for Polish dialects, though do not include all lexemes and phonological positions» [1, p. 204]). This conclusion is evidently right for Bulaestian dialect as well.

Well, the question is when and how this phenomenon appeared in the Bulaestian dialect?

To answer this question, we should consider the following facts here.

First of all, in general polonisms are represented in the Bulaestian dialect by some early examples mainly (see, inter alia: [4]).

Second, the great part of polonisms known in other Ukrainian dialects, including the dialect of Boiky, the Naddnestreansky, Gutsul'sky, and Bukovinsky dialects are absent in the Bulaestian dialect.

It is worth to add here that the dialects mentioned in the sentence above are more close to the Bulaestian dialect. As it was demonstrated earlier [3], just Gutsul'sky and Bukovinsky dialects are the closest relatives to the Bulaestian dialect.

Third, Polish *szczodry* 'generous' do not demonstrate any VN-reflex [2, p. 502].

The last fact is very important because we, therefore, can't explain Ukrainian dialectal шчендрій and suchlike phonetic forms as a result of a simple loanword from Polish.

It seems that the well explicative model is presented by some Ukrainian dialectal areas where VN- and V-reflexes both exist. As P. E. Hritsenko pointed out, it evidently demonstrates that the speakers of these Ukrainian dialects interpret these two kinds of phonetic reflexes as replaceable, or those “being in

the situation of free variation” [1, p. 203]. In the past, at some earlier stages of evolution of these dialects VN-reflexes were interpreted by their speakers as “more correct”. That's why in these dialects VN-reflexes appeared even in the “in-correct” phonological positions.

Evidently, the situation proves the very high level of interactions between these Ukrainian dialects and the Polish dialectal continuum in the past.

Making an effort to understand the time and conditions of these interactions we should look at some other facts also.

First of all we should take into account that besides the mentioned analogies in the Pisarevka dialect exists шандрій (with the same meaning 'generous') in the dialect of Boiky. The same phonetic form exists in the Khotyn region and (according to the kind information of M. V. Tunitskaya) in the Ukrainian microdialect of Goleni village (Edintsy district, the Republic of Moldova).

In [6] was mentioned, by mistake, another Ukrainian village, Tetskani. However, the phonetic form of this word with VN-reflex exists in the microdialect of Tetskani village (Bricheni district of the Republic of Moldova) as well (according to the information of K. S. Kozhuhar').

Next, there is a phonetic form чандрій – for example, in the microdialect of Danu village (Glodeni district of the Republic of Moldova). According to the information of K. S. Kozhuhar' the same phonetic form, чандрій, exists in some other Ukrainian villages from the northern part of the Republic of Moldova.

The phonetic form чандрій is known also in some Ukrainian villages from the Kel'mentsy district of Chernovtsy region of the Ukraine.

It is unlikely that all these analogies appeared in the mentioned dialects independently at all. At least this concerns the forms чандрій and чєндрій. And, anyway, it is obviously impossible to get the Bulaestian variant neither from чандрій (conversely, чандрій appeared as a result of /e/ to /a/ transition from чєндрій), nor, more over, from шандрій (as it demonstrates, in addition, a loss of /ч/ from the initial /шч/).

So, the phonetic form /ч'індрей/ is an archaic one and reflects some early times of ethnic and linguistic history of Bulaestians.

Well, when and how this form appeared in the mentioned Ukrainian dialects?

To begin with, we should point out once again that the asynchronous VN-reflex in the word чєндрій appeared evidently before the transition of /e/ to /a/, as it follows from the aforesaid, I think. And Bulaestian /ч'єндрей/, being evidently related with the Bukovinian and North-Moldavian forms of the word, reflects the archaic form that was spread in

the Ukrainian dialects of Bucovina before the time of beginning of the process of /e/ to /a/ transition.

Otherwise, the case of Bulaestian /ч'єндрей/ (/ч'єндрей/), which demonstrates VN-reflex (Polish influence, once again) and absence of /e/ to /a/ transition (in contrast to the forms of the word from Bucovina and from the northern parts of the Republic of Moldova), though the Bulaestian dialect is situated more to the south from Bucovina and evidently outside of the area of Polish influence, became inexplicable.

