

## Complementizer-headed main clauses for volitional moods in the languages of South-Eastern Europe: a Balkanism?<sup>1</sup>

Andreas Ammann and Johan van der Auwera  
*Center for Grammar, Cognition and Typology*  
*University of Antwerp (UIA)*

This paper checks the Balkan and neighboring languages for a lesser-studied field of grammar, the volitional moods. One aim is to advance the description of categories in this field. The uses of a particular syntactic construction in the languages of South-Eastern Europe, involving a complementizer heading a main clause are scrutinized. The authors argue that such constructions serve similar meanings in South-Eastern Europe, which becomes evident as they compare the meanings with the meaning of parallel construction in the Western Romance languages. To do this, they employ a paradigm-based approach to volitional mood, which centers around the categories “optative”, “imperative”, “hortative”, “exhortative”, “cohortative”, and combinations of these. Finally, they connect the complementizer-headed main clauses to the well-known phenomenon of infinitive regression in the Balkan languages.

### 1. The phenomenon

The construction we discuss is a main clause headed by a complementizer. The meanings of this construction belongs to what we call “volitional mood”, viz. Optative, imperative, hortative and related categories. (1) is an example from Modern Greek, expressing a wish.<sup>2</sup>

- (1) *Na zisete!* MG  
that.Mod live.Subj.Aor.2Pl  
‘May you live (a long life)!’ (Joseph and Philippaki-Warburton 1987: 180)

Compare (1) to the parallel example from Romanian in (2), which also expresses a wish.

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<sup>1</sup> Andreas Ammann is grateful to the Fund for Scientific Research - Flanders (Belgium) for the support granted through a Predoctoral Fellowship. Johan van der Auwera is grateful to the Royal Academy in Brussels, where he was a Fellow during the Fall of 2001. Both authors are grateful for helpful corrections and comments made by two anonymous referees and by César Montoliu.

<sup>2</sup> The following abbreviations are used in the glosses: 1, 2, 3 – first, second, third person; ACC – accusative; AOR – aorist; ART – article; DAT – dative; DEF – definite; FN – factive nominalization; G/D – genitive/dative; GEN – genitive; IMP – imperative; IPF – imperfect; LOC – locative; M – masculine; MOD – modal; M-P – mediopassive; NFN – non-factive nominalization; NOM – nominative; OPT – optative; PL – plural; PROG – progressive; PRS – present; SG – singular; SUBJ – subjunctive

- (2) *Să ne vedem sănătoși!* Ro  
 that.Mod us see.Pres.1Pl healthy.M.Pl  
 ‘May we see each other healthy!’ (Vasiliu 1972: 219)

Next, consider the second clause in the Romanian example in (3), which is structurally parallel to the Greek and Romanian sentences in (1) and (2).

- (3) *Dă-mi un pahar și să iei* Ro  
 give.Imp.2Sg-me a glass and that.Mod take.Pres.2Sg  
*și tu unul!*  
 and you one  
 ‘Give me a glass and take one yourself!’ (Mallinson 1986: 25)

Here, the function of the *să*-clause is somewhat different than in (2): the speaker not only expresses the wish that the hearer may take a glass, but, what is more, an appeal that he should take it. This becomes clear from the fact that the *să*-clause continues a sentence starting with an imperative, which has the same function, or at least a very similar one.

The volitional use of these kinds of constructions in the Balkan languages has been noted by Sandfeld (1930: 179f.), who traces the volitional uses of *hina*-constructions back to “le commencement de notre ère” in Greek (Sandfeld 1930: 180). It is found in the following languages spoken in the Eastern half of Southern Europe: Slovenian, Serbian/Croatian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Albanian, Greek, Balkan Romani, Judeo-Spanish, and dialects of Southern Italy. These languages form a contiguous area, which includes what is traditionally thought of as “the Balkan languages” or the languages of the “Balkan *Sprachbund*”. Genetically, they are all Indo-European, but belong to five different families, Albanian and Greek being independent branches and the other languages belonging to the Slavic, Romance, or Indic families.

## 2. Terminology for the volitional moods

Mood/modality is an area of grammar where a considerable amount of confusion is caused by terms which are not always defined and are often used in different senses. In practice, only “optative” and “imperative” are established terms, but even with “imperative” it is often unclear which non-second person forms should or should not be called “imperative”. Since verbal categories in general are difficult to identify, it is important to establish a terminological set and use it consistently.<sup>3</sup>

For the purposes of this paper we need to define the following five notions: (i) optative, (ii) imperative, (iii) exhortative, (iv) cohortative, and (v) hortative. We

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<sup>3</sup> Similar problems exist in the analysis of tense and aspect (see Binnick 1991).

also allow for combinations of some of these, namely optative, imperative and one from the set of the (co/ex-)hortatives. Firstly, we will use the universal semantic notions “wish” and “appeal”. This concerns the distinction between optative and the other four categories. In addition, we resort to paradigmatic aspects, which are language-specific. This will help us to describe the “imperative-hortative” system of each language. In our approach, we depart from modal functions and check the individual languages for the morphosyntactic strategies that are employed to express these functions.

