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LINGUISTIC BALKANIZATION: CONTACT-INDUCED CHANGE BY MUTUAL REINFORCEMENT

JOUKO LINDSTEDT

1. Introduction

The Balkan Sprachbund was the first linguistic area discovered by modern scholarship. According to Kopitar's (1829: 86) famous statement about Albanian, Wallachian, and Bulgarian (in modern terms: Albanian, Balkan Romance, and Balkan Slavic), in the Balkans "nur *eine Sprachform* herrscht, aber mit dreierley *Sprachmaterie*". The main features of the Sprachbund were described in Sandfeld's (1926, 1930) masterpiece and subsequent research by others (see Schaller 1975, Solta 1980, Asenova 1989). But we still lack an overall description of the historical development of this linguistic area. Especially the question of the origins and causation of the main areal features of the Balkans, the linguistic Balkanisms, is notoriously difficult.

In this paper I shall discuss the typological characteristics of grammatical Balkanisms, as well as the nature of the sociolinguistic contact situation which gave rise to the convergence that can be observed among the languages of the area. I shall argue that the origins of most grammatical Balkanisms are not to be sought in the internal development of any one of these languages, but rather in the multilingual contact situation itself, to the extent that the traditional notions of "source language" and "target language" may not always be applicable.

The languages or language groups of the Sprachbund are Albanian, Greek, Balkan Romance, Balkan Slavic, and Balkan Romani. Balkan Romance comprises the (Daco-)Romanian language spoken in Romania and Moldova, as well as Aromanian (Arumanian) and Megleno-Romanian spoken in the Central Balkans. Balkan Slavic means Bulgarian, Macedonian, and the so-called Torlak dialects of Serbian; Muslim speakers of Bulgarian and Macedonian are often referred to as Pomaks. Balkan Romani should be understood as an areal term comprising both Balkan dialects proper and those Vlax dialects spoken in the Balkan area. In addition to these five language groups, Ladino (Judezmo) and various forms of Balkan Turkic (such as Rumelian Turkish and Gagauz) have adopted some areal features; I will have to take them into account at a later stage of exploration.

2. Grammatical Balkanisms

The areal features of the Balkans can be divided into lexical (including phraseological), phonological, and grammatical. A Balkanism need not occur in all Balkan languages, but those with the widest distribution are theoretically also the most interesting. I shall concentrate upon morphosyntactic features, for grammatical innovations attest to more radical contact influence than mere loanwords or phonological traits do.

Table 1 presents the distribution of twelve shared grammatical innovations in the five language groups of the Sprachbund. A plus sign + means that the feature in question is dominant in most of the group. Of course this way of presentation requires some simplification: object reduplication, for instance, is subject to different grammatical rules even in such closely related languages as Bulgarian and Macedonian. A plus sign in parentheses (+) indicates that the feature is present as a tendency only or that it only occurs in some contact varieties.

	Greek	Albanian	Balkan Slavic	Balkan Romance	Balkan Romani
<i>Argument marking</i>					
ENCLITIC ARTICLES	(+)	+	+	+	(+)
OBJECT REDUPLICATION	+	+	+	+	+
PREPOSITIONS INSTEAD OF CASES	(+)	(+)	+	(+)	(+)
DATIVE / POSSESSIVE MERGER	+	+	+	+	–
GOAL / LOCATION MERGER	+	+	+	+	(+)
<i>RELATIVUM GENERALE</i>	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Verb system</i>					
AUX (+ COMP) + FINITE VERB	+	(+)	+	(+)	+
<i>VOLO</i> FUTURE	+	(+)	+	+	+
PAST FUTURE AS CONDITIONAL	+	+	+	(+)	(+)
<i>HABEO</i> PERFECT	+	+	(+)	(+)	–
EVIDENTIALS	–	+	+	(+)	(+)
<i>Other</i>					
ANALYTIC COMPARISON	(+)	+	+	+	+

Table 1. Shared grammatical innovations in the Balkans.

Notes on the twelve features chosen:

ENCLITIC ARTICLES: Instead of the classical Balkanism of “postpositive definite article”, I propose this cover term for different articles taking the second position in the NP. (For discussion, see sect. 3 below.)

