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ADMIRATIVITY REVISITED*

In this article, I shall turn my attention from the nominal to the verbal system, which also attracted the attention of Acad. Georgiev. My topic here is the so-called "admirative" as a semantic and as a morphological category in Bulgarian and in Balkan linguistics. This subject is by no means new to either field, but there are new data and directions of investigation that are worthy of note here. Although the admiring as such was not the topic of a special investigation on the part of Acad. Georgiev, his interesting and important articles on the Bulgarian verb (Georgiev 1955, 1957, 1973) can shed light on the questions that interest us here.

In an article on the diachrony of the Bulgarian verb, Acad. Georgiev (1973:44) wrote the following: "Общата закономерност, която действува тук в разво на българския език е законът за съхранение на модела. Тази обща закономерност определя действието на морфологичните и фонематичните закони, при което морфологичните закон неутрализира действието на фонематичния закон, ако последният води до нарушение на системата." (The first general law acting here in the development of the Bulgarian language is the law of preservation of the model. This general law determines the action of the morphological and phonemic laws, in which morphological law neutralizes the action of phonemic law if the latter results in a violation of the system.) On the other hand, in his article on constructions using the auxiliary имам 'have', Acad. Georgiev (1957:59) concluded: "В нашия език съвършено едно ново време, разработено чрез глагола имам и минало страдателно причастие. Това време означава действие, завършено в миналото, чийто резултат продължава да е наличен в сегашния момент, т.е. минало резултативно време. То още не е получило книжовна гражданственост. Поради особената промяна в значенията на миналите времена, които се е извършила в историята на

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version, Wiegand (1925) even goes so far as to claim that the Bulgarian use of the perfect with an apparent present meaning was borrowed from Albanian, an idea that Романски (1926) justifiably refutes. As is the case with Wiegand, Романски, too, does not distinguish the presence or absence of the auxiliary in the third person of the indefinite past and treats expressions such as Той е умрял ‘He (has) died’ and Тя била хубавица ‘She turns out to be a beauty’ as equally perfect or reported. He points out that the resultative character of the perfect allows it to express the speaker’s surprise in instances of discovering something unknown prior to the moment of speech. For us, however, the main point is this early comparison of the Bulgarian perfect with one of the Albanian present tenses.

With regard to the topic of this study, from the articles of Цонев and Wiegand onward, Bulgarian linguists have been primarily concerned either with demonstrating that the amative is a usage of the so-called reported mood (e.g. Андреєвич 1944:311, Купаров 1994:153), despite the fact that it involves witnessing, or with arguing that it is a usage of the indefinite past (indicative mood, e.g. Демина 1959:328, Герджиков 1984:110, Gentleeva 1988), despite the fact that it has a present tense interpretation and the auxiliary verb is absent in the third person.

In Friedman 1982 I compared the Albanian and Turkish translations of “Вай Гайд” with the Bulgarian original (Константинов 1895 [1973], Константинов 1972, 1975) focusing specifically on the correspondence of Albanian adverbial forms to the usages in Turkish and Bulgarian. I found that the 59 Albanian present adjectives corresponded to ordinary Bulgarian present tenses in 44 instances (and in 42 in the Turkish). Based on these comparisons together with other data, I concluded that Bulgarian and Turkish adverbial usages of perfect forms invariably referred to states that existed prior to the moment of speaking although the speaker had not been aware of them until the moment of speech. Thus, in Bulgar and Turkish the following meaning is invariably present: ‘I did not think that it was so, but now I see that it has been so and continues to be so’.

