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SEVERAL REMARKS REGARDING “IO” AND *INVOCATIO VERBALIS* FROM WALLACHIAN DOCUMENTS BEFORE 1500¹

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Abstract: *The Wallachian princes’ names were preceded in most of their charters by a short word (“Io”). Although many historians tried to find its origin in the proper noun “Ioan–Ioannes”, Marin Tadin suggested that “Io” might come from the short form of the *invocatio verbalis* (“In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”), the first letters of the Slavonic words “name” and “father” being united in the particle “Io”. This article tries to analyze whether the Wallachian documents before 1500 contain *invocatio verbalis* and if so, how many of these documents were issued by Wallachian princes whose names were preceded by “Io”.*

Keywords: *Wallachia; charter; Io; invocatio verbalis; 15th century; Mircea the Old.*

In the Wallachian charters, the princes’ names were frequently accompanied by a short word, consisting of only two letters “I” and “O”; “Io Vladislav”, “Io Dan” or “Io Mircea” are just few examples that describe this weird particle that precedes the rulers’ names. A long list of historians tried to explain “Io” [among them **Virtosu, E.** 1960, p. 35–82; **Ciurea, D.** 1967, p. 188–189; **Pippidi, A.** 2001, p. 27; **Dimitrov, D.** 2015, p. 177–194] and most of them believed that its roots could be found in the proper noun “Ioan–Ioannes”. In 1977, Marin Tadin published an article, where he proposed another possible explanation [**Tadin, M.** 1977, p. 172–196]. Tadin suggested that “Io” comes from *invocatio verbalis* of the Old Slavonic documents. The diplomatic formula “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”, generally known in diplomatic as *invocatio verbalis*, begins in Old Slavonic with the words “**ВЪ ИМА ѠТЦА**”; Tadin considered that the first letters of the Slavonic words “name” and “father” gave together the short word “Io” – “Nous croyons que la seule explication logique de la formule *Io* est: [vŭ imq otica], c’est-à-dire que ces deux lettres unies sont les initiales des deux mots slaves par lesquels commence l’invocation verbale complète.” [**Tadin, M.** 1977, p. 196].

Although Romanian medievalists found this explanation as being very interesting [**Panaiteescu, P. P.** 1987, p. 71, editor’s note – Ștefan S. Gorovei; **Panaiteescu, P. P.** 2000, p. 155, editor’s note – Gheorghe Lazăr], a systematic study regarding Tadin’s hypothesis and its usage in the Wallachian chancery has not been done yet. This article tries to depict the way in which the medieval scribes from Wallachia used “Io”, on the one hand, and *invocatio verbalis* (“In the name of the Father...”), on the other hand, in the old slavonic documents during the 14th and 15th centuries.

From the very beginning it must be underlined that “Io” was a common place in the charters of the Wallachian princes from the 14th and 15th centuries. The oldest Slavonic charter preserved

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from Wallachia, issued by Vladislav I (1364–1377) has a monogram that begins with the words “**ІѠ ВЛАДИСЛАВЪ ВЪВЕВДА**” [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, p. 18–19]. In the second document issued by Dan I, in October 3rd, 1385, the prince’s name – “**ІѠ ДАНЪ ВЪВЕВДА**” – appears in *intitulatio* of the document [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, p. 19–20]. In the third document, issued by Mircea the Old in June 27th, 1387, “Io Mircea voivode” is found both in *intitulatio* and in the monogram; moreover, in the same charter, Mircea mentions “**СВѢТОПОЧИВШІИ РЪДИТЕЛЬ ГОСПОДСТВА МИ, ІѠ РАДУЛЬ ВЪВЕВДА**” (“the late, holy father of my lordship, Io Radul voivode”) and “**СВѢТОПОЧИВШІИ БРАТ ГОСПОДСТВА МИ, ІѠ ДАНЪ ВЪВЕВДА**” (“the late, holy brother of my lordship, Io Dan voivode”) [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, p. 22–25]. From that moment on, “Io” accompanied the princes’ names in most of their documents from the 14th and 15th centuries [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, *passim*].

How often was used *invocatio verbalis* (“In the name of The Father...”) in the documents from Wallachia during these two centuries? The oldest original Slavonic act that has this diplomatic formula dates from July 17th, 1425 [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, p. 112–113]. The document was not issued by a Wallachian prince, but by a private person – Petriman – who leaved all his estate to the monastery Cozia (fig. 1). The document opens with both *invocatio simbolica* (the cross) and *invocatio verbalis* (“In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”), followed by the issuer’s name (Petriman), who was preceded by the personal pronoun (“азъ”). It is obvious that, as long as the document is not a princely one, the particle “Io” is not present in the text. Daniel Barbu tried to identify this Petriman – *nota bene*, he reads his name as Petărmanu – with *Petermanus de Longocampo*, a Transylvanian Saxon that lived a part of his life in Câmpulung [Barbu, D. 1995, p. 5], which was Wallachian town known for its German community [Ciocîltan, A. 2015, p. 81–188]. Whether this is true or not [Rădvan, L. 2011, p. 207], Barbu noticed that the diplomatic form of the document was influenced both by Latin and Slavic (or maybe Byzantine) models; he stated that *invocatio verbalis* was influenced by Latin diplomatic [Barbu, D. 1995, p. 6], although Marin Tadin had widely described its usage in Slavic documents [Tadin, M. 1977, *passim*].

