

**The Modern Greek Language: A Descriptive Analysis of Standard Modern Greek**



Review Author[s]:  
Brian D. Joseph

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ing through and annotating J's handwritten manuscript made possible its publication posthumously, more than 40 years after J's death at the hands of the Nazis.

In this work, J examines some of the linguistic evidence for contact between Albanian and Greek (and occasionally Latin), from the earliest times (during the 'voreinzelsprachlich' period, when the languages were outside the Balkan peninsula) up through the Hellenistic period. He focuses on three representative groups of words; accordingly, the book is divided into three main sections. Section I (pp. 16–23) is concerned primarily with those lexical correspondences between Greek and Albanian which deal with landscape-related designations. These linguistic elements, J argues, must be 'voreinzelsprachlich' (thus representing shared elements from PIE that date from the pre-Greek/pre-Albanian period) because of the occurrence of sound changes (e.g. \*sk- > h- in *hepe* 'rock cave', from \*sko.p-) that are characteristically Albanian. The forms he treats are the following: Alb. *lerë* 'stone, rockfall', Gk. *laúra* 'alley, passage'; Alb. *rrmiqe* 'precipitously steep place', Gk. *erípnē* 'cliff, crag'; Alb. *gumë* 'cliff', Gk. *gúpē* 'hollow in the earth, cave'; Alb. *hepe* 'rock cave', Gk. *skópelos* 'promontory, mountain peak'. All show correspondences in their root and occasionally in other formatives as well (e.g. *rrm-iqe* < \*rip-n-, with -n- suffix as in Gk. *erípnē*).

Section II (24–36) is concerned mainly with words shared by Albanian and Greek or Latin, which are not directly inherited from PIE but which do not permit a definitive establishment of a loan relationship in any direction. Here J treats two sets of words, which he ultimately takes to be etymologically related: Alb. *gëzof* 'fur', Gk. *gaúsapos* 'shaggy, wooly; felt', *gaúsápēs* 'a kind of wooly blanket', La. *gausapa*, and Alb. *gunë* 'fur', (Vulgar) La. *gunna*, (Middle and Modern) Gk. *gouína*. For the first set, he argues that the Gk. and La. forms are borrowings from the Illyrian outcome of \*g<sup>w</sup>ow-di-apos, a compound with the stem for 'cow, cattle' as its first member, while the Alb. form is from \*g<sup>w</sup>o.w-di-a.p(o)s (with a different ablaut grade in the first member); thus it can not be the case that Albanian borrowed the word from Greek or Latin (and they from some eastern source, e.g. Assyrian or Middle Indic, as has been suggested)—or that Greek and Latin borrowed it from Albanian—but rather that the former languages borrowed it from Illyrian, which was close to the pre-form of the Albanian. For

the second set, J argues for a derivation via borrowing (Latin to Albanian) ultimately from the Illyrian outcome of \*g<sup>w</sup>u-ni-a, whose first syllable is a zero-grade form of \*g<sup>w</sup>ow-. From these examples, J draws the conclusion—an important and interesting one for Balkan palaeo-ethnology—that 'das Alb. steht also jedenfalls dem Illyr. ... sehr nahe; das alb. Sprachgebiet ist seit vorrömischer Zeit in der Nähe des Gr. und des Lat. zu suchen.'

Section III (36–46) discusses some hitherto unnoticed Alb. borrowings from Greek: Alb. *tarogzë* 'helmet' from Gk. *thōrákion* 'armor, breastplate', where the [t] for Gk. *th* and [o] for *ā* point to an early date of borrowing (at least pre-Hellenistic times); Alb. *tepë* 'a type of grain' from Gk. *tiphē* 'one-grained wheat', where the [p] for *ph* again suggests a pre-Hellenistic dating for the loan; Alb. *cumbë* 'hill' from Gk. *túmbos* 'burial mound'; and *fnazë* 'snow' from Gk. *niphádion* 'snowflake', a post-Hellenistic loan because of [f] for *ph*. In addition, J provides a clarification of the derivation of the personal name *Llezhder* < Gk. *Aléxandros* (not La. *Alexander*, because of the accent!)

In discussing these various lexical items, J develops a number of important points about the historical phonology of Albanian (e.g. further evidence for \*pn- > -m- in *rrmiqe* and in *gumë*, and for \*p(o)s > f in *gëzof*); makes some interesting comparisons regarding affixes (e.g. Alb. collective suffix -iq-, as in *rrmiqe*, to Gk. -ik-, as in *gunaitkes* 'women', plural of *gunë*); and shows a sensitivity to the need for careful assessment of the semantic side of proposed etymologies. J also provides several examples of a Wörter-und-Sachen approach to etymology, e.g. his adducing of evidence, in the discussion of *tarogzë*, concerning archaeological finds of Greek helmets in northwest Albania.