The Albanian adverbial, however, can function as a true present tense. This can be seen clearly from a fact which has gone unobserved in the literature until now: The Albanian adverbial can be used in genuine present tense questions that relate only to the moment of speech, whereas as such usage is unacceptable in Bulgarian and Turkish. Here is a concrete example: A man walks into a barber shop and sees the barber’s apprentice but is surprised that the barber himself is not in his shop. In Albanian he can ask: Кје генка миштени? ‘Where is the master’ thus indicating that he is surprised at the very moment of speech. In such a context, however, he cannot ask in Bulgarian Къде би бил маставор? nor can he ask in Turkish Уста недеремдем?…”

In those Bulgarian and Turkish examples in which adverbial usage appears to relate to the present moment, there is always a stative meaning that applies to the
past as well. Thus for example, if I enter a room and, seeing that my friend is speaking Japanese, I exclaim: *Ax, ти си говори японски*, the meaning is ‘You speak Japanese’ rather than ‘You are speaking Japanese’, i.e. ‘I did not know that you know Japanese (a state of being that existed in the past prior to my knowledge whose existence I have just discovered)’. This same explanation can apply to examples such as спира се пролет от царевица и картофи – чак сега научих това ‘alcohol is made from corn and potatoes – I just now learned that’ (Демина 1956:327).

Yet another example demonstrating that Bulgarian and Turkish admiring usage always refers to a pre-existing, i.e. past, state, is the fact that in the case of a newly discovered pre-existing state, Albanian permits not only the present admiring but any of the past admiring, as can be seen from the following translations from “Бай Ганъо”:

Бреев! Хентен магаре бил твои чиляк (Константинов 1973:69)
Vay anisul! dedi. Bu herif hepten de esekmis bel! . . . (Константинов 1972:146)

Бре! гомар и мод паска ге ке нжер! (Константинов 1975:99)
‘Hey, what a complete ass that guy is!’

Бреї, хентеп магаре бил твое човек! (Константинов 1973:66)
Vay namussuz yaw! Bu herif hepten de esekmis bel! (Константинов 1972:144)

Оре, fare gomar paskeš gëndë ky njeri! (Константинов 1975:98)
‘Hey, what an utter ass that guy is!’

Ама просстра рабома тези немци. (Константинов 1973:31)
Su Nemçetleri anularyan turp yezin. (Константинов 1972:28)

Ама нjerës fare pa mënë qënkëshim këta austrrikët! (Константинов 1975:24)
‘My, what simpletons those Germans are!’

Let us now turn to the Balkan Romance languages, specifically Trans-Danubian Balkan Romance, i.e. Aromanian and Megleno-Romanian. This group has affirmative (nonconfirmative) forms, although not one of the handbooks on Balkan linguistics mentions these phenomena in discussions of admiration and related phenomena. According to Atanasov (1984, 1990:220), Megleno-Romanian has an inverted perfect with the same types of non-confirmative meaning (i.e. admirable, dubitative, reported, etc.) found in the Balkan Slavic languages, Albanian, and Turkish, as in the following example:

а бра, tu fost-aj mari om! ‘I just now learned that] you are important!’

The model here is identical to the Albanian (including the formation of a pluperfect of using an inverted auxiliary, e.g. vut-aj fost [not paske qenel]), but it is difficult to identify with certainty the source of these paradigms. One possibility is the common Romance tendency to put auxiliary verbs after the base. A second possibility is the influence of local Macedonian and/or Turkish dialects (prior to the Balkan Wars, many Megleno-Romanians were Muslim, see Књига 1900:149–153), in which auxiliary verbs are (or at least can be) elliptic. A third possibility is contact with Albanian during the period of the Albanian migrations across Macedonia to Thrace and Dobrudja, since one of the main routes went through the Meglen region (see Яранов 1932). In any case the combination of diachronic origin in perfect forms and non-confirmative semantics is identical to that seen in the other languages examined so far.

In the dialect of the Frasherite Aromanians of Gorna Belica (Бела ди supră) near Struga in southwestern Macedonia, the same types of non-confirmative meaning (including admiring usage, since surprise results from the discovery of something would not have been willing to confirm before the moment of discovery), are expressed by means of a special form using the particle -ka, which is suffixed to an underlying masculine plural form of a participle usually based on the imperfect (rather than the aorist) stem, e.g. нăгеска (not ‘nesska’) ‘walk’; дусека (not ‘duska’) ‘go’; ванека (not ‘vanica’) ‘come’, кумвеска (not ‘kambeska’) ‘know’, бека (not ‘bicka’) ‘drink’, but fut → faska ‘be’, avut → avaska ‘have’, văgă → văgaska ‘see’ (see below for an explanation). Here is a concrete example:

Ми йог ди миот [Ми ćадош]: Аве тора тини фаска ауври ом!
Учоусе се: Аве сега ти си би бого човек!

