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Victor A. FRIEDMAN (Chicago)

DIALECTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ROMANI IN THE BALKAN LINGUISTIC LEAGUE

In her excellent handbook on the Balkan languages, Asenova (2002: 220) describes Romani as "a non-Balkan language but with long residence in the Balkans." She does so in the context of Romani future formation, for which she cites Uhlik (1973), which, together with Kostov (1973) constitute two of the earliest attempts to integrate the study of Romani into Balkan linguistics. We can note here that in her assessment of Romani, Asenova is echoing Sandfeld (1930: 3–4), who mentioned Roman and Judezmo in his second footnote for the purpose of excluding them from his study. We can also observe that although Romani attracted the interest of some of the earliest Balkanists (e.g., Miklosich 1872–1880), Weigand's (1895: 78) passing observation that in central Albania many nomadic Roms spoke Romanian as their mother tongue while sedentary Roms knew all the Balkan languages in addition to Romani (emphasis mine) by its very phrasing excludes Romani from the Balkan languages. In this article honoring Professor Asenova's many accomplishments and significant contributions to Balkan linguistics, among which her handbook is certainly of great importance precisely owing to its masterful synopsis and analysis, I wish to contribute additional material on the Balkan nature of Balkan Romani. Although Romani in general can be considered a Balkanized Indic language, and, indeed, certain pan-Romani features are surely of Balkan origin, in fact Romani dialects of the Balkans are significantly more Balkanized than their non-Balkan relatives. The recent publication of Boretzky-Igla (2004) helps make this especially clear. As Asenova (2002: 75) correctly notes, it is the morphosyntactic commonalities of the Balkan languages that define their membership in a linguistic league and constitute the chief interest for Balkas linguistics, and so, as she does in her book, I shall concentrate here on morphosyntactic phenomena.

I shall begin with the feature cited by Asenova (2002: 220), namely future formation. We can go significantly beyond the data from Uhlik in three respects: 1) the spread of the Romani volo future reflects quite clearly the extent of the Balkan linguistic league, 2) the dialectological facts suggests the rise of the
volo future in Romani coincides precisely with its rise in the other Balkan languages summarized so clearly in A senova (2002: 214), 3) in Romani, as in the other Balkan languages, there is a competing habeo future, although the construction itself may involve something other than a lexical 'have'. In Romani, there are two main ways of forming the future. In the Northern and Central dialects (outside the Balkans), the so-called 'long' form of the present tense in -a is used, while the short form functions as the present, e.g. ker-a-v (root-stem vowel-lsg)-I do – kerava 'I will do'. In the group known to linguists as the Balkan dialects, i.e. that group whose formation took place in the Ottoman Empire, the future is almost always formed by means of a particle based on the root kam- 'want', normally plus the short form, and the long form functions as a simple indicative present, e.g. kerava 'I do' – ka kerav 'I will do'. The group known as the Vlax dialects, which underwent a series of shared changes in contact with Daco-Romanian and which are currently spoken all over Europe (and elsewhere), show a complex distribution. The Vlax dialects of southeastern Serbia (co-territorial with Totk dialects) as well as those further south or east and south of the Danube are like the Balkan dialects. Vlax dialects outside the Balkans behave like Northern and Central dialects, while Vlax dialects in Romania, Bosnia, and northern Serbia have the two futures in competition (Boretzky-Iglia 2004: 63, 244). The extent of the future marker ka and its cognates in Romani is a marker of Balkan influence, and its complete absence from the Northern and Central dialects, its absence or attenuation in Northern Vlax dialects and dominance in the Southern Vlax and Balkan dialects suggest the origin of the form after the Romani diaspora of the later medieval period, which is to say the same Ottoman period when the future was grammaticalized in the rest of the Balkans. The use of a possessive construction to express necessity and negated futurity is a Balkanism that has been calqued into Balkan Romani despite the absence of a lexical verb meaning 'have' in many dialects. Thus, for example, Romani si man te avav 'I have to come' calques exactly the Macedonian mado da oda, Tosk Albanian kam te vij, etc. Similarly, a non-agreeing construction that is used for both negated existence and negated possession is used for negated futurity in, e.g. nac man te avav 'I shall not come' cf. Macedonian and Bulgarian nemadja da oda, Aromanian (Kruševë, cf. Goś 1984) noare s'neadim, etc.

