The Diffusion of Macedonian Inflections into Megleno-Romanian: A Reconsideration of the Evidence

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A frequently cited example of the diffusion of inflectional affixes via language contact uses data from Macedonian and Megleno-Romanian that have their source in Capidan (1925: 159–61). The example is cited with sufficient frequency that it merits re-examination, elaboration, and updating. The first citation of the phenomenon after Capidan was in Weinreich (1953: 32–33), who is cited by Heath (1984: 370); Thomason (2001: 77, 153) gives the data without citation, and she is cited by Myers-Scotton (2002: 92). As presented in Weinreich, a dialect of Romanian called *Meglenite* (specified as spoken north of Salonica) has borrowed first and second singular present tense markers (-*um* or -*ăm* and -*iš* in Weinreich, -*m* and -*š* in Thomason), from the local dialect of Bulgarian. Both Weinreich and Thomason give the same example: *aflum, afliš* from *aflu, afli* 'find 1, 2 sg'. At the time Capidan was writing, Megleno-Romanian was claimed as a Romanian dialect and Macedonian was claimed as Bulgarian; however, today (as was already the case when Weinreich was writing) Megleno-Romanian has the status of a separate language within Balkan Romance, and the Lower Vardar dialects with which it is or was in contact are part of Macedonian.[1] With regard to the presentation of Macedonian in Capidan as well as Weinreich's account of both languages based on Capidan, there are clarifications and corrections that are in order. Also, the matter has been studied more recently by Atanasov (1984, 1990, 2002), who, however, omits some of the data from Capidan.[2] Finally, the Megleno-Ro-

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[1] See Ivanescu (1980: 30–46) for a summary of the Balkan Romance debate and Friedman (2000) on Balkan Slavic.

[2] Of the other potential sources on this phenomenon, Wild (1983) does not give conjugational data, while the texts in Papatsafa (1997) are not specified for origin.

manian data themselves are not as simple as presented in Weinreich. In fact, the phenomenon also has potential language-internal explanations, as we show below.

Setting the scene must begin with the Gevgelija dialect of Macedonian, for which Ivanov (1932) gives data that are roughly contemporaneous with the time Capidan was writing, while Peev (1979) has additional material from the same dialect zone.[3] It is interesting to note that in his account, Capidan (1925: 159) starts from standard Bulgarian but then moves to the system of the dialects that became standard Macedonian (i.e., West Central). He does not give the actual data from the Lower Vardar (southeastern) Macedonian dialects—of which Gevgelija is the northwesternmost—with which Megleno-Romanian was in contact. As is well known to Slavists, the 1 sg pres marker *-m*, which is descended from the Indo-European *mi*-conjugation and which by the ninth century was attested in only five verbs in Old Church Slavonic, was eventually generalized as the 1 sg pres marker to varying degrees in West and South Slavic (see Janda 1996). It was precisely in western Macedonia that this generalization went furthest. In standard Macedonian and the west central dialects on which it is based, there are three conjugations, but all verbs (except *sum* 'I am') take *-am* in the 1 sg pres, e.g., *sakam-sakaš-saka* 'want', *beram-bereš-bere* 'gather', *nosam-nosiš-nosi* 'carry' (all 1, 2, 3 sg pres). In the Gevgelija region there has been paradigm merger and a change in the 1 sg pres vowel: the respective paradigms are *sakum-sakiš-sake*, *berum-beriš-bere*, *nosum-nosiš-nose* (see Ivanov 1932: 86–88 and Peev 1979: 85–87 for details and discussion, also Elson 1983 and Friedman 1985 on the distribution of Macedonian paradigm mergers).[4]

To understand the Megleno-Romanian data, we must first set the language in its historical and geographic context. During the Ottoman period, Megleno-Romanian was spoken in a dozen or so villages in the Meglen region, most of them in the township (*nahiye*) of Karadžova

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[3] See the appendix for an explanation of the principles of orthography and toponymy citation used in this article.

[4] Ivanov (1932: 87) notes that the 1 sg ending can also occur as *-əm, -åm,* or *-om* (this last mostly in songs), and he attributes this to the influence of neighboring dialects, e.g., Voden (Greek Edhessa) *-əm*. We can note that nearby Kukuš (Greek Kilkis) also normally has *-um.* See Peev (1979: 85) on the origin of the vowel.