Because, it is hard to believe that the Bulaestian /ч'єндрей/ could receive the VN-reflex in its modern area in the central part of the Republic of Moldova.

The transition of /e/ (/e a/) in /a/ in the Ukrainian dialects, that is worth to mention, spread in the quite large area: «Западноукраїнська зона, в якій /a/ из /e/, достатньо велика. Она простирається от Середнього Полесья через Волинь до Буковини и Гуцульщини. Наиболее проявлен переход /e/ в /a/ на Западній Волині...» [5, p. 199]. Translating: “the western Ukrainian zone of /a/ from /e/ transition is enough large. It is spread from the Middle Polesie through Volhynia until the Bukovina and the regions of Hutsuls. The transition of /e/ to /a/ is mostly developed in the Western Volhynia...”.

It is evident (Y. Sheveliov points it out) that in the different Ukrainian dialects this processes had happened in the different times.

Although, in general the transition of /e/ to /a/ occurred during the so called “Middle Ukrainian time” (by Yu. Sheveliov), i. e., in the XVI century A. D. [5, p. 211-212, 55]. The probable exclusion (as Yu. Sheveliov thinks), is presented by the region of Volhynia (Western Volhynia – A. R.), where, consequently, we can suppose earlier beginning of this process.

Thus, we see once again, as it was suggested in our anterior researches, the XVI century A. D. as the upper chronological limit, the *terminus ante quem* for splitting of ancestors of Bulaestian dialect speakers (or, at least, for splitting of those of them who had been using this phonetic form, /ч'єндрей/) from the parental group of Ukrainian dialects. The reason is clear because, as was said above, the Bulaestian /ч'єндрей/ demonstrates the absence of this transition of /e/ to /a/ (though, we should mention here that some sporadic manifestations of this process are known in the Bulaestian dialect as well: /yч'ара/ ‘yesterday’, /ко|ч'ара/ ‘fire iron’).

The *terminus post quem* is done by the appearance of asynchronous VN-reflex in the word чендрій. Marking the period of intensive interrelations of ancestors of Bulaestian dialect with the Polish dialectal continuum (and evidently, once again, being earlier than the transition of /e/ to /a/), at the same time it indicates, I think, to some territories sit-

uated more closer to the Polish dialectal continuum and more distant from the central part of the Prut-Dniester interfluves.

So, the important fact here is that the region of Pocutie was captured by Polish king Kasimir (Kazimierz) III in 1349 A. D. Next, the more southern fortress of Khotyn was for the first time occupied by Polish army in the XV century. And then twice, in total for the period more than fifty years, was conquered by Polacks in the XVI century A. D. Another important fortress at the region, Kamenets-Podol'sky, was declared by the Polish authorities as a so called “royal city” since 1439 A. D. At the early XV century a war between Polish kingdom and “The Great Principality of Lithuanians and Russians” for the power over the territories at the left bank of Dniester river (down to the Rashkov fortress or even more to the south) happened. As a result of the war, these territories were controlled by Polish authorities since the middle of XV century.

Thus, the intensive Polish influence to the Ukrainian dialects of Pocutia and Bucovina began not later than the second half of XIV century A. D.; for the territories at the left bank of Dniester river to the south of Kamnets-Podol'sky the beginning of this intensive Polish influence should be dated to the early XV century. And just XV century looks like the more probable time for appearance of phonetic forms шчендрій and /ч'єндрей/ in some Ukrainian dialects of the region.

However, discussing the split of the ancestors of Bulaestian dialect from the parental dialectal continuum, we should not see here their migration from the Carpathian region exactly in the XV or early XVI centuries A. D. as the only possible scenario of this event. Not less, or even more probable that the split was caused by some ethnic, political and lingual changes in the XV–XVI centuries at the territories between the zone of Orhei Kodry and Bucovina. So, it is possible that just these changes split the Bulaestian dialect speakers from their parental Ukrainian dialects and made them more or less isolated from the later ethnic and linguistic processes in this dialectal continuum.

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