The irreal conditional of future marker, i.e. future marker plus imperfect marker, also occurs precisely and only in those Romani dialects that form their future in the Balkan manner. Most dialects use the invariant future particle plus the imperfect and pluperfect, formed in most dialects by adding -ats to the short present and aoris, respectively, although in Arli, where final -ats is usually lost, sline 'was' (third person imperfect) has replaced -ats, and in some dialects, the imperfect marker is attached to kam-, e.g. ka sovava - ka sovava sline - kamas sovav 'I would have slept'. The following examples are typical: Te avena sine javinate, ka lena sine thud 'If they had come in the morning, they would have gotten milk' (Jusuf-Kepeski 1980: 116), Ma ti khelavkerasas la, ka xalas amen sarintec 'If we had not made her dance, she would have eaten all of us' (Ceech-Heinschink 1999: 123), Me ka gilavgivmu sine 'I would have sung...' (Jusuf-Kepeski 1980: 118) (cf. also Uhlik (1973: 83–93). Moreover, since earlier stages of Indic, like Slavic, Italic, and Hellenic, are attested with an infinitive, we know that we are dealing with the Balkan type of infinitive replacement. Unlike future and conditional formation, however, this is a pan-Romani phenomenon and thus must have occurred at an earlier stage in the language. While the process may have begun prior to the arrival of Romani in the Balkans, it was undoubtedly completed in contact with late medieval Greek and contemporaneous Slavic dialects prior to the Romani diaspora (cf. Matras 2002: 163). In Romani, as in Macedonian, the elimination of the older infinitive is complete, without even the formal traces of the type found in Greek (cf. Joseph 1983 on the cline of Balkan infinitive replacement, especially pp. 252–253 on Romani). Romani te is used as a complementizer for all types of verbs that take the functional equivalent in the other Balkan languages, modal, phasal, etc., e.g. Me lev te hromonav 'I begin to write' ; Say te avav 'I can come', Mangav te sovav 'I want to sleep'. Moreover, in Romani, as in the other Balkan languages, there is a distinction between the epistemic complementizer and the modal te as can be seen in the following examples: Džemav ka ka des man maro 'I know that you will give me bread', Džemav te hromonav 'I know [how] to write', Sunel pe samo oleskoro kavalo kajste bašule pe 'His flute was heard playing' (cf. A senova 2002: 166). In addition to being used for complementation, independent te can mark optatives as in the other Balkan languages, e.g. O beng te hal tumaro sore! 'May the devil eat your head' (Jusuf 1974). Furthermore, te can also mark the protasis of conditional clauses as seen in the previous examples with Te avena sine 'If you had come' and Ma ti khelavkerasas la 'If we had not made her dance'. Romani te also participates in the types of copular subordination noted by A senova (2002: 296), e.g. Romani bi te = Balkan Slavic bi o, Greek χρησίγε, Rumanian fiad ța, Romani fiz te = Albanian qe te, Balkan Slavic za o, Greek προτε, Rumanian ca șa, Romani angal te = Balkan Slavic prou șa, etc. To all this we can add that the development of new infinitive-like constructions using non-conjugating forms of the present indicative in dialects spoken outside the Balkans and in contact with languages that have infinitives (cf. Boretzky 1996) is additional evidence that it is precisely Balkan contact in the Romani dialects of the Balkans that preserves the morphosyntactic isomorphism.

The fourth and final section of A senova's treatment of Balkanisms in the verbal system is her extensive discussion of the dominance of synthetic over analytic pasts (A senova 2002: 240–274). Unlike the other three verbal
would treat as like English "everybody", i.e. as a singular.

The Romani comparatives and superlatives of the Balkans are entirely Balkanized. In fact, they are actually formed by means of borrowed markers, e.g. baro ‘big’, poharo, majharo, daľja baro ‘bigger’, najbaro, embaro, majharo ‘biggest’. This is a typical post-Byzantine Balkanism, i.e. one that developed after the first wave of Romani speakers left the Balkans for northern Europe. Those dialects that did not remain in the Balkans either maintain the old synthetic comparative in -eder with greater consistency (it is almost entirely lost in the Balkans), or devise other means to express comparison.

With regard to the general tendency toward analytism, we can say that the tendency in Romani resembles that found in the classic Balkan languages in certain respects, although it differs from them in degree of development. While it is true, as observed in many sources (Friedman 1997, Igla 1999, and Matras 1997), that the Romani case system is undergoing simplification under contact conditions in many Balkan dialects, the case system retains its vitality in all of them. Still, in Macedonia in particular there is a tendency to replace the ablative in -tar with the preposition tar-, which also takes on some genitive functions. There is also a tendency to move the locative -te and dative -ke in favor of the dative as well as a trend replacing both cases with a prepositional construction: jekhe aintzate ‘in a field’s = jekh aintz. Igla also has dative/accusative merger and ubilqua merger, e.g. me ka beša/đez iško (Gračija) ‘I will live in/go to Skopje’, kaj ka đa ‘where will you go’, kaj beše ‘where to do you live’. The one romani case that seems to retain its vitality in the face of analytical pressures in the instrumental -sa). Like the other Balkan languages, Romani preserves a vocative. This is an Indic inheritance whose conservation may have been encouraged by Balkan contact, e.g. phral ‘brother’, phrala ‘O brother’. Those dialects still located in the Balkans also borrow vocative forms of loanwords, e.g. in Arli tetka ‘aunt’, voc. tetko.