(Turkish *karaca ova* 'dark plain') in the district (*kaza*) of Gevgelija.[5] The general region was mostly Macedonian-speaking, although there were also some Roms and Turks (including Yuruks from Anatolia) and a few Circassians. Capidan (1925: 9) names eleven villages, all of which are recorded as being in the Karadžova *nahiye* in Kănčov (1900: 152–53) except Barovitsa (Gk Katanerḗ), which was in the Gumendže (Gk Goumenissa) *nahiye* of the Enidže Vardar (Gk Giannitsa) *kaza*. Both Kănčov (1900: 247) and Simovski (1998[2]: 53) claim Barovitsa as Macedonian-speaking, and Atanasov (1990, 2002) does not list it as having Megleno-Romanian speakers, although Simovski notes that almost all the toponymy in the village's boundaries is Vlah. Kănčov (1900: 153) also claims Tsărnareca (Gk Kárpē) as "Bulgarian," but all other sources give it as Megleno-Romanian, and Capidan collected Megleno-Romanian texts there. That village's dialect is noted by all observers as being more heavily Slavicized than the rest of Megleno-Romanian. According to Simovski (1998[2]: 67) a large number of Macedonian-speaking refugees from nearby Macedonian-speaking villages settled there in the nineteenth century, and there were many mixed marriages—the brides being mainly from nearby Kriva (Gk Gkríva) and Barovitsa. Simovski adds that the village was considered bilingual in Macedonian and Megleno-Romanian. The predominantly Megleno-Romanian village of Nănti was the largest Megleno-Romanian village (3500 inhabitants according to Kănčov 1900:152) and the only one whose inhabitants were Muslims rather than Christians. According to Kănčov, there were also 160 Roms in Nănti, and Capidan (1925) mentions both Roms and Pomaks (in this context, Macedonian-speaking Muslims) in the village. The closest village to Nănti was a Christian Macedonian-speaking village, Tušim (Gk Aetokhḗrion).[6] The next village down the road, Fuštani (Gk Foústani), however, was 75% Macedonian Muslim and 25% Macedonian Christian according to Kănčov (1900: 147). Like all other Muslims who found themselves on the Greek side of the border after World War One—except the Albanian-speak-

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[5] The Meglen (or Məglen or Moglen, from Slavic *mʊgla* 'fog') was a separate *kaza* that was redistricted in the late nineteenth century, its villages divided among Gevgelija, Kukuš, and Enidže Vardar (Greek Giannitsa); see Kănčov (1900: 153). Today most of the region is in Greece, but Gevgelija and the northernmost Megleno-Romanian villages are in the Republic of Macedonia.

[6] For a detailed study of the fate of the Tušim Macedonians, see Monova (2002).

ing Çams of Epirus and the Muslims of Western Thrace—all the Muslims in the Meglen were deported to Turkey in the exchange of populations mandated by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Recently, Kahl (2006) discovered the deportees of Nǎnti in Turkish Thrace. A number of Megleno-Romanian Christians were among those who fled to Romania in the wake of the Balkan Wars. Most ended up in the region of Tulcea in Dobrudja, where they have assimilated to Romanian. Some Megleno-Romanians also fled to the Republic of Macedonia as a consequence of the Greek Civil War after World War Two. In addition to those villages already mentioned, Capidan and Kǎnčov both list the following Megleno-Romanian villages (all in Karadžova): Umǎ, Ljumnitsǎ, Cupǎ, Lundzinj, Oshinj, and Birislǎv, Sermenina, and Coinsko.[7] The first six of these plus Tsǎrnareca constitute the modern core of Megleno-Romanian from which Atanasov gathered his data.

Megleno-Romanians are unique among Balkan Romance speakers in that they do not refer to themselves by a word cognate with *Roman*, e.g., *Armîn* or *Rǎmǎn*—terms used by Aromanian-speakers—but rather as *Vla* (plural *Vlashi*), i.e., the term used by their Macedonian-speaking neighbors, who call them Pashki Vlasi (Vlahs of Mt. Pajak). The degree of Slavic influence on Megleno-Romanian is sufficiently high that the verbal system has a Slavic type perfective/imperfective opposition, e.g., *durmíri* 'sleep' *zadurmíri* 'fall asleep' (Atanasov 1990: 208). Nonetheless, the influence of Macedonian on the conjugational system is not nearly as pervasive (or even certain) as the presentation in Weinreich and Thomason would lead one to expect.