‘I was amazed: “Hey, you are a rich man now!”’

In my view (see Friedman 1994), keeping in mind the fact that the Frasherite Aromanians of Gorna Belica arrived there from Myzeqe in central Albania and that until the middle of this century they knew Albanian, they must have taken the morpheme marking the third person singular present admiring in Albanian – by far the most common form – and reinterpreted it as a marker of admiring in general (cf. Гергев 1955b, and 1970 on interesting examples of morphemic reinterpretation in Bulgarian). They then added this borrowed and reinterpreted morpheme to a verbal stem created by analogy with the corresponding dialectal form of the relevant Albanian participle, which ended in schwa, which in turn also serves as the marker of plurality in some masculine adjectives. The choice of an imperfect stem can be explained by the fact that the Albanian admiring occurs in the imperfect but not in the aorist, e.g. 3 sg ‘have’ present ka, imperfect kishte, aorist pati, perfect ka pasur, pluperfect kishte pasur, 2nd pluperfect pat pasur, but present admiring paska, perfect admiring paska pasur, imperfect admiring paskësh, pluperfect admiring paskësh pasur but not aorist ‘paspat, 2nd pluperfect ‘pastpat pasur.

It is interesting to note that those Aromanian admiratives that are exceptional in their use of an aorist rather than an imperfect base (faska ‘be’, avaska ‘have’, văgaska ‘see’) all correspond to Albanian irregular verbs that have suppletion in the aorist stem (which in turn forms the basis of the participle, which in turn is the base for the
admiring). This suppletion is exceptional because most Albanian verbs do not distinguish aorist from imperfect stems. This is illustrated here by the forms of the Albanians verbs meaning 'be', 'have', and 'see', which all involve suppletion, and the verbs 'open' and 'drink', which are regular. The order of forms is the following: 3sg present – 3sg imperfect – 3sg aorist – participle – 3sg present admiring: 

je – ishite – qe – qenë – qenka
ka – kishte – pani – pasuar – paska
sheh – shihte – pa – parë – paka
hap – hapte – hapi – hapuri – hapka
pi – pinte – piu – pirë – pika

It thus appears that the Frasheriote Aromanians of Gorna Belica borrowed a single morpheme associated with the Albanian admiring and reinterpreted it as a marker of the category of admiringativity in general, while at the same time creating a verbal stem from native material on the analogy of their understanding of Albanian.10

We can conclude by observing that we find in the works of Vladimir Georgiev an inspiration for a more precise understanding of admiringativity in Bulgarian and in the other Balkan languages. Admiring usage of the old perfect (indefinite past) stands somewhere between the "the law of preservation of the model" on the one hand, and the "process of the rise of a new tense expressed by means of the verb 'have' and the past passive participle" on the other. Although such admiring usage appears to have a present meaning, it is evident both from the comparison with Albanian and from restrictions within Bulgarian itself, that the underlying relation to a past state is always preserved. Nonetheless, the rise of the new perfect with the verb 'have' is indicative of the change of the basic meaning of the past indefinite from 'perfect' to 'unmarked past' (with a chief contextual variant meaning of 'non-confirmative' vis-a-vis the markedly confirmative past definite).11 Finally, the example of the Aromanian admiring not only gives us an excellent example of both borrowing and reinterpretation of morphemic material between languages but also of the borrowing of an entire grammatical category, which, together with the Megleno-Romanian and Turkish data gives us reason to identify a more general grammatico-semantic Balkanism.

NOTES

1 All these articles were collected in Георгиев 1985, except that Георгиев 1955 was reprinted without the first sentence.

