

ELEMENTS OF TURKISH ORIGIN IN ROMANIAN GASTRONOMIC TERMINOLOGY

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Abstract

Gastronomic terms of Turkish origin, diversified in several categories, are semantically stable in the Romanian language. Both as independent units and as components of some phraseological units they have experienced semantic modifications. Through the use of this terminology in certain contexts within modern Romanian language, comic and/or slightly ironic semantic nuances have been created.

Key words: *term, etymology, sense, phraseology, archaism*

Résumé

Les termes gastronomiques d'origine turque, diversifiés dans plusieurs catégories, sont sémantiquement stables dans la langue roumaine. En tant qu'unités indépendantes et comme composantes de certaines unités phraséologiques ils ont subi des modifications sémantiques. Grâce à l'utilisation de cette terminologie dans certains contextes au sein de la langue roumaine moderne, se sont créées des nuances sémantiques comiques et/ou légèrement ironiques.

Mots-clés: *terme, étymologie, sens, phraséologie, archaïsme*

1. Socio-historical context

The Turkish influence on the Romanian language was manifest at the time when the Ottoman Empire emerged in South-Eastern Europe. For almost five centuries, the Turks linguistically marked the Romanian Principalities, as a result of political, administrative, economic, social and cultural changes. It is a time when Turkish merchants, moneylenders, officials and soldiers make their presence felt in the Romanian Principalities. In the 15th century, Dobrudja becomes an Ottoman territory, Banat is transformed into a pashalic until 1716, when the Austrians occupy it, Brăila, Tighina, Turnu become rayas, with a new administrative organisation, occupied, militarized and exploited by the Turks. In the 18th century, along with the Phanariot regime that would last for a century, the vassalage of Moldavia and Wallachia increases, the life of the boyars becomes Turkish in style, since the Turks impose their customs and mentalities (the Oriental fashion in ceremonies, clothing, food, cultural events). The unification of Moldavia and Wallachia in 1859 and then the War of Independence in 1877-1878 annuls the suzerainty of the Porte and with it, the Turkish influence on the Romanian language.¹

The Slavic-Romanian texts of the second half of the 14th and 15th centuries attest the first Romanian words of Turkish origin. They designate politico-administrative realities. In the 16th century there are also borrowings that denote professions, human qualities etc. Gastronomic names are borrowed later, in the 17th

¹ Cf. Suci, 2011, p. 19-22.

century, with the names of household items, buildings, plants, animals and military, legal, administrative terms. In the 18th century other words are taken over from Turkish: names of dishes, social skills, names of household items etc. Emil Suciu argues that by the end of the 18th century, the Romanian language borrowed approximately 1675-1700 words from Turkish, noting that their number may be higher.² About 650 words are assigned to the first half of the 19th century, names of food, clothing, dances, household items, occupations, traits of objects etc. The Turkish influence on the Romanian language ends about mid-nineteenth century.

One can identify concerns for the vocabulary of Turkish origin not only in the works of language history, but also in the studies of Lazăr Şăineanu³ and Emil Suci⁴.

Our research highlights the Turkish borrowings in the gastronomic field, the stylistic registers of use, phraseological units created around them and onomasiological categories of these names.

2. Borrowings

The following words are directly borrowed from Turkish: *acadea* ‘lollipop’ <Tk. *akide*; *baklava* ‘baklava’ <Tk. *baklava*; *boia* ‘paprika’ <Tk. *boija*; *bulgur* ‘food made from wheat’ <Tk. *bulgur*; *caimac* ‘skin of milk, cream’ <Tk. *kaymak*; *caşcaval* ‘cheese’ < Tk. *kaşkaval*; *cataif* ‘cake made of noodles’ < Tk. *katayif*; *chiftea* ‘mincemeat ball/rissolé’ < Tk. *köfte*; *ciorbă* ‘soup’ < Tk. *cobra*; *ciulama* ‘white sauce stew’ < Tk. *çulama*; *gaigana* ‘omelette’ < Tk. *kaigana*; *ghiuden* ‘dry mutton/beef sausage’ < Tk. *göden*; *ghiveci* ‘vegetable hotchpotch’ < Tk. *güvec*; *halva* ‘halva(h)’ < Tk. *halva*; *iahnie* ‘kind of ragout with vegetables, meat, stewed potatoes’ < Tk. *yahni*; *iaurt* ‘yoghourt’ < Tk. *yoğurt*; *magiun* ‘plum jam; jam’ < Tk. *macun*; *mezel* ‘sausage’ < Tk. *meze*; *mezelic* ‘appetizer’ < Tk. *mezelik*; *musaca* ‘moussaka, dish of vegetables and minced meat fried in grease, then stewed’ < Tk. *musakka*; *pătlăgea* ‘tomato’ < Tk. *patlican*; *pesmet* ‘dried crust’ < Tk. *pecsimet*; *rahat* ‘Turkish delight’ < Tk. *rahat (lokum)*; *ravac* ‘must/ juice obtained without pressing the grapes’ < Tk. *ravak*; *salam* ‘salami’ < Tk. *salam*; *sarailie* ‘almond cake dipped in syrup’ < Tk. *sarayle*; *simit* ‘pretzel with sprinkled sesame’ < Tk. *simit*; *sugiuc* ‘Turkish delight with nuts’ < Tk. *sucuk*; *susan* ‘sesame’ < Tk. *susan*; *şerbet* ‘fruit syrup boiled hard, candied fruit juice’ < Tk. *şerbet*; *şuberec* ‘a pie similar to a cheese pancake’ < Tk. *şebörek*; *tarama* ‘salted roe’ < Tk. *tarama*; *telemea* ‘salted cheese’ < Tk. *teleme*; *tocmagi* ‘noodles’ < Tk. *tutmaç*; *tos* ‘granulated (sugar)’ < Tk. *toz*; *zaharea* ‘food for the army’ < Tk. *zahira, zahre*.

