

# Albanische Forschungen

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# *Wir sind die Deinen*

Studien zur albanischen Sprache, Literatur  
und Kulturgeschichte,  
dem Gedenken an Martin Camaj (1925–1992)  
gewidmet

Herausgegeben von Bardhyl Demiraj

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Ablativformen vor, im Plural – mit ganz geringfügigen "Oszillationen" – praktisch nur Formen mit *-sh*.

Ein vollständiges Schema des Kasussystems nach den von uns aufgestellten Kriterien, also eine Vervollständigung des in Anm. 66 gebrachten Schemas, wollen und können wir an dieser Stelle nicht geben – dazu bedarf es der Analyse zahlreicher weiterer moderner albanischer Texte. Jedenfalls sind auch außerhalb des Ablativ-Komplexes Ergänzungen erforderlich, z. B. auf dem Gebiet des Vokativs, der in meinem Artikel<sup>72</sup> kurz erwähnt wird. Hilfreich können hier u. a. auch die Überlegungen Selman Rizas<sup>73</sup> sein, die sich ebenfalls vor allem auf Diskrepanzen zwischen dem funktional-semantischen und morphosyntaktischen Gebiet beziehen.

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### ADMIRATIVITY AND MODALITY IN ALBANIAN- MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE CONTACT

Weigand (1923/24, 1925) was the first to notice certain similarities between the Albanian admirative (*mënyra habitore*) and Bulgarian (in modern terms, Balkan Slavic) admirative usage and suggested that the Balkan Slavic usage was the result of Albanian influence. He described the Albanian admirative as an inverted perfect and cited the following example (transcribed here as in the original) in both articles:

To bilo xubavo v grada! (Bulgarian)  
Kjen-ka bukër ndë kasaba! (Albanian)  
'How fine town life is!'

The 1925 article generated denials of Albanian influence on Bulgarian by Romanski (1926) and Beševliev (1928), but it was cited approvingly by Sandfeld (1930:119-20). Earlier assertions that the Albanian admirative derived from an unattested inverted future are definitively rejected by Demiraj (1971), who also demonstrates the fact that the admirative is attested in its current form (albeit with variable semantics) in the earliest Albanian writers. Friedman (1980, 1981, 2005) gives an exhaustive summary of previous discussions for Albanian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Turkish and also demonstrates the fundamental differences between the Balkan Slavic and Turkish phenomenon, on the one hand, and the Albanian, on the other. The Albanian admirative is marked for non-confirmativity, i.e. surprise (which requires a contrary expectation, i.e. a previous state of nonbelief), doubt or disbelief, or implication that the information is inferred, reported, etc. It constitutes a distinct set of paradigms in which the present, although derived historically from an inverted perfect, is now a true present, and, moreover, any of the past admiratives (imperfect, perfect, and pluperfect) can substitute for the present precisely in contexts where Balkan Slavic and Turkish have admirative uses of the perfect (as in the example above, where *paska qenë*, *qenkësh*, and *paskësh qenë* would all also be possible in the Albanian). By contrast, the Balkan Slavic and Turkish admiratives are actually non-confirmative uses of the unmarked past or

72 Fiedler (2008), S. 88 f.

73 S. Riza (2002), S. 55.

perfect whose non-confirmativity is derived from the contrast with a marked confirmative past. In the Albanian of Macedonia, however, we find a new development of the admirative, viz. the replacement of the 3 sg. present optative of 'be' *qoftë* with the 3 sg. pres. admirative of 'be' *qenka* in the meaning 'be it ..., or be it' or 'whether ..., or ...' I will argue here that this is a Balkanism connected with Macedonian influence that derives from an Albanian reinterpretation of a Macedonian optative usage of the Macedonian verbal *l*-form. as such, it is a relatively rare example of a calqued rather than copied (borrowed) conjunction.<sup>1</sup>

The Macedonian verbal *l*-form is descended from the Common Slavic resultative participle, which in Old Church Slavonic (*ceteris paribus*, the equivalent of Common Slavic for our purposes here) was used to form the perfect, pluperfect, conditional, and future perfect. In Macedonian, unlike Bulgarian, the *l*-form lost its ability to function attributively but remained in use for the perfect, pluperfect, and conditional. At some late stage in Common Slavic, i.e. before the rise of the opposition confirmative/non-confirmative, what was the *l*-participle

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<sup>1</sup> Camaj (1984: 163) makes the important point that in both older and modern Albanian writers, the subjunctive present admirative can be used in the protasis of irreal conditionals, as in his example *të fryke era, s'kishim me ndejë jashtë* 'If the wind were blowing, we would not sit outside.' Newmark, Hubbard and Prifti (1982: 86) also cite the irreal conditional use of the imperfect and pluperfect subjunctive admirative, e.g. ... *fluturojnë e sillen ca re të vogla, të zeza pis, sikur të qenkëshin tym prej dinamiti* '... there fly around and roam about a few small clouds, pitch black, as if the actually were dynamite smoke.' and *Sikur e gjyshja të mos paskëshin nxjerrë kokën nga qerrja ... kushedi sa gjatë do të kishte mbetur ashtu ...* 'If his grandmother had not actually stuck her head out of the cart ..., who knows how long he would have remained like that ...' These modal uses are connected with usages in some of the earliest attested admiratives (see Demiraj 1971) and are, I would argue, a development that is entirely distinct from the non-confirmative meaning (see also Liosis 2010 on the modal fate of the admirative in Arvanitika). As Camaj (1984: 187) points out, the Albanian optative itself is an internal Albanian development with close morphological connections to the aorist (which, we can add, is the one tense form totally absent from the admirative). It would appear that expressions of desire and *irrealis* were in a state of relative lability in Albanian for some time before the attestation of our earliest documents. Nonetheless, the phenomenon we are examining in this article is based on a later Albanian system, where both optative and admirative have achieved their current states, but at the same time a new development is possible.