OBJECT REDUPLICATION: Direct and indirect objects receive head-marking by clitic pronouns attached to the verb. The actual rules are different in each lan-

guage (Aronson 1997), which is why a plus sign in parentheses is not applicable here.

PREPOSITIONS INSTEAD OF CASES: A tendency away from inflectional case marking (except the vocative case). Albanian is the most difficult to assess here, since we do not know whether and when it might have had more cases; but some conclusions can be drawn by means of internal reconstruction (Asenova 1989: 58, citing Demiraj).

DATIVE / POSSESSIVE MERGER: The use of the same inflectional case marking, the same preposition, or the same series of enclitic pronouns for marking the indirect object at the verb or the possessor at a noun. Notice that this feature does not fully coincide with “dative / genitive merger” even when there is a genitive case (Tzitzilis, in press): cf. Greek *tus gráfi éna grámma káthe méra* ‘(s)he writes them a letter every day’ and *to spíti tus* ‘their house’, where *tus* ‘them, their’ is an accusative.

GOAL / LOCATION MERGER: The same prepositions and adverbs, including the interrogative adverb ‘where’, are used to express both going somewhere and being somewhere.

RELATIVUM GENERALE: Relative clauses are introduced by an uninflected marker which does not distinguish number, gender, or syntactic role (the latter is often marked with a clitic pronoun at the verb). Especially the standard languages may also use an inflected pronoun at this position. Since the impact of literary traditions is difficult to assess, I have not made use of a plus sign in parentheses at this feature.

AUX (+COMP) + FINITE VERB: Modal auxiliaries are followed by a finite verb, not an infinitive. This is traditionally known as the “Balkan infinitive loss”, but we do not really know what kind of an infinitive Albanian might have lost; we only know that it has grammaticalized a new infinitive, though finite complements are still widely used (Joseph 1983: 85-100).

VOLO FUTURE: The future tense is marked with an auxiliary that has grammaticalized from a verb meaning ‘to want’ (cf. English *will*).

PAST FUTURE AS CONDITIONAL: A past tense marking attached to the *volo* future indicates the conditional mood (for an overview, see Gołąb 1964). The past marking may be attached either to the future marker (cf. English *would*) or to the main verb.

HABEO PERFECT: A perfect (anterior) tense formed with the auxiliary ‘to have’ and either a past participle passive or a special perfect participle of the main verb.

EVIDENTIALS: Grammaticalized evidential distinctions (Friedman 1986, 1998; for Romani, see Matras 1995). This is a wider Eurasian areal feature (Haarmann 1970).

ANALYTIC COMPARISON: Adjectives form their comparative and superlative with particles instead of suffixes.

If we calculate the indices of Balkanization of different language groups from Table 1, giving a whole point for each plus sign and half a point for a plus sign in parentheses, we receive the following scores: Balkan Slavic 11.5 – Albanian 10.5 – Balkan Romance and Greek 9.5 – Romani 7.5 points. To be sure, the differences are small, and the exact scores are dependent on the set of features chosen, but this ranking of the languages does seem to agree with the overall impression their grammars make. Balkan Slavic is grammatically more Balkanized than the other languages; actually, Macedonian would score full a 12.0 points. Romani is less Balkanized than the other four groups. In sect. 4 below I shall discuss the possible sociolinguistic reasons for these differences.

An interesting detail is that in linguistics, “Balkanization” refers to convergent development – more or less the opposite of the notions attached to the Balkans and Balkanization in common language (cf. Todorova 1997). The peculiar combination of contact and boundary maintenance (Friedman, in press) is one of the keys for understanding the Balkan linguistic situation, at least in the past centuries when the Sprachbund took its form.

It should also be pointed out that the five language groups are partly coterritorial, and they were more so in the past. Thus, there may be no differences as to the extent to which the contacting dialects of different languages have been Balkanized. The epicentre of Balkanisms seems to be somewhere south of the lakes Ohrid and Prespa, where the Greek, Albanian, Macedonian, Aromanian, and Romani languages meet (see the map in the first volume of Weigand 1894-95), their local forms being clearly more similar to each other than the five language groups taken as wholes. In addition, Turkish and Ladino/Judezmo were spoken in the area.