South-Eastern languages and Hungarian took over certain words of Turkish origin serving as an intermediary in transferring these words from Turkish into Romanian.

Borrowings from Turkish and other languages: Turkish and Greek: *fistic* ‘pistachio’ < Tk. *fistik*, Neo-Greek *φιστίκι*; *peltea* ‘fruit jelly’ < Tk. *pelte*, Neo-Greek *πελτές, μπελτές*; *pilaf* ‘pilaw, pilaff’ < Tk. *pilân*, Neo-Greek *πιλάφι*; *pastramă* ‘smoked-dried salt meat; pastrami’ <Neo-Greek *παστραµθς*, Tk. *pastirma*; Turkish and Hungarian: *tarhon* ‘tarragon’ < Tk. *tarhun*, Hungarian *tárkony*; Turkish and Bulgarian: *năut* ‘chickpeas’ < Tk. *nuhud*, Bulg. *xaxym, xoxym*; *zarzavat* ‘vegetables’ < Tk.

² See Suci, 2011, p. 27.

³ See Lazăr Şăineanu, *Influența orientală asupra limbii și culturii române*, published in 1900.

⁴ See Emil Suci, *Cuvinte românești de origine turcă*, a study published in 2006; *Influența turcă asupra limbii române*, 2009-2010.

zarzavat, zerzevat, Bulg. *zapzavam, zepzevam*; Turkish and Serbian: *sarma* ‘forcemeat roll in cabbage/vine leaves’ < Tk. *sarma*, Serb. *sarma*.

3. Stylistic registers

Romanian borrowed words of Turkish origin in older stages of this language and not necessarily from literary Turkish, but from vulgar, popular and dialectal variants, which is reflected in the form and meaning of the words that entered Romanian. Some are literary forms associated with elements of other language registers.⁵

Literary forms and popular variants: *baclava*, pop. *paclava*; *caimac*, pop. *căimac*; *cașcaval*, pop. *cașcavea, cașcavelă, cașcavet*; *cataif*, pop. *cadaif*; *chiftea*, pop. *cheftea, chioftea, chiufta, cuftea*; *ciulama*, pop. *ciolama, ciorlama, ciulam, ciulamea, ciulă, ciulămea, ciulumea, ciurumea*; *fistic*, pop. *fâstâc, festec, festic, feștec, vâstâc; ghiuden*, pop. *ghiudem*; *halva*, pop. *alva*; *iahnie*, pop. *iacnie, iagnie, iahnâie, iahnea, ianâie, icnea, icnie, iehnea, ignea, ignie, ihnie*; *pâtlăgea*, pop. *nătlăgea, parlagea, parmagea, patlage, patlagea, patlageană, patlagică, patlăgean, pălăgean, pătlăgea, pătlăgean, pătlăgeană, pitligeană, platagea, plătăgea, plătăgean*; *pesmet*, pop. *pesimt, pesmed*.

Other variants are regionalisms: *iaurt*, reg. *igurt*; *magiun*, reg. *magin, magion, magium, majon, măgion, măgiun*; *mezelic*, reg. *mezelichi, mezelâc, mizilic*; *pilaf*, reg. *pilat, pilau, pilav*; *sarailie*, reg. *saralie*; *sarma*, reg. *sarmală, sarmă*; *simit*, reg. *simită*; *telemea*, reg. *temelea, tilimea*; *tocmagi*, reg. *tocmaci, togmagi, tojmaci, tojmagi, tomnaci, toșmagi*.