The definition of the optative is given in (4).

- (4) The *optative* is a constructional paradigm, available for all grammatical persons, a core meaning of which is the expression of the speaker’s wish.

A construction with optative meaning from Modern Greek was exemplified in (1), where we have a main clause headed by a complementizer. This construction has come to replace the synthetic optative found in Classical Greek. The form *génoito* in (5) is a specifically optative (medio-passive present 3SG) form of the Classical Greek verb *gígnomai* ‘be born’.

- |     |                     |               |     |
|-----|---------------------|---------------|-----|
| (5) | <i>Génoito</i>      | <i>taĩta!</i> | CIG |
|     | happen.Opt.Pres.3Sg | that.Nom.Pl   |     |
|     | ‘May that happen!’  |               |     |

The only modern South-Eastern European language with a morphological optative is Albanian. An example is given in (6):

- |     |   |              |              |    |
|-----|---|--------------|--------------|----|
| (6) | <i>Të</i>   | <i>bëftë</i> | <i>mirë!</i> | Al |
|     | that.Mod  | do.Opt.3Sg   | well         |    |
|     | ‘May it be agreeable!’ (Buchholz and Fiedler 1987: 150) |              |              |    |

In the other languages of South-Eastern Europe, the optative is expressed by constructions corresponding to the Modern Greek construction in (1) and the Romanian one in (2).<sup>4</sup> The following typical example, from Macedonian, contains a main clause headed by the complementizer *da*:

- |     |                                    |                |    |
|-----|------------------------------------|----------------|----|
| (7) | <i>Da</i>                          | <i>pukneš!</i> | Ma |
|     | that.Mod                           | burst.Pres.2Sg |    |
|     | ‘May you burst!’ (Kramer 1986: 41) |                |    |

We link the optative to one particular speech act, viz. that of an expression of a wish, setting it apart from the categories of imperative and hortative. The latter categories contain an extra element of appeal, which is absent in the optative. For the purposes of this paper, the imperative can be defined as follows:

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<sup>4</sup> There is an optative of the type shown in (1) and (2) even in Albanian (see section 4 below).

- (8) The *imperative* is a construction used with the second person, singular and plural, which has as a core meaning the expression of the speaker's wish and an appeal to the targeted person(s) to carry out the wish.<sup>5</sup>

The imperative is typically conceived of as being reserved for the second person(s), and we will conform to this practice.<sup>6</sup> There are, however, categories which differ in meaning only with respect to the person(s) targeted by the appeal. These are referred to with many different labels in the literature, depending on the person(s) associated with them and the author's preference: "imperative", "hortative", "jussive", "adhortative", to name just the most important ones. We will designate these categories by the common denominator of "hortative". On the basis of language-specific paradigmatic distribution of the individual strategies, we will distinguish the hortative from the more restricted categories of exhortative and cohortative.

We will associate the hortative with the 3rd persons *and* the 1st person plural.

- (9) The *hortative* is a construction used both with third persons and with first person plural, which has as a core meaning the expression of the speaker's wish and an appeal to the targeted person(s) to carry out the wish.

A language with a hortative is English, where it is formed with *let*. A hortative like *Let him/them clean up the mess they made!* contrasts with an optative (with *may* substituted for *let*)<sup>7</sup> and a statement with a modal like *must* or *should*. We call the English *let*-strategy "hortative" because it also serves the first person plural: *Let us try to understand!*

The situation is different in French. Here, the construction corresponding to *let* used for the third persons employs the complementizer *que*, followed by the subject and a subjunctive which differs from the indicative only with few verbs, including the copula (*Qu'il soit content avec ça!* 'Let him be pleased with that!'),

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<sup>5</sup> We tacitly imply that the IMP.2SG is formed with the same strategy as the IMP.2PL. This is not universally so, but holds by and large for all the languages that are relevant for our paper, though with some minor structural differences. For example, in Standard Albanian the IMP.2SG takes enclitic object pronouns (*Merr-e!* 'take it!' versus *E merr* 'you are taking it'), but with the IMP.2PL, pronouns may be enclitic or proclitic: *Merr-e-ni / E merr-ni edhe këtë!* 'Take (pl) this too!' (Buchholz and Fiedler 1987: 65). We can count all of these constructions as imperatives, as *E merr-ni edhe këtë!* 'Take this too!' is prosodically distinct from *E merr-ni edhe këtë.* 'You (pl.) are taking this too.'

<sup>6</sup> In this respect, this paper differs from the terminology used in van der Auwera et al. (2002).