What unites most grammatical Balkanisms structurally is a tendency towards explicit marking of grammatical functions with particles, prepositions, and other uninflected function words that are identifiable across the languages (cf. Hinrichs 1997: 20). The main uses of several frequent prepositions in them are also remarkably similar (Asenova 1989: 72-76). But each language realizes the parallelisms with its own material. The borrowing of grammatical morphemes is not common and neighbouring languages easily tolerate direct cross-language clash between their phonological forms in the same semantic fields: compare ‘yes’ : ‘no’ = Bulgarian /da/ : /ne/ = Greek /ne/ : /óxi/; ‘and’ : ‘or’ = Bulgarian /i/ : /ili/ = Greek /ke/ : /i/; ‘my’ : ‘his’ = Bulgarian /mi/ : /mu/ = Greek /mu/ : /tu/.

3. The Elusive Origins

According to Kopitar (1829), whom I quoted in the introduction to this paper, Albanian preserves its original linguistic form, but “Wallachian” and “Bulgarian” adopted it only after their speakers arrived in the Balkans. In the 19th century, the Balkanization of Romance and Slavic was supposed to have taken place by substratal influence, Albanian representing the structure of the original languages of the area.

The theory of the substratal origins of the Balkanisms has now largely been abandoned. We do not know what the grammars of Thracian, Dacian, Illyrian, and other ancient languages of the Balkans looked like (Katičić 1976), which means that even in principle it would be impossible to prove the hypothesis to be correct. Moreover, the theory is directly disproved by the fact that in the Old Church Slavonic texts from the 10th century onwards, Balkan Slavic definitely does not appear as a Balkanized language, though the shift from the substratal languages into Slavic had already largely taken place; the index of OCS in Table 1 would only be 0.5. Finally, the traditional substrate theories do not explain the Balkanisms of Greek, which is known to have been spoken in the southern Balkans for more than 3,500 years.

There is, however, another version of substrate theory that must be seriously considered, namely the hypothesis that most Balkanisms are internal developments in Balkan Romance, later adopted by other languages (cf. Sandfeld 1930: 170-173). Since Romance languages are still spoken in the Balkans, some would classify this as an adstratal theory. However, owing to the low social status of Daco-Romanian in the past, and of other forms of Balkan Romance even today, only language shift of an originally Romance-speaking population would explain the diffusion of Balkanisms, and in this sense this is a substrate theory.

Gołąb (1984, 1997) argues that the high degree of Balkanization of Macedonian is due to a language shift from Aromanian into Slavic. As noted above, the geographical centre of Balkanisms on dialect maps would be in Macedonia. We also know that Balkan Romance, or Balkan Vulgar Latin, used to be the most important language of the Balkans west and north of the so-called Jireček line (Jireček 1901), and even east of it along the Via Egnatia. It is tempting to see Romance, or more specifically Aromanian, substrate as the main source of Balkanisms in this area.

There are problems in this hypothesis, though. It rests on the fact that Balkan Slavic has several features that are not typical of other Slavic languages and, Gołąb argues, are therefore likely to have been borrowed from a non-Slavic source. However, the problem is that several Balkanisms, such as the postpositive article and the loss of the infinitive, are not typical of all of Romance, either. As a result, there is nothing to prove that their source must have been in the spontaneous development of Balkan Romance.

Gołąb's Romance substrate theory does not fully explain the Balkanisms of Greek, either. The Aromanian population of Northern and Central Greece is of course known to have been larger than it is today (Weigand 1888, 1894-95; Gołąb 1984: 11). However, for demographic reasons the gradual and still on-going shift of the Aromanian population into Greek could hardly have radically changed the Greek language, whose centre of gravity was farther south. Notice that even the Slavic population in mainland Greece did not leave any significant traces in Greek, though it was presumably larger than the Romance-speaking population ever was (Vasmer 1941; cf. Weithmann 1994).

However, a case can be made for an earlier Romance, or rather Latin, influence upon Greek, through an adstratal relation in late Antiquity. Horrocks (1997: 73-78) points out some possibly Latin-influenced changes in the Greek of the time, such as the extension of finite subjunctive clauses at the expense of the infinitive, the rise of the periphrastic future, and the merger of the aorist and the synthetic perfect. But from the vantage point of other Balkan languages, such changes should still be counted as originating in Greek.

