



UNIVERSITY OF NIŠ  
The scientific journal **FACTA UNIVERSITATIS**  
Series: **Linguistics and Literature** Vol.1, No 3, 1996 pp. 169 - 171  
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## SERBIAN DIALECT OF PRIZREN Slobodan Remetić

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This monograph, titled "*The Serbian Dialect of Prizren I (Sounds and Forms)*"<sup>1</sup>, consists of four parts: *I Introduction*, *II Phonetic System*, *III Forms* and *IV Final Remarks*.

In the introductory part, the author deals with the history of the town of Prizren that may be considered the history of "the small-scale Serbian state". Prizren used to be a great trade and economic center during the 13th and 14th centuries, under the reign of the Nemanjićdynasty. The author has given a brief review of the town history from that period up to the present time.

Historical events had great impact upon the structure of Prizren inhabitants. At the time of Turkish invasion, Orthodox Serbs had been making the majority of population. The Turks settled in the town around the middle of the 15th century, remaining there ever after. It is very difficult to determine precisely when the Albanian population migrated to the area. Most probably, it happened in the period between the 14th and 16th centuries. At the end of the 18th century, Tzintzars (Aromanians) moved from Ioannina to Prizren, thus making "the fourth and youngest component of this nationally heterogeneous milieu".

Numerous historical events were causing "significant ethnic fluctuations" in these areas, resulting in "the expansion of Albanian ethnic element" to the detriment of the others, particularly the Serbs. The estimations are that at this moment (1996) there are "not more than 8% of Serbs" in Prizren. This is an additional reason to take down and describe the dialect. The initiative for the author to begin this work should be mostly attributed to Mr. Dimitrije Čemerikić and the lexical material he gave to the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1950. It is his very material that S. Remetić is constantly referring to, making comparisons, finding parallels or interpreting deviations respectively.

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Received, November 1, 1996

<sup>1</sup> In original: "Srpski prizrenski govor I (glasovi i oblici)", SDZb XLII, Belgrade 1996

The chapter titled "*The Phonetic System*" consists of three main parts: *A. Accent*; *B. Vocalism*; *C. Consonantism*.

A specific characteristic of the Prizren dialect lies in linking "the accent to the penult". The fixed accent is not new in these areas. Mr. Milivoj Pavlović had registered such phenomenon much earlier in the Sretečka Župa, where the accent was fixed to antepenult and explained by the influence of the Macedonian language.

The scope of this phenomenon in the dialect of Prizren depends upon "the word class and grammatical categories and forms". This process is developed to the highest degree in nouns, where it is independent of gender or formation elements. In this respect, we always have: *балавица, Бугарска, краставица, успомену, амбасадора, главоња*, then: *калуџер - калуџери - калуџерима, унуџе - унуџиџи - унуџиџама* and: *Јован - Јована - Јованов - Јованово - Јовановица - Јовановичино*, and similar.

However, in the adjectival-pronominal declension "the most dominant is the tendency of accentuating the syllable that is positioned before the open ultima in the nominative case, representing at the same time a stem syllable": *бол'ега Турч'ина, Ванкинога сина, дѳб'рога зѳта* and similar.

Two tendencies in the prosody are registered in the verbal system: a) the tendency of stabilizing the accent on the penult, and b) the tendency of preserving the accent on the same syllable in the whole paradigm.

The transfer of accent to the proclitic is in harmony with general tendencies in the prosody of this dialect, and therefore it appears exclusively in monosyllabic words.

The deviations from the system of accent binding to the next-to-the-last syllable appear in the following: a) the words with the accent on the ultima in borrowed phrases and adverbs, and b) the words with the accent before the penult in compound words with incompletely integrated constituents, in onomastics, borrowed words and more recent vocabulary.

The vocalic system of the Prizren dialect is richer from the standard language in the vowels /ɔ/ and /ii/, and there is also the tendency of the vocal /p/ decomposition into /ɔp/. The speech of the Prizren Turks also contains seven identical vocalic phonemes, so the influence of Turkish upon the vocalic system of the Serbian Prizren dialect cannot be excluded. It is particularly true if we have in mind "that the Turks have not remained (nor are still remaining) in any other Serbian settlement for so long and in such a great percentage as in Prizren".

The consonant system of the Prizren dialect recognizes eight sonants and fifteen consonants. The consonant /x/ is absolutely removed from the phonological system of this dialect, while this is not the case for the consonant /ɕ/. Two pairs of affricates /tʃ/, /tʃh/ and /ɟʃ/, /ɟʃh/ are reduced to one consonant - /tʃ/ and /ɟʃ/, but the affricate /s/ can also be heard. The sonant /ɔ/ is assimilated in all the positions with /l/ before the front vowels and it has the value of /l/, while /l/ before the back vowels and at the end of a syllable is hardened. Similar phenomenon is observed in the sonants /n/ and /ɲ/.

The chapter under the title "*Forms*" deals with: *A. Declension and B. Verbs*. Although it falls into the dialects of Prizren-Timok type, meaning that it has the analytic declension, in this dialect "the declension is in a kind of a half way between the old-*{tokavian* and more progressive spoken language types". Namely, beside the basic analytic declension, there is also "a completely preserved dative in all the levels", and the genitive forms cannot be treated as being exclusively produced under the influence of the standard language or neighboring languages, as well.

The Prizren dialect verbal system fits into the dialects of the Prizren-Timok type by all of its characteristics. Certain typical Prizren-South-Morava characteristics provide this dialect a special position in the Prizren-Timok zone, that is connect it to other Prizren-South-Morava dialects and differentiate it from the Svrljig-Zaplanje and Timok-Lu`nica vernaculars. Such verbal-system characteristics are, for example:  $-(j)a$  in the masculine gender of the active participle in singular,  $-e(-\phi)$  in the third person plural of the present tense, as well as  $-cmo$  in the first person plural of the aorist.

The Prizren dialect specificity is reflected in future tense formation. Apart from the formation according to the model  $o\psi'e + \partial a + present\ tense$  of the conjugated verb, the future tense is here formed "by the contraction of infinitives and enclitics of the verb  $o\psi'e$ " of the following type:  $\partial\delta u\psi'y$  (*mu y cybomy*),  $\psi\partial\delta u\psi'e\psi u$  (*za*),  $\psi\partial\delta u\psi'e\psi o$  (*ce*), and similar.

The verbal adverb of the present tense shows certain formation specificity, as well.

The Prizren vernacular is also familiar with "the expansibility of certain stems", which is typical of all the Prizren-Timok dialects.

The fourth chapter of this study are "*The Final Remarks*", followed by the texts with dialectological material.

A very rich material, by which every assertion is substantiated, represents a particular quality of this book. Although prepared selectively, "*The Word Index*" greatly facilitates the search through the book and makes it more practical.

The monograph "*The Serbian Dialect of Prizren I*" joins other dialectological studies that describe the vernaculars of the Prizren-Timok region and it proves that, all the way from the time of Belić (*A. Belić, The Dialects of the East and South Serbia, SDZb I, Belgrade, 1905*) to the present time, the vernaculars of this zone have never ceased drawing the attention of researchers, with a good reason, as this book shows. The value of the book is many-sided: it records and describes a dialect that is retreating and vanishing; it offers a rich material from the area; it discovers a speech with the fixed accent, which is not frequent and usual in our vernaculars; it enlightens a dark spot in our dialect atlas.

The book offers a lot for dialectologists to read and learn, but it may also be interesting to the others, as well.