<sup>7</sup> In addition, English has residual optatives without *let*, using the subjunctive instead, e.g.

- (i) Long live the queen!

*Qu'ils soient contents avec ça!* 'Let them be pleased with that!').<sup>8</sup> An appeal to a group which includes the speaker looks different. In *Soyons contents avec ça!* 'Let's be pleased with that', the complementizer is absent. For this reason, we do not call the French third person construction "hortative", but "exhortative":

- (10) The *exhortative* is a construction used with third persons, but not with the first person plural, which has as a core meaning the expression of the speaker's wish and an appeal to the targeted person(s) to carry out the wish.

What is the strategy used for an appeal to the first person plural in French, if it cannot be called "hortative", nor "exhortative"? We will refer to it with the label "cohortative".

- (11) The *cohortative* is a construction used exclusively with the first person plural, which has as a core meaning the expression of the speaker's wish and an appeal to the targeted person(s) to carry out the wish.

Note the crucial point that a strategy can perform more than one function within volitional mood – optative and (co/ex-)hortative – and thus receive a combined label.<sup>9</sup> We will illustrate this in the next section by looking at the construction we want to investigate – the complementizer-headed main clauses with volitional mood functions, taking main clauses with *të* 'that' in Standard Albanian as an example.

### 3. Labeling the functions of complementizer-headed main clauses in a Balkan language: Albanian

We have already given examples of Balkan complementizer-headed main-clause optatives in (1) and (2). Although Albanian has special forms for expressing wishes – the inflectional optative forms illustrated in (6) above – *të* + main clause is here also available for this function. Example (12) shows an optative *të* + main clause, which expresses a wish:

- (12) *Për hair qoftë!*            *Të*            *na trashëgohen!*            *Al*  
 for good be.Opt.3Sg    that.Mod            us.it enjoy.M-P.3Pl  
 'So be it! May they enjoy a long life!' (Buchholz and Fiedler 1987: 134)

<sup>8</sup> In French, this construction can also convey an optative, translatable with *may*. In English, the only other reading that *let* can give is etymological – an imperative of a verb meaning 'allow'. We will see later on that in the languages of South-Eastern Europe there is a parallel to the French situation.

<sup>9</sup> The categories we established so far are not paradigmatically exhaustive yet. We have not included the first person singular forms. Where these concern volitional mood, they are served by hortative constructions in South-Eastern European languages as well. A more frequent use is that in questions, corresponding to something like *Shall I...?*

This strategy is available for all persons, which seems to be a characteristic of the specific speech act “wish”, at least in the languages of Europe. Furthermore, main-clause *të* is used within the imperative-hortative domain, and is characterized by the common element of appeal. We find this construction for the third persons as in (13) as well as for the first person plural as in (14),<sup>10</sup> and refer to it as “hortative”.

- (13) *Ti, Agim, shko te nëna dhe Rexhepi* Al  
 you Agim go.Imp.2Sg to mother.Nom.Def and Rexhep  
*të rrijë këtu!*  
 that.Mod stay.Subj.3Sg here  
 ‘You, Agim, go to your mother, and Rexhep is to stay here!’ (Buchholz and Fiedler 1987: 134)

- (14) [...] *hajde të ikim!* Al  
 come.on that.Mod go.1Pl  
 ‘[...] come on, let’s go!’ (Buchholz and Fiedler 1987: 134)

Finally, just like the corresponding Romanian example in (3), the Albanian construction can be used for an appeal to a second person – a usage which competes with a dedicated imperative.

- (15) *Sapo të vijë ky shoku, ta* Al  
 once that.Mod come.Subj.3Sg that comrade that.Mod.him  
*marrësh [...]*  
 take.Subj.2Sg  
 ‘Once that guy comes, take him [...]’ (Buchholz and Fiedler 1987: 134)

Taking (12)-(15) together, we can say that *të*-headed main clauses in Albanian serve optative, hortative, and imperative. Accordingly, they encode a far more polyfunctional volitional mood than the Standard Average European languages, and this feature is characteristic of the Balkan languages.

#### 4. Optative-hortatives in Europe and beyond

The function of the Albanian construction with *të* at the head of a main clause corresponds to the function of main clauses headed by analogous complementizers in Greek, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Romanian, Balkan Romani, Serbian/Croatian, and Slovenian. But is it an areal feature? At first sight this is doubtful, given that, as mentioned above, French also has main clauses headed by *que*, which have

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<sup>10</sup> Albanian still has a cohortative ‘let’s go’ that does not use any complementizer, viz. *shkjomë* (Buchholz and Fiedler 1987: 119, note 63), and interestingly, this very phrase exists in Greek too (*páme*, Joseph and Philippaki-Warbuton 1987: 15). But here we are dealing with set expressions, not a productive formation (compare Demiraj 1926: 1127). Puşcariu (1926: 176) provides similar examples for Istro-Romanian.

