

*Albanskij toskijskij govor sela Lešnja (kraina Skrapar):
Sintaksis, Leksika, Ėtnolingvistika, Teksty*
'The Albanian Tosk Dialect of the Village of Leshnja (Skrapar Region):
Syntax, Lexicon, Ethnolinguistics, Texts'
(Materialen zum Südosteuropasprachatlas, vol. 2)

Dželjal' Jully [Xhelal Ylli] and Andrej N. Sobolev

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Reviewed by *Victor A. Friedman*
University of Chicago

After more than four decades of calls for a Balkan linguistic atlas, an international group of Balkanists is finally attempting to address the task on the basis of a pilot project begun at the University of St. Petersburg in 1996. This project, however, pursues the more modest goal of producing an atlas that will cover selected, representative dialects in depth, rather than attempting the herculean task of surveying all the dialects of all the languages of the region. Moreover, since the focus of the project is precisely areal, it examines the dialects in terms of those categories that are of greatest relevance to language contact: syntax and lexicon. The current volume is the second in a series that is projected to cover 13 points (seven Slavic, three Greek, two Albanian and one Romance), of which the first was the Bulgarian dialect of Široka Lāka (and nearby villages) in the Rhodopes (Smolyan region).

The volume under review here comprises an introduction (pp. 17-28), syntax (29-252), lexicon (253-389), ethnolinguistics (390-485) and texts (486-513). The bibliography consists of seventeen items, and there is a 74-minute CD of 29 tracks: seventeen tracks from the ethnolinguistics section narrated by eight speakers, and twelve tracks from the texts, ten from one speaker and one each from two others, all of whom were also recorded for the ethnolinguistics tracks.

The introduction gives some details about Leshnja, which is a Bektashi village in the Ćorovoda district and thus representative of northern Tosk, itself the dialectal base of Standard Albanian. The location of the village is described in detail, but no map is provided. Although Jorgo Gjinari published a twenty-page dialectological description of the Skrapar region in 1960, the dialect of Leshnja has not been described before, and no Albanian dialect has received such a detailed syntactic and lexical description. In a sense, as indicated by the title, this volume is the

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opposite of a traditional dialect description, which would be devoted primarily to phonology and morphology while giving only a few remarks on syntax and lexicon. Here, the phonology, morphophonemics and morphology are cursorily surveyed in seven pages, while more than two hundred pages are devoted to syntax. So, for example, the description of stressed schwa is limited to an observation that it occurs and that it corresponds to Geg nasal *a*. Missing, therefore, is the fact that stressed schwa can also correspond to Geg nasal *e*, e.g., *vě = vĕ* 'put.' Also lacking is an indication that stressed schwa in this dialect, as is the case elsewhere in northern Tosk, is considerably fronted (although, apparently, not as low as in, e.g., Korĉa) and in fact often sounds pretty much like [e]. The transcription is a very broad phonemic one, using a system based on Albanian orthography. Fortunately, the excellent CD provides all the material any phonologist could wish for, and while what I heard on the CD did not always correspond exactly to what was transcribed, the deviations were so minor that they did not constitute any sort of impediment.

Much of the morphology can be deduced from the syntactic description, which is in any case organized primarily by morphological categories. The fifteen sections that make up this chapter are the following: Substantive (46 pp.), Pronoun (17 pp.), Adjective (20 pp.), Numeral (9 pp.), Adverb (2 pp.), Verb (71 pp.), Substantival Phrase (5 pp.), Adjectival Phrase (1 page), Quantitative Phrase (5 pp.), Prepositions (15 pp.), Coordinating Conjunctions (5 pp.), Structure of the Simple Sentence (9 pp.), Existential and Possessive Phrases (5 pp.), Communicative Direction of the Expression (interrogatives, negatives and particles; 7 pp.) and Subordinate Clause (11 pp.). Each section is organized according to the questions of a standardized questionnaire, and thus they are readily comparable with the Bulgarian dialect described in the previous volume. This genuine comparability, thoroughness of syntactic coverage, as well as the enormous wealth of examples and details are extremely strong points of this work.