The following are obsolete variants: *mezel*, obs. *mezelic*; *peltea*, obs. *beltea*; *susan*, obs. *susam*; *tos*, obs. *toz*; obsolete variants and regionalisms: *năut*, obs., reg. *năhut, nohot, nohut, nout, noot*; *pastramă*, obs., reg. *pastrama, păstrăma*; *ravac*, obs., reg. *răvac, revac*; *șerbet*, obs., reg. *cerbet*; *tarhon*, obs., reg. *tarahon, taracon, târcan, tarcân, tarcon, tarcom, tarcum, târhană*; *zaharea*, obs., reg. *zaara, zaerea, zahara, zahare, zaharea, zahere, zahirea, zahrea, zăhărea, zehrea*; *zarzavat*, obs., reg. *zărzăvat, zerzavat*.

4. Phraseology

Some gastronomic terms are part of phrases: *ghiveci călugăresc* ‘meatless hotchpotch’, *cafea sadea* ‘coffee without sugar’.

In paremiology, the proverb *cine s-a ars cu ciorbă suflă și-n iaurt* (literally ‘he who burnt his mouth while eating soup will cool even the yogurt’) in the sense of ‘he who got in trouble once becomes extremely cautious’, is well known.

Others are associated with other words to form expressions: *a se întinde la cașcaval* ‘to have exaggerated claims’, *a se da la cașcaval* ‘to be soft, to be stupid’; *de la chiftele la izmene* ‘about someone who is telling things with no connection to each other, someone who is beating about the bush’; *a se amesteca în ciorba cuiva* ‘to interfere in the affairs of others’, *a băga pe toți într-o ciorbă* ‘to treat people equally’, *a avea o ciorbă de copii* ‘to have many children’; *ciorbă lungă* ‘unsubstantial, unsatiating food’; *a lua caimacul* ‘to get the best for oneself’; *a face pe cineva ciulama/a face pe cineva pilaf* ‘to thrash somebody soundly’; *a se face pilaf* ‘to get really angry’; *a-și face capul ciulama* ‘to get confused’ (phrase); *a făgădui cuiva muniți de pilaf* ‘to promise somebody many things’; *a sufla și-n iaurt* ‘to be extremely

⁵ For variants, we consulted MDA.

cautious”, *a turna iaurt peste smântână* “to be a clumsy housewife”; *a pune piper și-n iaurt* “to waste what you have (in large quantities)”; *a face din rahat bici* “to achieve high quality work with few and inefficient resources”, *rahat cu apă rece/rahat cu prune* “worthless, unimportant thing”; *a face rahatul praf* “to fail in achieving a previously much praised work”, *a îngheța ca un rahat în ploaie* “to freeze to death”.

5. Onomasiological categories

The gastronomic terminology of Turkish origin differs depending on the denoted object or product: salami, sausages: *ghiuden, mezel, mezelic, salam*; dishes: *bulgur, chiftea, ciorbă, ciulama, gaigana, ghiveci, iahnie, musaca, pastramă, pilaf, sarma, tarama*; pasta: *pesmet, șuberec, tocmagi*; desserts, pastries: *acadea, baclava, cataif, halva, magiun, peltea, rahat, ravac, sarailie, simit, sugiuc, susan, șerbet, tos*; dairy products: *caimac, cașcaval, iaurt, telemea*; spices, seeds: *boia, fistic, năut, tarhon*; vegetables: *zarzavat*.

6. Conclusions

Turkish borrowings, gastronomic terms, entered the Romanian language as early as the 14th century until the first half of the 19th century. They belong to different onomasiological categories: food, products, meats, dairy, desserts, spices, including generic names (*ciorbă* ‘soup’, *mezel* ‘sausage’). In association with Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, Hungarian, the Turkish language served as a second borrowing language, an intermediary-language. Since they were used in the Balkans, gastronomic terms were widespread: some words of literary language circulated along with popular, regional or obsolete forms. In Romanian, gastronomic terms have several popular variants, a fact which confirms circulation in both urban and rural areas.

Despite the decreasing Turkish influence on Romanian, as early as the second half of the 19th century, gastronomic terms were entrenched in the vocabulary. By phraseology, the place of elements of Turkish origin in Romanian was strengthened. Expressive from a semantic standpoint, the phrases and expressions of popular and colloquial use witnessed a diversification of forms.

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