We thus come to the explanation that Greek, the most influential language among the Christian population of the Balkans, was the primary source of Balkanisms. This was Sandfeld's (1930: 213) opinion, though he admitted that at least the postpositive article must have had another source. Another frequently cited exception is the formation of the numerals from eleven to nineteen on the model "one-upon-ten" and so on; here Slavic, which is generally not seriously considered as the originator of other significant Balkanisms, is the obvious source.

Tzitzilis (in press) has recently collected lots of interesting material from Greek dialects and old written sources in an effort to show that many Balkanisms in Greek are older than has been assumed in Balkan linguistics, and that Greek, as the official language of the Byzantine Empire, would have been an obvious source of contact-induced change in other languages of the peninsula. His material pertains to such fundamental Balkanisms as the periphrastic *volo* future, the replacement of the infinitive with finite constructions, object reduplication, analytic comparison, and the merger of dative and possessive constructions. Their earlier dating in Greek makes Sandfeld's assumption of Greek primacy in building the Balkan Sprachbund more convincing.

There are, however, two fundamental shortcomings in explanations of this kind. First, Greek is the best-documented language of the Balkans, with the longest historical record; if Balkanisms are due to a typological drift that has been taking place in the area for a long time (somewhat in the spirit of Nichols 1992), the fact that a given change is attested in Greek at an early date does not show that it could not also have been attested in some other Balkan language, notably Albanian, if we had comparable records of it at our disposal. It should be remembered

that nothing that we know prevents assuming an equally long prehistory in the Balkans for Albanian as for Greek.

Second, thought should be given to the fact that all Balkanisms supposed to have originated mainly in Greek are post-classical innovations in this language, too. This situation is unlikely to have arisen by chance: if Greek had indeed been the primary source of the contact-induced changes in other Balkan languages, we would expect it to have contributed old and new features alike. There is no certain example of a significant grammatical feature which has been stable in Greek ever since Antiquity and which has been borrowed by several other Balkan languages. The explanation for this fact must be that even in Greek, Balkanisms were innovations that it shared with other languages of the area to begin with, though we lack direct historical evidence for this.

The loss of the infinitive has been considered a Greek-based Balkanism par excellence. The gradual replacement of Greek infinitival constructions with subordinate clauses introduced by the final conjunction *na* < *hína* is well-documented. However, Joseph's (1983) detailed study showed that in various Balkan languages a complex interplay of contact-induced change and language-internal causes must be assumed (cf. also the survey in Asenova 1989: 150-155).

On the other hand, Greek cannot be wholly excluded when the history of the Balkan article system is described, though this is often done because Greek does not have a postposed article (neither does Romani, whose article system, at least in the Vlax dialects, is closely modelled upon Greek). Greek is the first Balkan language known to have possessed a definite article, though it was, and is, preposed. But it is also the first language known to have possessed a linking article between the head of NP and the following modifiers (e.g. *i giortés i megáles* 'the-feasts-the-big' = 'the great festivals'), a phenomenon that can be connected to the linking articles in Albanian and Balkan Romance (cf. Solta 1980: 193-194). That is why the linking and postposed articles have been subsumed under the heading 'enclitic article' in Table 1.

It is possible that such enclitic determinants represent a very old areal feature of the Balkans (see Hamp 1982 on possible toponymic evidence for the postposed article in the ancestor language of modern Albanian). This feature is most grammaticalized in Albanian, which has both a postposed and linking article and whose linking article does not require the NP to be definite. Romanian has both article types, too, but its linking article used with adjectives does require a definite NP. However, this is not the case with the link used in possessive constructions:

- (1) *imitații perfecte ale celor originale*
 imitation.PL perfect.PL.FEM LINK.PL.FEM DEF.PL.DAT original.PL.FEM
 'perfect imitations of the original ones'

The *a*- link is used to introduce a second NP in the dative-possessive case, but it does not presuppose the definiteness of the preceding NP, with which it agrees. The *ce*- link agrees with the following NP, which should be definite; it is here required because the head noun that would carry the postposed article with dative-possessive marking is missing.