Although the title makes the focus of this volume clear, the lack of tables or systematic presentation of the phonology and morphology will surprise the traditional dialectologist. Thus, for example, someone looking for the possessive pronouns of this dialect would find only those that are used in examples illustrating answers to the various morphosyntactic dialectological questions, e.g., question 2.6.1 (p. 86): "Do possessive pronouns have a full paradigm or is the accusative form generalized?" (*Imejut li pritjažitel'nye mestoimenija polnuju padežnuju paradigmu ili obobščili formu vinitel' nogo padeža?*) The answer given is "Masculine possessive pronouns have generalized the accusative only for the genitive, dative, and ablative, but not for the nominative" (i.e., the same as in Standard Albanian), followed by phrases illustrating the first-singular masculine possessive pronoun in the nominative, accusative and dative. At the end of the paragraph, however, we have the curious note that there was one occurrence of an accusative for the nominative: *sot ěsht dall'indja* [sic] *t'ime* ('Today is my birthday' — the ictus indicates stress.) The form *time*, however, is feminine, which gender, at least in Standard Albanian, has a distinct

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dative-genitive in the first-person singular possessive (*sime*), while first-person singulars have no case distinction at all if referring to plural heads. On the other hand, second-singular and first-plural possessive pronouns referring to masculine plural heads merge the nominative and accusative and oppose it to the genitive-dative. It is curious that the characteristic northern Tosk generalization of the non-ablative oblique first- and second-person plural personal pronouns (*neve* and *juve*, respectively) for the nominative is described as "rare" (2.4.6, p. 80), and yet, for example, in the first-person narrative on CD track 19 (pp. 500-01), *neve* occurs in subject position six times while *ne* does not occur at all.

The chapter on the lexicon is organized according to twelve lexical categories covering nature, humanity and labor, e.g., weather, body parts, kinship terms, formulaic expressions, pastoral terms, agricultural terms, apicultural terms, culinary terms, etc. This is followed by an account of the semantics of 73 selected lexical Balkanisms of various origins (Greek, Latin, Turkish, Slavic and "substrate"). Unfortunately, the first volume did not follow this format, and so comparison is difficult.

The chapter on ethnolinguistics covers the folk calendar, various household and other rituals, mythological beliefs (vampires, the evil eye, etc.) and miscellaneous. The questions in this section have both lexical and lengthy textual answers rich in detail. Those interested in taboo speech, however, will be disappointed by the heading *mallkime* 'curses,' which contains only the following: *ja kshu i mallkonim. mos u bëfsh, i thosh* 'This is how we used to curse: "May you not become [old]" was said to him/her.' (The expression as it was recorded is extremely euphemistic. The literal meaning is simply 'May you not become.' A more idiomatic English equivalent would be 'Drop [dead]!') This chapter is not readily comparable with that in the preceding volume, which does not follow the questionnaire but organizes narratives according to informants and then by topics. The chapter of texts contains memoirs, narratives of daily life, tales, anecdotes, etc. The texts illustrate both the dialect and the culture of those who speak it, and they also make entertaining reading.

Keeping in mind the purpose of the volume, which is to provide material for a comparative Balkan atlas, the book succeeds admirably in its goals. It also provides an enormously rich trove of data for any Albanologist or Balkanist. This book is a truly valuable contribution to both Albanian and Balkan linguistics, and we look forward to future volumes in the series.

Comparative Syntax of Balkan Languages

María Luisa Rivero and Angela Ralli (eds)

2001. New York: Oxford University Press, 234 pp.

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Reviewed by Virginia Hill
University of New Brunswick

This volume contains a collection of papers in generative grammar presented at the workshop on the syntax of Balkan languages in Athens, 1996. Topics include identifying functional categories, the pattern of verb movement, accounts on raising and control, clitic doubling, the morphosyntax of subjunctives and the structure of DP. Languages under discussion (*i.e.*, Albanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian) are presented in comparative paradigms with other languages and dialects of the Balkans as well as languages outside this area.

Brian Joseph's paper raises the question "Is Balkan Comparative Syntax Possible?" and his comments set the tone for the other studies in the volume. Basically, a distinction is drawn between the study of the *Sprachbund* properties of the Balkan languages and the study of the parametric settings in these languages. *Sprachbund* properties sprang from language contact, which entails superficially shared features, without profound consequences on the grammar of each language concerned. His example of the formation of past tense in Albanian and Macedonian shows borrowing through language contact; however, this form does not carry over the formation of other tenses in each language. Recognition of language-contact effects transpires when the respective features diverge from the inherited Proto-Indo-European properties. Thus, a historical approach is indispensable when identifying *Sprachbund* properties: not only is there need to distinguish between inheritance and borrowing, but also the synchronic contemporary data must be seen with an eye to the 400 to 700 years of language development since the contact situation (*i.e.*, the Balkanization) has occurred. In this context, the differences among Balkan languages are as important as the similarities, since they define each other. This type of linguistic study, when