2 Although much has been written about this construction (e.g. Т. Бояджиев 1968, Gallis 1960, Костов 1972, Пичева 1968, Георгиев-Балкан 1957 and others).

3 The term "admiring" itself is based on Дозон (1879:226) French translation of Cristofordihi's Greek term διποοδηθεν 'unexpected'. The Albanian term is хабисте from habi 'surprise'.

4 In Weigand's example Το ευχήσεται μη υπάρξει 'The man speaks really well, better than I thought he would', the form ευχήσεται is a mistake. It should be ευχήσεται. Романски (1926) points out a number of other mistakes in Weigand's article. Since Weigand repeats them in both his English and German versions, they appear to indicate his imperfect mastery of Bulgarian rather than typographical errors. His presentation of the Albanian data is likewise misleading, as it confines the diachronic origin of the admiring with its synchronous meaning.

5 The literature on this subject has grown to such enormous proportions, that it is impossible to cite all the relevant works. See Fried m an 1980 for a bibliography relevant up to that year.

6 Only in 6 and 7 cases, respectively, did the Bulgarian and Turkish usages correspond to Albanian present adjectives. In 9 and 10 cases, respectively, there was no correspondence due to differences in translational style. See also the discussion of Albanian past admiringative in this article.

7 This is an important difference between admiringative usage and dibative usage. If the customer were to ask, e.g. in Turkish, Usta nerede and the apprentice were to answer that he didn't know, that he wasn't around, that he wasn't at home, etc., and the exasperated customer did not believe him, he could then exclaim: Lyi be, usta neredesmi?!, but this quotation would be an explanation of sarcastic exasperation at the apprentice's previous responses rather than a genuine question. The same holds true for the Bulgarian equivalent.

8 Duco-Romanian has the so-called modal presumem 'presumptive mood', which also expresses admiringative and related concepts (dubitative, reportedness, etc.). However, since these forms are not perfect but rather modal (i.e., formed with future, conditional, or subjunctive markers), the problem of the non-correspondence of temporal form with apparent semantics (i.e. the use of a past tense to express an apparently present meaning) does not arise. For details see Fried m an 1998.

9 The Aromanian perfect uses an invariant feminine singular aorist-stem participle.

10 It is important to note that since the Aromanian perfect normally uses a feminine singular aorist-stem participle, a fact explained by Golu b (1939) as being due to the fact that the Aromanian feminine has taken over the functions of the neuter — as is also the case in Albanian — the fact that the Gorna Belica admiringative uses a masculine plural imperfect-stem base supports the contention that it was formed by analogy with a non-native model.

11 See especially Fried m an 1988 for detailed arguments.

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MÖGLICHKEITEN UND ERFORDERNISSE
INTERDISZIPLINÄRER BETRACHTUNGSWEISEN IN DER
BALKANLINGUISTIK

Immer deutlicher treten in jüngster Zeit Bemühungen von Sprachtypologen in Erscheinung, die europäischen Sprachen auf ihre Gemeinsamkeiten hin zu untersuchen und eine "Eurolinguistik" zu etablieren. Dieses Unternehmen befindet sich zwar noch im Anfangsstadium, doch kann es bereits mit greifbaren Ergebnissen aufwarten – etwa im Bereich der Syntax mentaler Prädikate, d. h. beim sprachlichen Ausdruck für "frieren; Hunger haben; Kopfschmerzen haben; sich freuen" usw.; oder in der Kennzeichnung externer Possessoren.


Angesichts dieser Situation, die ja auch für die Balkanlinguistik relevant ist, weil sie die Balkansprachen in größere Zusammenhänge stellt, erscheint mir ganz allgemein eine Überwindung der klassischen Areallinguistik bzw. Sprachbundforschung und eine stärkere interdisziplinäre Arbeitsweise erforderlich, will man die spezifischen Fragen der Balkansprachen in Relation zu anderen europäischen Sprachen herausstellen. Im besonderen erscheint eine stärkere Hinwendung zur Semantik

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