Capidan (1925: 158–61) treats the affixes in question as *-m* or *-ǎm* and *-š* or *-ǎš*, e.g., *aflum/aflǎm, afliš/aflǎš*. (The original conjugation is *aflu, afli, aflǎ, aflǎ′m, afláts, aflǎ*.) He does not specify, however, the fact that the newer forms occur only in four villages, and only with first conjugation verbs ending in a consonant cluster, the second of which is a liquid, /n/, or /k/. Atanasov (1984: 525; 1990: 214; 2002: 237) specifies forms such as *aflum, afliš* as occurring only in Oshinj and Lundzinj. He does not give forms with a schwa as a stem vowel like *aflǎm, aflǎš*. The forms with schwa occur in Oshinj, and Nǎnti, which also have forms

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with original *-u-/-i*. Cupă, the next village east of Oshinj on Mt. Pajak has one occurrence of *jungljish* 'you cut the throat' (95–96). Atanasov's texts demonstrate that Birislav (from which Capidan does not have texts) has *aflu* despite the fact that it is the next village downhill northeast of Oshinj on the way to Lundzinj or Nănti. While Nănti is known to have had a Macedonian-speaking population, Oshinj, Lundzinj, and Cupă did not, although the larger region was Macedonian-speaking, and Simovski (1998[2]: 60) reports some mixed marriages with Macedonians in Cupă, which is on the road between Oshinj and Tsărnarecă. Moreover, it is striking that Tsărnarecă, by all accounts the village with the strongest Macedonian influence (even the name is Macedonian 'black river') and the most significant bilingualism, does not have this feature.[8] Finally, there is the fact that while *aflum/afliš* show a coincidental parallelism to the Gevgelija Macedonian dialectal conjugation in the stem vowel, *aflăm/aflăš* show other innovations as well.[9] Capidan also notes the form *mutshchim* 'I bite' from Lundzinj, which appears to be a back formation from *mutshchish.* We therefore might want to look within the Megleno-Romanian system itself to see if there are any possible sources for the phenomena under consideration.

We should note here that unstressed final vowels in the 1,2 sg present are eliminated if the resulting consonant cluster is acceptable, except in Uma and Tsărnareca. Thus, for example, Uma and Tsărnareca have *c'ăntsu, c'antsă* 'sing' 1,2 sg where the other villages have *cǫnt, cǫnts*, likewise *dormu, dormi* 'sleep' 1,2 sg. There is also a tendency for final *-ă* to replace *-i* in the 2 sg of III conjugation verbs in *-nj* in Uma and Tsărnareca, e.g., *tsernji > tsernjă* (eslewhere *tsernj*) (Atanasov 2002: 236–39). It is thus the case that, in addition to some stem-vowel confusion, all Megleno-Romanian dialects except Uma and Tsărnareca have vocalic endings in the 1,2 sg present only when their elimination would result in an unacceptable cluster, i.e., there could be analogical pressure to make these few verbs take consonantal endings like all other 1,2 sg present verbs in those dialects. However, while this only occurs in half the possible dialects, they are not the

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[8] The name Birislăv (Borislavci) is also Slavic.

[9] In final position, 1 sg *-u* and 2 sg *-i* also occur in the third and fourth conjugations in Uma and Tsărnareca (e.g., *sternu, sternji* 'spread', *dormu, dormi* 'sleep').

dialects with the most intensive contact with Macedonian, and the geographical distribution is uneven.

Two native sources of the 2 sg present ending in *-sh* are the IV conjugation present, where most verbs have a 2 sg marker in *-sh*, e.g., *sirbés, sirbésh, sirbeáshti* 'serve 1-2-3 sg', and the aorist, where all verbs have the 2 sg marker *-sh*, e.g., *căntásh, durmísh, sirbísh*. Moreover, *apmlju* 'fill', which shows the *-m/-sh* inflections, was originally a II conjugation verb and shifted to I, an indication that conjugational paradigms in these dialects are unstable.

With regard to 1 sg *-m*, there are also potential internal sources. The 1 sg imperfect is *-ám* or *-eám*, e.g., *căntám, durmeám*, and we also have native *săm* 'I am' *am* 'I have'.[10] Moreover, the present of 'have' functions as the formant of not only of the perfect (e.g., *am fost[ă]* 'I have been') but also of a non-confirmative built on an inverted perfect (with encliticized auxiliary) that is used, among other things, to express present surprise at a pre-existing state, e.g., *ió fóst-ăm mári óm!* '[Good heavens! It appears that] I am a rich man [much to my surprise]!' (cf. Atanasov 1990: 221). This means that final *-m* as a 1 sg marker with apparent present meaning is much more common in Megleno-Romanian than in the rest of Balkan Romance, which lacks this particular formation. Furthermore, there are occurrences from Lundzinj of what Capidan identifies as 1 pl *-m* where a 1 sg form would be expected, e.g., *spunim* 'I/we tell' (vs. *spun/spunim* Capidan 1928: 160), and Lundzinj also has a 2 sg *spuniń* 'you tell' and *antriń* 'you enter' (in addition to *antrish*), which Capidan explains as analogy with verbs of the type *deapin-deapinj* 'spin 1,2 sg', *seamin, seaminj* 'sow 1,2 sg'. While *mutshchim* would not necessarily be homonymous with the 1 pl (the expected form would be *mutshchă'm*), nonetheless it could be an additional source of paradigmatic pressure.