Another document, preserved in a late Romanian cartulary, was issued by Joseph, the abbot of the monastery Govora [Sacedoțeanu, A. 1961, p. 810], in September 26th, 1485 (fig. 2). Both *invocatio simbolica* and *invocatio verbalis* are present in the document, the second one being a Romanian translation of the Slavonic original, which was lost or not found yet – “Întru numele Tatălui și al Fiului și al Sfântului Duh” (“In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”) [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, p. 316]. The same monastey (Govora) received a vineyard from hieromonk Macarie on March 24th, 1495 (fig. 3). This time the document has a different form for *invocatio verbalis* – “ИЗВОЛЕНІЕМ ѠЦА И СВЕРШЕНІЕМ СИНА И ПОСПЕШЕНІЕМ СВѢТАГО ДЪХА” (“With Father’s will and Son’s fulfillment and Holy Spirit’s help”) [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, p. 411]. Although it is not mentioned Father’s name as in previous acts, but Father’s will, the model seems to be the same. Macarie who made the donation for the monastery might be the same person with the abbot of Govora, mentioned on September 8th, 1492 [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, p. 373]; his donation from 1495 was confirmed a year later by the Wallachian prince Radu the Great with a charter for the same monastery [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, p. 434, 436]. It is evident that none of the documents issued for Govora monastery by the priests Joseph and Macarie had the particle “Io”, as both of them had no kinship relation with a Wallachian prince.

A very interesting document was issued by Mircea the Old for the monastery Cozia. Dating from September 4th, 1389, the original charter was torn and only a part of it was preserved (fig. 4). A copy of the document was written in a Slavonic cartulary (fig. 5) and when it was edited and published, the missing part of the original was filled in from the late Slavonic copy. The charter begins with the diplomatic formula “**ВЪ ИМА ѠЦА И СИНА И СВѢТАГО ДЪХА**” (“In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”), the *intitulatio* mentioning “**ІѠАН МИРЧА ВЪВЕВДА**” [Panaitescu, P. P., Mioc, D. 1966, p. 28, 29]. The main problem is that *invocatio verbalis* is missing in the original document and the editors took it from the Slavonic copy; the same observation applies to the text “Ioan Mircea voivode” from *intitulatio*. It is thus very difficult to know whether the formula “In the

name of the Father...” was present in the original or it is an interference from the later copist [**Bogdan, D.** 1938, p. 45; **Bogdan, D.** 1986, p. 730]. This charter issued by Mircea the Old for Cozia monastery is the single internal document from 14th–15th centuries, wherein both the particle “Io” and *invocatio verbalis* can be found; as it was previously mentioned, it is almost impossible to know if these two diplomatic formulae were present in the original or they were added centuries later when copying the charter into the cartulary. As Damian Bogdan noticed, an external document issued by Mircea the Old in 1403 and having a short form of *invocatio verbalis*, probably translated from Latin, was strongly influenced by the Polish chancery, as Mircea’s document was sent to the king Władysław II Jagiełło [**Bogdan, D.** 1938, p. 68–69; **Bogdan, D.** 1986, p. 730].

The last Wallachian document dating before 1500 that had a similar formula to those studied above was preserved in Greek; issued on March 28th, 1412 and representing a transaction between two persons (Constantin and Hariton), the act begins with the formula “In the name of God (*Ἐν ὀνοματί τοῦ Θεοῦ*)” [**Panaiteșcu, P. P., Mioc, D.** 1966, p. 77–78]. Although *invocatio verbalis* is not as explicit as in the Slavonian documents, by mentioning the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the conclusion is the same – when a document is issued in the name of person that does not have a princely origin, *invocatio verbalis* may be present even if it is written in a short or long form.

Marin Tadin also noticed that “Io” as a short form of *invocatio verbalis* could be very easily confused with the Greek name “Ioannes”, a situation met in Wallachian charters as well. “C’est la raison pour laquelle, croyons-nous, au XIV^e siècle les clercs des chancelleries bulgare, serbe du sud et vladco-moldave, qui suivaient le rite byzantin, ont été séduits par cette identité graphique et amenés a confondre l’invocation verbale slave avec le prénom grec: Jean.” [**Tadin, M.** 1977, p. 194]. This situation is also met in the Wallachian charters before 1500, several original documents recording it during the reign of Mircea the Old, Mihail I, Dan II/ Dan III, Alexander I (Alexandru Aldea) and Radu the Great [**Panaiteșcu, P. P., Mioc, D.** 1966, p. 49, 87, 106, 108, 116, 124, 131, 136, 423].

“Io” was a common diplomatic formula in Wallachian princely documents. Although many historians wrote that it might be link with a proper name, Marin Tadin proposed an origin coming from *invocatio verbalis*. The Wallachian documents from 14th and 15th centuries reveals that when “Io” was used in the internal princely charters, *invocatio verbalis* was not present, with only one exception – an act that was not preserved in original, but in a Slavonic copy. In private documents, the formula “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” could be found both in Slavonic originals and in late Romanian copies.

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