The Romani definite article is not postposed, as is also the case in Greek, e.g. o òhavo ‘the boy’. Moreover, it occurs with proper names, and, in some dialects, can also occur with demonstratives and with postposed attributive adjectives, e.g. o nom kadava ‘this man’ o nom o phuro ‘the old man’ (Igla 1996: 40). Sampson (1926: 152) argues convincingly that the Romani article is based on native pronoun material, given the preservation of oblique forms in -l- in some dialects. Thus, while not a borrowing from Greek, the development of the demonstrative into an article probably occurred in contact with Greek. While this development is shared by most Romani dialects, it has virtually disappeared from certain Northern dialects in Russia, Poland, and the Baltic states as a result of subsequent contact (Вентцель – Чернков 1976: 329). In connection with the opposition definite/indefinite, as I have argued else-

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4 Балканско езикознание, кн. 1
where (Friedman 2003), the historical evidence and the nature of modern parallels among the various Balkan and Slavic languages support the view that the grammaticalization of ‘one’ as an indefinite article, while widespread in the languages of the world, is nonetheless aril rather than typological in its Balkan context, i.e. a Balkanism, although it has not been identified as such in any of the standard handbooks. In the Balkan languages, such usage forms a continuum, with Turkish, Albanian, and Balkan Romance at one end, Greek, Bulgarian, and Macedonian in the middle, and the former Serbo-Croatian at the other end. In the case of Romani, which patterns like Balkan Slavic and Greek in this respect, the fact that such usage does not occur in archaic peripheral dialects such as that of Wales (Sampson 1926: 405) favors its interpretation as an aril feature. While the presence of grammaticalized indefinite markers in languages of Western Europe and South Asia could be argued for in a typological rather than an aril explanation, the temporal and spatial patterns of distribution support the argument that grammaticalized indefinite markers in Southeastern Europe arose precisely during and owing to the linguistic contact of the Ottoman period, and thus represent a Balkanism.11

In terms of isosyntagmatic prepositional constructions, Romani Balkan dialects have a mixture of prepositions and case usage that reflects the semantics of the other Balkan languages. Thus, while Romanı uses the dative (-ke) in meanings of Slavic sa, Albanian për, Greek yea, Romanian pentru, Balkan Romani can also use the dative-derived preposition -k as well as using k- plus the modal subordinator te, i.e. k-te, as a collocation corresponding to Balkan Slavic za oca, Albanian për të, Greek yia va, Romanian pentru să. Similarly, Romani can use the ablative or its prepositional equivalent tar- like Balkan Slavic odom, Albanian nga (= prej), Greek atop, Romance din (dei, de la), e.g. tari xoli mukel i metla tare po vas ‘from anger she drops the broom’, hari poterni tari Dudija ‘a little younger than Dudija’, chindo - mudardo tari buti ‘dead tired from work’, O Muto dolel e Ismeti tari kan ‘Muto grabs Ismet by the ear’, so posigo tari lazi nasela ‘she runs away as quickly as possible out of shame’ (Jusuf 1974). Similarly, Romani dëzi [k-a] corresponds to Albanian gjer [në] = Balkan Slavic o = Greek oç = Romanian pinălu) (cf. Ase nova 2002: 97). As I have noted elsewhere (Friedman 2001), a key difference between the social position of Romani and that of the classic Balkan languages is that while the latter were subject to multi-directional multilingualism, Romani multilingualism was (and is) unidirectional. That is, while the speakers of the other Balkan languages both learned other languages and heard theirs spoken by others, in the case of Romani, Roms learned other languages but others did not usually learn theirs. This combined with various mechanisms of boundary maintenance – both linguistic and social – differentiates Romani from the other Balkan languages, but not so much, I would argue, as to exclude Romani from the Balkan linguistic league rather than assigning it a special place within that league. Romani entered the Balkans at precisely the time when some of the fundamental changes that created Balkan morphosyntactic commonalities were taking place and it participated in many of these changes. Moreover, those developments that took place in the Balkans after the exodus of many Romani dialects are shared precisely by those Romani dialects that remained. Finally, we can note that owing to the nascent state of standardization in Romani, local dialects continue the Balkan linguistic tradition of accommodation at the colloquial level to a greater extent than any of the other Balkan languages. Thus, Romani, and especially its dialects in the Balkans, show the same innovative and conservative tendencies that are seen in the classic members of the Balkan Sprachbund, and it is precisely the concentration of these features in the Romani dialects of the Balkans that argues for their inclusion in Balkan linguistic accounts.

