

РЕЦЕНЗИИ И ОТЗВЫ

REVIEWS

A NEW CONTRIBUTION TO CONTEMPORARY PHILOLOGY IN MONTENEGRO

Vujović, Novica (urednik): Cetinjski filološki dani III. Zbornik radova s naučnoga skupa održanog na Cetinju 2. i 3. septembra 2021. Cetinje: Fakultet za crnogorski jezik i književnost, 2022. 622 str. ISBN: 978-9940-40-076-7.

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In Montenegro, the town of Cetinje not only has a symbolic relevance for the country's cultural history, it is also the center of contemporary Montenegrin studies. In this country, one point of contention is the question of the state language, its political name and, above all, its cultural-historical position in the Shtokavian area, which also serves as the basis of the standard language (or state language) in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. This topic is addressed in a recent contrastive study (*cf.* Henzelmann, 2024¹). We can say that this wide-ranging issue is controversial, and the faculty in Cetinje attaches great importance to bringing together international academics who discuss this important question. Scholarship thrives on dialog and sometimes also on contradiction, and it is therefore commendable that the colleagues in Cetinje make such an important effort and invite Slavists and Balkanologists from practically all parts of the world to exchange views on the latest linguistic, literary, geopolitical, social, cultural and economic developments of Southeastern Europe.

The third international academic conference entitled “Cetinjski filološki dani III” took place from 1 to 4 September 2021 and was held under the motto “Contemporary Humanities as a Nexus of Cultures”. The event was opened by the Dean of the Faculty of Montenegrin Language and Literature, Adnan Čirgić, as well as other special guests from the USA. This international conference, which is held every two years in Cetinje, is an important point in the conception of South Slavic philology. As a result of this event, a conference volume was published containing reviewed papers presented at the “Cetinjski filološki dani III”. This volume is the publication that will be discussed in the following and which will be outlined in a few excerpts. Due to the wealth of material and the more than 600 pages of the volume, a selection of relevant and outstanding studies in linguistics will be presented.

Let us start with the study by the Polish linguist Robert Bońkowski, who compares the phonemes /ś/ and /ź/ in Polish and Montenegrin (pp. 67-75). The article refers to the state languages in Poland and Montenegro, which have these phonemes. Their phonetic development is described and analyzed, even though it is known that their use is still neither consistently applied nor undisputed in Montenegro (Thomas, 2013, p. 230)². Then, the Hungarian linguist Előd Dudás, who is undoubtedly one of the best experts in his country on the language situation in the Shtokavian area, goes into the scientific description of the linguistic reality in Montenegro and shows how it has been discussed in Hungary (pp. 139-148). In the last century, the breakup of Yugoslavia provided new opportunities for the language situation of the Shtokavian diasystem, which is reflected in the works of István Nyomárkay, for instance. The paper is clearly and vividly structured so that the reader can gain a good overview of this interesting topic.

¹ Henzelmann, M. (2024) Language in post-Yugoslav Montenegro: An unstable complex of contested values. In: *Zeitschrift für Slawistik. // Journal of Slavic Studies*, 69 (2), 229-255.

² Thomas, Paul-Louis (2013) Pour une grammaire commune du BCMS (bosniaque – croate – monténégrin – serbe). // *Revue des études slaves*, 84 (1/2), 235-251.

The translator Mieczysław Dziekoński discusses the role of an academy in the consolidation of a linguistic identity (pp. 149-158). The author presents a brief analysis of the relationship of the National Academy of Sciences and Arts towards the Montenegrin language from its foundation to present day. This is based on several representative issues concerning languages in Montenegro, which were published in different periods. Hereinafter, Mark L. Greenberg raises the question of where the South Slavic language area ends. As a point of reference, he highlights historical varieties of Panonian dialects (pp. 177-183), a problem that is certainly not easy to handle, especially when we consider the findings of onomastics. It is well known that Slavic toponyms and hydronyms also exist in places where there is no longer a South Slavic majority, for example, in large parts of Greece. Martin Henzelmann then documents the semiotic landscape of nature reserves in Serbia (pp. 195-220). The author argues how the exploration of the linguistic landscape can be usefully combined with semiotic approaches and sees that the complexity of the public use of language has been comprehensively researched to date. He lists several examples from Slavic countries that prove the latter argument. However, he emphasizes that rural areas have not yet been in the focus of studies and that these sparsely populated regions do not allow for all theoretical research. For example, quantitative approaches can only be of very little significance if written language in public is available on a small scale, e.g. in a national park. Then, the Bulgarian expert on language history Iskra Hristova-Shomova presents a very informative essay on Nativity of the Virgin Mary and Epiphany in South Slavic Panegyrics (pp. 221-233).