This important publication comes at a time when interest in unraveling the details of the historical developments of Albanian—long the most obscure of IE branches—is on the rise, both in the US and in Europe. We can lament the fact that there may be no more of J's work to be published posthumously, but Pfeiffer must certainly be praised for his efforts in bringing out this volume. [BRIAN D. JOSEPH, *Ohio State University*.]

**The Modern Greek language: A descriptive analysis of Standard Modern Greek.** By PETER MACKRIDGE.

Oxford: University Press, 1985. Pp. xxiv, 387. \$45.00.

Despite the attention that has been paid to Classical Greek over the years, the sole modern representative of the Hellenic branch of Indo-European has curiously been somewhat ignored. Thus, though some descriptive grammars, handbooks, and linguistic works on Modern Greek are available, M's is the first comprehensive 'state of the art' survey of Modern Greek in English. It rivals in scope earlier works by the French Neo-Hellenist A. Mirambel, and thus fills an important gap in the literature on this language.

M's work is not a grammar in the traditional sense, although considerable description and grammatical detail are presented; nor is it a grammar in any modern sense, for there is little actual linguistic analysis (i.e. in some well-articulated theoretical framework); nor is it a textbook, although occasional comments are made about potential problems for language learners. The book is, however, a presentation of the current state of the language, described—in a good decision on M's part—from a purely synchronic viewpoint. As such, it includes not only a discussion of the social and cultural setting, given in an introductory chapter, but also a thorough consideration of all structural facets of the language: sounds and orthography; gender, case, number, and person; voice, aspect, and tense; noun morphology; verb morphology; noun phrases, prepositions, and pronouns; the clause, word order, coordination, and negation; indicative subordinate clauses; mood in general and especially subjunctive clauses; vocabulary; and style and idiom. One appendix provides tables of inflectional paradigms; another discusses orthographic conventions for accentuation.

M chiefly reports on other scholars' findings; but his treatment is innovative in a few ways. Thus he provides a clear and unambiguous definition of 'Standard Modern Greek' as 'the language normally written and spoken today by moderately educated Greeks in the urban centers [e.g. Athens and Thessaloniki]' (p. 12); this cuts to the heart of a subject made difficult by years of diglossia, and by the mixing of high and low varieties in most speakers' usage. M arrives at this definition after a thoughtful and insightful consideration in Ch. 1 of the history of the Greek 'language question'—the struggle concerning the diglossic varieties. Another innovation is his treatment of the category 'subjunctive' in Modern Greek: he takes it to be 'a semantic and

syntactical category' (274) defined by the occurrence with a verb of any one of a heterogeneous group of 'subjunctive markers' (or 'mood formants') which includes the future/modal marker *tha*, the modality markers *na* and *as*, and 'temporal conjunctions expressing anteriority and universal relatives, when reference is not to the past, and a few other conjunctions' (275). The notion 'subjunctive marker' is circularly defined (as is recognized by M) by an element's ability to create a subjunctive verb.

M is at his best in discussing matters pertaining to style. He displays a sensitivity to Greek usage, style, and idiom that is rare among non-native speakers; and his observations in these areas show remarkable insight. Moreover, his copious and well-chosen examples are generally taken from naturally occurring conversation and from literary or other written documents (especially newspapers); they therefore accurately reflect usage, and provide an invaluable collection for other scholars. Finally, M provides an excellent bibliography; though not comprehensive on the linguistic side, it is most thorough and even includes many unusual but still important references, e.g. sources on Greek slang.

The book has a few problems, however. First, the audience is not well-defined. Clearly, one must know Greek to derive more than a superficial gleaning from this work (and a good knowledge of Greek does not preclude getting something out of it—having studied and worked on the language myself for over 15 years, I still learned quite a bit from the book). All examples are given in the Greek alphabet (M discusses the alphabet, with tables of values, in Ch. 1), and only occasionally with morpheme-by-morpheme glosses; thus access to them is restricted for many potential readers. Second, Chs. 2–5 on morphology often concentrate too much on details and on exceptional features relevant only for individual words. Third, M could have insisted less on the possibility of influence from the languages of Western Europe on the structure of Greek—e.g. with respect to 'sequence of tense' phenomena (134), or extended prenominal modifiers (197)—and could instead have referred more to the Balkan languages and the many ways in which interactions with them have shaped what he refers to as 'traditional Demotic'. Finally, linguists reading this book may blanch a bit at remarks such as 'there is a tendency for names of fruit-trees to be feminine ... suggesting that the feminine may have connotations of fecundity' (49).