The fact that *-u/-i* are the original inflections plus the fact that *aflăm/ aflăš* also occur argues in favor of viewing *-m* and *-š* as the elements of change, independent of stem vowels, which themselves are subject to analogical pressures. This adds to the strength of the argument that *-sh* could have come from the fourth conjugation, since for the most part 2

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[10] The etymologies of *săm* and *am~ăm* are interesting problems in their own right, but these developments considerably pre-date the specifically Megleno-Romanian phenomena we are examining here and therefore do not bear on them.

sg present verbs either do not have a distinctive ending or are marked only by the historical palatalization of the final consonant. Strictly speaking, such palatalization is also the origin of IV conjugation 2 sg *-sh*, but because it is part of a stem formant, it will always be preceded by a vowel, which in turn will be preceded by the verbal root. It is thus the case that IV conjugation *-sh* looks like a second person marker, as in the 2 sg aorist *-sh*. The form *aflăm* also supports the argument that the 1 sg inverted perfect, with its apparent present meaning, could have supplied analogical pressure for the dialects of the four villages that eliminate all vocalic endings in the 1,2 sg present. Moreover, the spread of schwa as a stem vowel would have been strengthened by its presence in the 3 sg, pl and 1 pl of I conjugation, e.g., *cántă*, *cántă'm* 'sing' (Atanasov 1990: 213).

It can thus be argued that the Megleno-Romanian process is one of conjugational restructuring that coincides only in part with the surface appearance of local Macedonian conjugational patterns. So, while the influence of Macedonian need not be ruled out, neither is it necessarily the source of the change. The fact that the phenomenon is absent from villages with more significant Slavic influence, on the one hand, and the fact that possible native sources for the changes can be identified, on the other, combined with the fact that these conjugations are clearly relatively unstable, leaves this as a questionable example of borrowed inflectional morphology. A far clearer example in the Balkans is to be found in Eastern Bulgaria, where some Romani-speakers who also speak Turkish have transferred the 2 pl Turkish preterite marker *-nIz* into Romani (as *-əs*) and, in some of those dialects, then extended it to the 1 pl, e.g., Turkish (local dialect, which in this is the same as the standard) *yap-tı-k* 'we did', *yap-tı-nız* 'you (pl) did', most Romani *kerdj-am* 'we did', *kerdj-an* 'you (pl) did' but, e.g., Kaspičan Romani *kerdj-am-əs*, *kerdj-an-əs* (Elšík and Matras 2006: 135–36).

Appendix

Orthography and Toponyms

In this article, I follow the Megleno-Romanian orthography currently in use in the Republic of Macedonia as in Papatsafa (1997). Thus ă = schwa; c = [k] except before front vowels, where ch is used; i = a palatal glide after vowels; j = [ž] but lj and nj are palatal [l'] and [ń]; dz, sh, ts,

and tsh are read as they would be in English; ea, oa, uo are all rising diphthongs as in Romanian. In cited Megleno-Romanian verb forms, stress is only marked when final. An acute is used to mark stress except with schwa, when an ictus is used for typographic reasons. Macedonian and Greek are cited in standard Latinizations.

The primary citation of toponyms is governed by the following principles: Megleno-Romanian villages are given in their Megleno-Romanian form as cited in Atanasov (2002) using the Megleno-Romanian orthography noted above. Other villages and towns are given in their Macedonian form. If a Macedonian place is currently in Greece, the Greek form is given in parentheses on first citation. The following list gives the variant names of the core Megleno-Romanian villages (and Barovitsa) in Megleno-Romanian, Macedonian, and, if currently located in Greece, in Greek. Variants are given in parentheses.

The first four villages are the only ones with attestations of the phenomenon.

Table 1. Core Megleno-Romanian Villages from Capidan (1925)

Megleno-Romanian	Macedonian	Greek
Nănti	Noti (Nəte, Nəti , Notija, Nonte)	Nőtia (Enőtia)
Oshinj	Ošin	Arkhággelos
Lundzij	Lungonci (Lugunci, Lunci)	Lagkadiá
Cupă	Kupa	Koúpa
Birislăv	Borislav (Borislavci)	Períklea
Ljumnitsă	Ljumnica	Skrá
Tsărnarecă	Crna Reka	Kárpē
Barovitsă	Barovica	Katanerḗ
Umă	Huma	
Coinsco	Konsko (Kojnsko)	
Sirminină	Sermenin (Sermenina)	

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