The volume is enriched by further papers dedicated to the problem of Shtokavian varieties. This shows what diverse opportunities South Slavic studies offer, as they open the path for very promising perspectives on linguistic constellations. For instance, there is an article by Sadik Idrizi Aljabak, dealing with emotional-expressive lexis in folk poetry in the Sharr Mountains (pp. 235-249). Dialectal particularities are also one of the key areas that the editor Novica Vujović and the Dean of the Faculty in Cetinje, Adnan Čirgić, emphasize (for example, in their recent publications, cf. Čirgić 2020³, Vujović 2024⁴). That means, research on this topic can only be welcomed, as can the highly interesting study by Alen Kalajdžija, in which the Bosnian author from Bjelopolje Mehmed Ćatib Akova and his particular use of language are presented (pp. 251-265). Furthermore, reference should be made to the study by Ismail Pilić, who reflects on the role of modal verbs in Bosnian (pp. 379-397). This topic has also been evaluated for other South Slavic and Balkan languages (Henzelmann, 2019, pp. 78-79⁵), but it is useful to provide scholars with evidence from Bosnia and Herzegovina as well, which is readily apparent in this field.

In the contribution by Dušan-Vladislav Pažderski, the author shows how the language policy of Kashubian affected language consolidation (pp. 399-417). This small idiom in northern Poland has an interesting history and is used in written communication, against the background of which Slavic studies classify it as a literary microlanguage. However, the challenges associated with a corresponding language policy are also related to the opinion of the speakers. There are very controversial developments in the study of literary microlanguages, but rather in the South Slavic region, which have been described in detail (cf. Henzelmann, 2017⁶). Nevertheless, it is sure that Kashubian has not yet been adequately researched and that comparisons between Western and Southern Slavic literary microlanguages are a rarity in Slavic Studies. This means that the topic addressed here can serve as a basis for future contrastive studies.

Finally, reference should be made to the paper by Ljudmila Vasiljeva. She focuses on the prominent role that language textbooks play in Montenegro's educational process (pp. 531-538). There is no doubt that the teaching and learning process is very much explained by the educational settings of a country. This ranges from school education to special further training courses in which language skills

³ Čirgić, Adnan (2020) *Dialectology of the Montenegrin Language*. Lexington Books.

⁴ Vujović, Novica (2024) Zakonski osnov i filološka argumentacija u prilog zaštiti crnogorskih govora. // *Jezikoslovni zapiski*, 30 (1), 153-168.

⁵ Henzelmann, Martin (2019) Beobachtungen zu Balkanismen in der europäischen Rechtsterminologie (mit Blick auf das Bulgarische und auf das Rumänische). // *Linguistique Balkanique. Balkansko ezikoznanie*, 58/1 (2019), 73-88.

⁶ Henzelmann, Martin (2017) Wie südslavische Mikroliteratursprachen (nicht) entstehen: Sprachplanerische Grundsätze, Rahmenbedingungen und Schwierigkeiten (Skizziert am Beispiel des Bunjewatzischen und des Pomakischen). // *Balkanistic Forum*, 17 (3), 34-49.

must be acquired for the job (an interesting example of this is given in a paper by Lisek, 2021⁷). The language teaching process in Montenegro and ways of realizing the principle of active communicativeness provide an incentive for the creation of textbooks, too. They ensure the communication needs of students, provide speech skills, while simultaneously increasing the level of socio-cultural education, and that highlights that a textbook as a teaching tool has several functions in terms of language training.

In sum, it is obvious that the conference volume impressively documents the diversity of Slavic studies. The contributions are an important milestone for scholarly exchange and for academic debates on philological topics, particularly those dedicated to South Slavic and Balkan studies. This is proven by the following background: Montenegro is now an important center for research in South Slavic topics. Great efforts are made to promote Cetinje as an important location, and this is reflected in the organization of the “Cetinjski filološki dani III” conference, which takes place every two years and is attended by an international audience. More important, however, is the interdisciplinary composition of the volume discussed in this review, because although we were only able to take a closer look at the linguistic papers due to the large number of studies, we must of course also acknowledge the cultural, literary and political analyses that the book contains. Yet, we note that the studies are not arranged thematically, but alphabetically according to the authors’ surnames. Of course, this is a formality that the editor regulates autonomously, but for me as a critical reviewer, it would be much clearer if the papers were summarized thematically. This would give us an overview of the foci of the papers, and we would also be able to recognize the topics more precisely without having to study the complete table of contents first. Thus, in my opinion, a certain structural overview could be included in future volumes. However, the contents of the papers are interesting, and I have to admit that in the end, that is what counts. Therefore, the publication undoubtedly helps to promote Cetinje as a core location for solid philological activities, as it contains new insights into South Slavic studies from different perspectives.

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⁷ Lisek, Grzegorz (2021) Über Schmerzen und Symptome... Wortschatz im Polnischunterricht für deutschsprachige Rettungskräfte. // *Glottodidactica*, 48 (1), 45-62.