Balkan Slavic does not possess the linking article; moreover, its postposed article is more agglutinative than its Romance counterpart. The Slavic article can, however, attract the primary stress of the phonological word in dialects with mobile stress, which is not possible with the preposed article of Greek. In all, it seems as if Greek has borrowed part of an enclitic article system by adopting the linking use of its preposed article; this use is now obligatory when modifiers follow the head. On the other hand, Balkan Slavic has adopted a postposed article which is structurally based on a demonstrative (cf. Bulgarian *knigata* 'the book' with Polish *książka ta* 'this book') and which has an enclitic second position in the NP (Bulgarian *goljamata kniga* 'the big book').

Albanian looks most like the prototype of the Balkan article system, but it is a NA language, whereas Slavic and Greek are AN languages. Thus, every language has a unique combination of article types and NP structures, and no one (except, perhaps, Romani) is actually calquing any other. The languages seem to be participating in a common drift towards a second-position article, with different realizations in each.

I believe that the impossibility of finding a single source language for this and other grammatical Balkanisms is not due to our limited knowledge of the history of the Balkan languages taken separately; indeed, Greek and Balkan Slavic, for instance, are sufficiently documented in the relevant period. The source language simply does not exist in the traditional sense: the sociolinguistic contact situation has caused changes that would not have occurred in any of the Balkan languages by internal drift. I shall try to develop this thesis in the remaining part of the paper.

4. The Sociolinguistic Situation

During the five centuries of Ottoman rule in the Balkans, the administration of the Empire was based not on geographical or ethnic units, but upon the division of the population into religious groups (millets). The founding of nation states slowly took place during the 19th century, ending the prerequisites for linguistic convergence in the whole area. After that, contact-influenced changes have mainly concerned the numerous ethnic minorities that were left inside each country.

During Ottoman rule, there was no single lingua franca among the Christian population, which is why no large-scale unidirectional borrowing or large-scale language shift took place, though the prestige of Greek cannot be denied. Turkish was the language of the State, but not a prestigious language among the Chris-

tians. As the history of Albania and Bosnia shows, even conversion to Islam did not necessarily mean linguistic shift to Turkish. The Balkans were characterized by stable multilingualism, with stable prestige relations among the languages.

Gumperz and Wilson's (1971) classical study shows how stable multilingualism in the Indian village of Kupwar has led to radical convergence that they call "intertranslatability": a single syntactic surface structure can be filled in with words from different languages. At the grammatical level there exists a kind of blueprint for a contact language, but it has several distinct lexica, so that people are still perceived as speaking different languages. This is a compromise between intense inter-group contacts and strong in-group identities in Kupwar, and the sociolinguistic situation in the Balkans seems to have been largely similar. I find the following common conditions to be the most important:

- a) Speakers of different languages live closely together, often in the same villages.
- b) There is no single dominant lingua franca.
- c) Speakers of each language have sufficient access to the other languages they need.
- d) Native languages are important symbols of group identity.

Because of population mixture – as well as such specifically Balkan phenomena as transhumance – speakers of different languages must often communicate with each other. There is no single lingua franca they could resort to, but different multilingual strategies are adopted. Since speakers of each language have sufficient access to other languages they need in order to communicate, no pidginized varieties arise; individuals acquire various degrees of bilingualism and multilingualism.¹ The multilingual situation gradually leads to structural convergence between the languages, but as languages remain important symbols of group identity, they all retain their distinct lexica.

Ross (1996) describes some Papua New Guinea cases in which bilingualism without language shift has led to structural convergence of genetically unrelated languages. Each language has retained the inherited form of its functional morphemes, but their use is often modelled upon those of another language. In the New Guinea of the past there were no wide-spread lingua francas, but from their

¹ Gustav Weigand writes about the town of Monastir [= Bitola] in Macedonia 110 years ago: "Es ist klar, daß in einer Stadt mit so verschiedenen Nationalitäten auch eine große Vielsprachigkeit herrscht; das Türkische und Bulgarische [= Macedonian] ist [sic] fast gleich verbreitet, die Aromunen, wenigstens die Männer, können außer ihrer Muttersprache bulgarisch und griechisch, die meisten auch türkisch und albanesisch; viele verstehen selbst das Spanische [= Ladino/Judezmo], das, wie sie wohl fühlen, viele Wörter mit ihrer Sprache gleich oder ähnlich hat. Daß in Gesellschaften zugleich mehrere Sprachen gesprochen werden, ist ganz gewöhnlich" (Weigand 1894-95, p. 6 in vol. 1).

childhood people must have been bilingual in the “emblematic”, in-group language of their own ethnic group and the intergroup language used with the neighbouring villages, as is still the case today in this area.