developed an optative usage in the third person singular to replace the third singular imperative which, being homonymous with the second singular imperative, was lost. Such usage is found in Czech as well as throughout South Slavic and thus must have arisen prior to their separation. Vaillant (1966: 97) attributes the construction to an elliptical optative composed of *da* plus the conditional (3 sg. *bi* plus *l*-participle), as in Macedonian *Dal ti Gospod dobro!* literally 'May the Lord grant you [that which is] good!'. In Macedonian, the *l*-form was reinterpreted as a perfect rather than an elliptical conditional and can thus occur in other persons with the auxiliary of the old perfect rather than the conditional marker, e.g. *Da ne sum te videl!* literally 'May I not have seen you!', i.e. 'I'd better not see you [around here]'. In the course of subsequent centuries, the perfect meaning of the old present resultative perfect using the *l*-form in Macedonian came into competition with that paradigm's non-confirmative meaning, which arose as a result of the development of marked confirmativity in the synthetic pasts (see Friedman 1986 for detailed discussion). In southwestern Macedonian, with the rise of a new resultative perfect using the auxiliary *ima* 'have' and the neuter verbal adjective, the old perfect using the present of 'be' plus the verbal *l*-form became restricted to non-confirmative usage and, in the extreme southwest, disappeared almost entirely. To the north and east of the Ohrid-Struga region up to the river Vardar (and beyond, since World War Two), the old and new perfects are in competition, and the old perfect using the verbal *l*-form is an unmarked past, but with a chief contextual variant meaning of non-confirmativity (see Friedman 1977 for detailed explanation).

At the same time, with all these developments, a remnant of the old Late Common Slavic use of the *l*-participle as an optative (without, n.b., an auxiliary in all the languages where it occurs) survives in the Macedonian (and Bulgarian, but not BCS) use of the third person singular neuter of 'be' *bilo* ..., *bilo* ... in the meaning 'whether ..., or ...' In its meaning, this construction corresponds to the Albanian use of the 3 sg. present optative *qoftë* ..., *qoftë* ... In modern Albanian, the optative is more or less limited to expressions such as *rrofsh!* 'thank you' (literally, 'may you live') *me nder qofsh* 'you're welcome' (literally 'may you be with honor') and a variety of other formulae, blessings, and curses that can use any verb in any person, such that the paradigm is very much alive albeit quite restricted in function. This function, however, is very tightly connected to the desiderative function of the optative. As such, it rarely occurs outside this function, and when it does, e.g. in the expression *në*

*qoftë se* 'if', it can always be replaced by some other locution (*në, po, po të*, etc.).

In the Albanian of Macedonia (at least in the northwest) it appears that the combination of restriction of the Albanian optative to wishes combined with the surface similarity of the Macedonian optative use of the *l*-form to its non-confirmative use, especially with the verb 'be' as in the example from Weigand cited for Bulgarian above (the Macedonian would be the same, *mutatis mutandis*, see Friedman 1981, 1986 for further discussion), has resulted in a calqued replacement of *qoftë* by *qenka* in the meaning of 'whether ..., or ...'. Thus, for example, an Albanian politician from Tetovo talking with a colleague in Skopje about the importance of investment made the point that nationality was irrelevant: *qenka shqiptar, qenka amerikan, qenka maqedonas ...* '[it doesn't matter] whether it's (= let it be) an Albanian, an American, or a Macedonian ...'. The Macedonian for *qenka* here would be *bilо*, while standard Albanian would use *qoftë* in this position.

It is worth noting that, based on evidence from a variety of languages (Matras 1998), we have here an interesting and relatively rare example of calquing as opposed to ordinary borrowing in a conjunction. Thus, for example, in the hierarchy of borrowed conjunctions in Romani, 'but' is most likely to come from the most recent contact language, 'or' from an older contact language, and 'and' is least likely to be borrowed (Elšík and Matras 2006: 185). Colloquial Macedonian and Albanian in Macedonia, for example, share Turkish *ama* for 'but' (literary Albanian *por* and literary Macedonian *no*). Moreover, in the context of nineteenth and twentieth century nation-state politics, the relative importance of Macedonian for Albanian-speakers *sensu largo*, is considerably more recent than the importance (and prestige) of Turkish. At the same time, however, day-to-day contacts between Macedonian and Albanian dialects at the local level in what is today the Republic of Macedonia have a very long history, and one that is not nearly as contestational as current politics would suggest. Thus, I would argue, the fact that what we have here is not borrowing but calquing — and at the middle level in the hierarchy at that — points both to both a high degree of bi- or multi-lingualism between the Albanian and Macedonian language communities, and such a calque also demonstrates the accessibility of verbal forms when used in the function of other parts of speech.

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