NOTES

1 In Ase nova’s text: “...един небалкански език, но съ дълго жителство на Балкания”.

Kostov (1998), Matras (1994), Sawicka (1997), and Boretzy and Igl (1999) are among the authors who have written more recently on Romani in its Balkan context.

2 The original passage occurs in an account of a journey from Elbasan to Berat with a stopover at the Orlik of Belmak owned by a certain Jusuf Bey. As it is one of the few passages in early Balkanist literature to describe Roms, I cite it in full here: “Schreieend lieben die Kinder der auf dem Gute Lebenden Zigeuner auseinander, von denen die kleineren vollständig nackt, die grösseren nur mit einer Hendeck bekleidet waren. Jedes Gute in dieser Gegend hat seine Zigeuner, die aber nicht nur also Tagelohner beschäftigt, sondern auch als Bauern angesehen sind. Unter den unherwandernden Zigeunern, wie Kesselklickern, Schmieden, Bärentreibern findet man viele, die, aus Rumäniem stammend, sich auch der rumänischen Sprache als Muttersprache bedienen, während die Einheimischen außer der Zigeunersprache meist aller Balkansprachen mächtig sind.”

3 Andrej Sobolev of the University of St. Petersburg (XXVI Inter-University Conference on Linguistics and Literature, University of St. Petersburg, Russia, March 1997; PC) has raised the legitimate methodological issue of the Balkan Sprachbund as a consistently definable unit. Despite the original parallel first drawn by Tregicirco (1923) between the genetic linguistic family defined by common descent and the areal linguistic league defined by subsequent contact, the selection of the correspondences used to define the latter have yet to be adequately systematized. Contact phenomena, however, do not induce the type of systemic invariance found in phenomena such as regular sound change and shared morphology, which serve as the bedrock of demonstrable genetic origin. Contact induced change, by its very nature, involves a complex ecology of choices among competing systems as well as the kind of spread reminiscent of epidemiological models. For the purposes of this article, it suffices to adduce a number of clearly areal features to support our main point, which is the relevant position of Romani within the Balkan linguistic league.
There are also individual dialects with other methods, but these need not concern us here.

Variations include kam, kan, ke and kana (with preserved stem vowel). Forms such as ma, m' represent generalizations of the second syllable of the present indicative (see Boretzky-Igla 2004: 245 for distributions). Although some dialects preserve an archaic first singular komam, in most it is regularized to koma. Also worth noting is the fact that the most widespread variant of the particle is ka, a reduction very like that found in other Balkan languages.

It is worth noting that the presence of the ka future in the Balkan Romani dialects of the Crimea points to the migration of those dialects to the Crimea at the same time as other Balkan languages such as Albanian and Bulgarian.

The speaker here is using Macedonian Burjirdi pronunciation.

This 'where' also functions as a universal relativizer as in the other Balkan languages, e.g. me danav ka de man maro 'I know that you will give me bread'.

While in both genetically and areally related languages shared innovations are crucial in determining the type and degree of relationship, nonetheless, given the fact that contact phenomena involve the selection among competing alternatives, shared archaisms can also be said to have a place in defining the ecology of the linguistic systems. This is especially true when a language in contact is compared with genetically related non-contact languages. Since contact itself is often an impetus for innovation, shared archaisms in a contact situation have a value in areal linguistics that is quite different from their non-diagnostic nature in genetic linguistics.

Masa (1991: 248, 370–371) notes that in Eastern (Bengali-Assamese-Oriya) Indo-Aryan and Sinhalese, morphological (as opposed to syntactic) marking of indefiniteness has arisen. In Sinhalese, there is a suffixed indefinite article (ek-, ak-) derived from ‘one’ whereas in the Eastern type definiteness is marked by a series of suffixed classifiers of non-Indo-Aryan origin, and when these classifiers are suffixed to ek ‘one’ the numeral becomes an indefinite article. These independent developments, unlike the situation in Romani, were not accompanied by the development of definite articles.

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ZUM RENARRATIV IM SLIVENER ROMANI

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