Friedman (1997: 32-35) sees two main features in the Balkan folk ideology concerning language. The first is the identification of language and religion with ethnicity; this is the boundary-maintaining function of the language. The second is the identification of language with wealth in the sense that “the knowledge of many languages is an asset”, though not all languages have the same prestige. Multilingualism is, or used to be, valued, but language shift less so.

The prerequisites for the special sociolinguistic situation in the Balkans date back at least to the Slavic and Avar invasion of the Byzantine territory, from the sixth century onwards (Vasmer 1941: 11-19; Tăpkova-Zaimova 1966; Fine 1983: 59ff.), which resulted in the weakening of the cities and central administration and the radical ruralization of society (Weithmann 1994). Later, under Ottoman rule, there were no administrative boundaries to prevent large-scale population movements and population mixtures caused by the weak and at times brutal and arbitrary local administration (Sugar 1977). Ethnic groups were associated not with territories, but with languages, religions, and even livelihoods, the Slavs being mostly farmers and many Albanians and Aromanians being transhumant shepherds. Thus, economic exchange relations presupposed much cross-linguistic communication.

The formation of nation states in the Balkans during the 19th and 20th centuries has meant the creation of new units that attempt to be as self-sufficient as possible both economically and culturally. The period of linguistic convergence in this area has ended, though some Balkanisms may in principle still spread inside each individual language owing to a typological drift called the “snowball effect” by Joseph (1983: 210-212).

Civ’jan’s (1965: 14ff., 183ff.) theory of an abstract intermediary language (*ja-zyk-posrednik*) in the Balkans is based on sociolinguistic premisses that somewhat resemble those I am proposing. However, she assumes an unconscious attempt of the speaker of Balkan language A to speak in structures that would be maximally comprehensible for the speaker of another Balkan language B; Rozencvejg’s (1969, 1972, 1976) model is partly similar. In my view, this theory appears too speculative. It does not explain why language A would permanently change owing to such encounters. It also presumes the existence of a special kind of Balkan “foreigner talk” that does not show much similarity to actually observed cases of foreigner talk (Romaine 1988: 72-84). I think it is safer to base assumptions on the interference phenomena that are present in every bilingual speech community (Romaine 1995: 51ff.). A strong second language of a bilingual individual may and does influence the first language even when it is used in a monolingual set-

ting. This is in accordance with the mechanism proposed by Ross (1996: 202-206) to explain convergent change in New Guinea.

Influence through shift can nevertheless be a partial explanation for convergence. The situation was different for each language, depending on its relative social status. For the Balkanization of Romani, the language least valued by other ethnic groups, the reasons must be sought in the multilingualism of its native speakers. On the other hand, for the prestigious Greek language substratal effects may have been relatively stronger. Tsitsipis (1998) describes how hellenization is positively valued among the Albanian-speaking minority of Greece. Weigand's (1888, 1894-95) classical works abundantly testify to how a hundred years ago whole Aromanian villages saw no problems in supporting a Greek school for children and adopting the Greek literary culture. But nowhere in the Balkans can we assume language shift and concomitant substratal influence to have been the decisive factor for contact-induced change of whole languages. The main mechanism of change must have been interference phenomena in the minds of multilingual individuals.

5. Mutual Reinforcement of Change

Linguistic Balkanization does not mean straightforward simplification. Even complicated subsystems, such as the Balkan verb system with several past tenses, can be retained if there is sufficient structural overlap between the languages.

I propose that linguistic Balkanization was initiated by speakers who were bilingual or multilingual to such an extent that in their speech there were transfers not only from, but also into their native languages and who for that reason favoured features that made it easier to identify structures across languages. In language contact, such syntactic features as word order and different particles are easier to transfer from one language to another than inflectional categories are (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 72 ff.). This is why the contact situation itself has favoured explicit syntactic marking in the Balkan languages: structural conflicts between the languages are solved analytically, by syntactic means, because cross-language identification between analytic structures is easier than between inflectional categories. Multilingual speakers may favour even such structures that were not common in any of the contacting languages to begin with (cf. Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 96).