Despite these relatively minor shortcomings,

M has done a real service to scholarship. This work is a must for Neo-Hellenists and is also worthwhile reading for others, including linguists interested in the state of Greek in the 1980's and anyone with a knowledge of earlier stages of the language who wants to see what centuries of development have wrought. [BRIAN D. JOSEPH, *Ohio State University*.]

**The spoken Arabic of Khābūra on the Bāṭina of Oman.** By A. A. BROCKETT. (Journal of Semitic studies, monograph 7.) Manchester: University of Manchester, 1985. Pp. vii, 240, with 9 plates.

B has researched the Omani Arabic dialect around Al-Khābūra, of which A. Jayakar and C. Reinhardt were the only previous students. B divides this area into four distinct subdialects, remarking (6) that Khābūran Shiite Arabic might constitute a fifth group. Women's speech, we are told, is often more old-fashioned than the men's; however, it should be noted that there is little modern research in Arabic male/female language, and unfortunately none in the present study.

One speaker (11–12) often used the masc. 3sg. imperfect marker for 1st and 2nd persons ('a usage occasionally heard in Khābūra', 12, thus ruling out an idiolectal idiosyncrasy), e.g. *anta yifham* 'you know' for *anta tifham*. We desperately need an explanation for this bizarre phenomenon, which is without parallel.

The major importance of B's book lies in the glossary (45–225). One notes interesting dialectal peculiarities like *wayn~hayn* for classical *ʔayna* 'where?', *baxas* 'understand' (unknown elsewhere), or the preservation of the root *rʔy* for 'see'. There are some fascinating semantic shifts when one compares these with other dialects and with the classical; e.g., *ḍbēb* means 'bees', whereas it means 'flies' elsewhere (cf. Hebrew *zəbūb* 'fly'). However, a few lexemes listed are best considered as loans from Modern Standard Arabic, such as *allaḍi* 'relative pronoun, masc. and fem.' (52).

This study clearly demonstrates the importance of synchronic preservation for the diachronic perspective. In the discussion of the *b-* future marker (21–2), Khābūran Arabic shows that T. Nöldeke's 1904 analysis was correct: *b-* was an apocopated form of the classical verb *bayā* 'want' = Khābūran *bā*.

In discussing the passive (19–21), B correctly notes the retention of internal passives like *yxāz* 'it is taken away'; but then the remark that 'illiteracy by no means excludes subtlety of expression' (19) reveals a prescriptive heritage.

B has a particularly strong section on *fād* 'verily; already; well now, then' etc. (25–32): no other particle has such a wide range of meanings. This is common throughout the Gulf countries. Although it is listed in H. Wehr's Arabic dictionary only as a verb, the other Semitic languages are the key to its current synchronic status. In Aramaic, e.g., the cognate is also adverbial.

The section on loanwords (33–4) reveals fifty lexemes from Iranian languages (not 'Persian group of languages', 33), thirty others from Indian languages, and dozens recently incorporated from English (with Systemzwang, e.g. in the broken plurals). B lists 30 not found in the Wehr dictionary. These English words are Arabicized for dictionary purposes, e.g. *āyl* 'engine oil' under *ʔyl* (53), or *batre* 'car battery' under *btr* (45).

The Africanist as well as the Semitist can profit from this glossary. Swahili has been influenced by Omani Arabic more than any other Arabic dialect. Thus Swahili *hodi* 'May I come in?' derives from *hodhod* (213), although B is skeptical about the latter's etymon < *hadʔ* 'peace'. The Swahili response *karibu* 'Come in!' exactly parallels the Arabic pl. imper. *garribu*, which is probably its etymon.

The work is an important contribution to Arabic dialectology, and continues the excellence which one has come to expect from the *JSS* monograph series. [ALAN S. KAYE, *California State University, Fullerton*.]

**Language in African culture and society.** Ed. by EYAMBA G. BOKAMBA. (Studies in the linguistic sciences, 14:2.) Urbana: Department of Linguistics, University of Illinois, 1984. Pp. ii, 170.

This collection contains ten articles, which fall into three groups. The first group of articles deals with sociolinguistics: 'Language differences in strategies for the interactional management of conversation', by C. A. CREIDER; 'Arabicization and language policy in the Sudan', by E. A. YOKWE; and 'French colonial language policy in Africa and its legacies, I', by E. G. BOKAMBA. B argues convincingly that