Romaine (1988: 80-81) notes that Gumperz and Wilson's Kupwar case of "intertranslatable" languages (or "isogrammatism", Gołąb's term for the same phenomenon in the Balkans) does not resemble the relexification typical of pidgins or, as it should rather be said, of mixed languages proper (Bakker and Muysken 1995). Instead, Romaine proposes the term "re-syntactification". But at least in the Balkans, this does not mean that language A has adopted the syntax of language B; rather, all the languages were converging towards complete cross-

linguistic identifiability of syntactic structures in terms of function words and word order. A complete intertranslatability or isogrammatism was of course never reached, nor will it be ever attained in the present conditions of the Balkans. But structures common to the Balkan languages are far more numerous than many nationalistically minded local linguists are willing to admit (Friedman 1997).

By the term “mutual reinforcement of change” I want to emphasize that the origins of most Balkanisms cannot be found in the internal drift of any of the languages of the Sprachbund. None of them would have developed those features outside the contact situation, since it is this situation itself that favoured certain grammatical structures (Friedman, in press, speaks of “interactive interference”). In this scenario, the notions of source language and target language, thought to be necessary in describing contact-induced change, become relative or even superfluous.

Notice that at any rate, finding the absolute origins of an areal feature would hardly count as an explanation for it. The earliest attestation of *hina* instead of an infinitival complement does not explain why it gained so much ground in Greek – still less does it explain why the other Balkan languages borrowed it, if it indeed first appeared in Greek. In fact, all the languages of the area have produced countless linguistic changes over the centuries, but only some of these became features of the Sprachbund. We should ask why some changes were more successful than others and what the sociolinguistic situation was like that made them successful. This is a kind of evolutionary model in which the particular contact situation forms the environment to which certain mutations are better adapted than others.

In terms of pidgin and creole linguistics we can perhaps say that although no pidgins or creoles arose in the Balkans, a blueprint existed for a contact language that was realized with different lexica in the concrete languages that participated in a common areal drift.

The particular cross-linguistic contacts in the Balkans have seldom been symmetrical, and despite numerous changes in the status and prestige of particular languages (Friedman 1977: 33–35) the overall power relations among them have not changed radically over the centuries. In terms of prestige, Greek has always been close to the top, while Romani has been near the bottom ever since its speakers first arrived in the Balkans in the 13th century (Hancock 1995: 18). It is interesting to note that in Table 1, Greek and Romani are among the less Balkanized languages. For Romani, its shorter age as a Balkan language may be part of the explanation, but both Romani and Greek were characterized by the least amount of mutual bilingualism with other languages. Romani speakers were multilingual,² but the speakers of other languages did not learn Romani. Greek was

² Until recently, Balkan scholars have mostly neglected the Roma, but cf.: “Unter den umherwandernden Zigeunern [in Berat, Albania], wie Kesselflickern, Schmieden, Bärenreibern findet man

learnt by many speakers of other languages and a certain amount of language shift took place, but its speakers were in turn less motivated to learn other languages.

On the other hand, the most Balkanized languages, viz. Macedonian, Bulgarian, Albanian, and Aromanian were near the middle of the prestige scale. Their speakers learnt Greek, but there was also a fair amount of mutual multilingualism among them. The most Balkanized language, Macedonian, was not only geographically in the centre, but also socially in the middle. There is a Macedonian saying, *nie sme krotok narod* 'we are meek people' (Friedman, p.c.). In Balkan conditions, the Slavic Macedonians have been relatively pragmatic in their relations with other ethnic groups. They have also borrowed grammatical features from other languages, to which a certain amount of substratal influence of Aromanian can be added. This is an example of the kind of historical sociolinguistics that Balkan linguistics is in need of.³

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viele, die, aus Rumänien stammend, sich auch der rumänischen Sprache als Muttersprache bedienen, während die Einheimischen außer der Zigeunersprache meist aller Balkansprachen mächtig sind" (Weigand 1894-95, p. 78 in vol. 1).

³ Victor Friedman, Johanna Nichols, Juhani Nuorluoto, and Sarah Thomason read earlier versions of this paper and suggested several improvements.

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