optative functions as well as some functions which can be said to belong to the imperative-hortative domain. The point has been made before: Asenova (1989: 141) compared the Balkan constructions discussed here to sentences like *Qu'il sorte!* 'Let him go out!' in French. But there is a paradigmatic difference. In French, as well as in other Western Romance languages, the first person plural is split: we have an optative with *que* or its cognates heading a main clause, but bare verb forms for an appeal to a group that includes the speaker, i.e. the first person plural in Romance. In all Western Romance languages, a complementizer-headed main clause with a subject in the second person or first person plural is always optative. The following example from Romanian shows, however, that in this language, the complementizer *să* can head a main clause which conveys an appeal to the first person plural:

- (16) *Să plecăm!* Ro  
 that.Mod leave.Pres.1Pl  
 'Let's leave!' (Mallinson 1986: 25)

We have already illustrated the imperative use of this construction, i.e. the use with a second person subject (cf. example (3)). This means that in Romanian, this construction is an optative-imperative-hortative, whereas in the other Romance languages, we are dealing with an optative-exhortative, as the function of appeal is only present when the subject is a third person.<sup>11</sup>

The distribution is striking: Romanian is genetically Romance, it has a predominantly Romance lexicon, but it is known to share several grammatical Balkanisms, and with respect to volitional mood it turns out to be typologically Balkan too. It is worthwhile to note that the languages spoken to the West of Romanian - Serbian/Croatian and Slovenian, do not show the same pattern. Slovenian does not have first person plural uses of main clauses with *da*, and in Serbian/Croatian, they exist, but only as an alternative to a dedicated form used without *da* (Olga Mišeska Tomić, personal communication). In having first person plural forms with the same syntax as those used for the second person in the system, these languages behave like Western Romance. But it is unlikely that this correspondence is due to Romance influence on Western South Slavic, as the form that is used for an appeal in the first person plural is a dedicated form in Serbian/Croatian and Slovenian, but not in Western Romance, where a subjunctive or indicative form is used with a special syntactic pattern. Historically, the first person imperative of Western South Slavic originates in a pre-Slavic optative form which in Common Slavic substi-

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<sup>11</sup> There are also some parallels in German, but they are comparatively marginal. Sentences like *Dass ihr mir aber brav seid!* '(That you) Be good!' are almost confined to something like Motherese, leaving only negated wishes as unmarked uses: *Nicht dass noch mehr Stellen wegfallen!* '(Let's hope) That no more jobs will be cut!'. See section 7 below for the more relevant occurrence in Southern Italian dialects.

tuted the imperative, arguably as a full paradigm (Vaillant 1966: 29f.). Why is this form retained in Western South Slavic then, but not the third persons of this paradigm? The answer may very well have to do with contact with the Balkan languages, but whether this is so or not, the paradigmatic correspondence with Western Romance is probably accidental. After all, in those languages the first person plural forms correspond to the second person ones only in their syntactic behavior, they are not part of the same morphological paradigm.<sup>12</sup>

The use of a construction headed by a ‘that’-complementizer for volitional mood is not restricted to Southern Europe. However, in a sample of 400 languages, we found clear cases of parallels to the Southern European situation only in four languages, all of them spoken in Africa. Thus, in Igbo (Niger-Congo: Nigeria), optative and imperative-hortative meanings are expressed by an “injonctif” headed by *kà* ‘that’ (Onumajuru 1985: 152-160). A similar distribution is found in Idoma – another Niger-Congo language spoken in Nigeria (Abraham 1967: 48f.), in Susu (Niger-Congo: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Friedländer 1974: 54, 98) and Marghi,<sup>13</sup> – which is also spoken in Nigeria, but belongs to the Chadic branch of Afro-Asiatic (Hoffman 1963: 202).<sup>14</sup>

We have seen that the complementizer-headed main clauses used for volitional moods in the Balkan languages have some parallels in Romance and in a few Western African languages. They are clearly not exclusively “Balkan”. But in the case of Romanian, where the correspondence to the other languages of the Balkan *Sprachbund* is remarkable, it indicates that we have one more Balkanism, on a par with the classical ones such as merger of genitive and dative or clitic-doubling? Greenberg (1996: 182f., 196) refers to an unpublished paper by Pappas (1996) investigating this question and concludes that the answer is positive. In this respect, it is helpful to take a closer look at the elements that make up the complementizer-headed main clauses in the individual languages.

## 5. The makeup of the independent modal complementizer clauses in the languages of the Eastern half of Southern Europe

An essential component of the complementizer pattern is the complementizer itself. In Greek, Albanian, Macedonian, Bulgarian, Romanian, and Balkan Romani – as

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<sup>12</sup> The imperative-hortative paradigms in the Mediterranean languages are discussed in more detail in van der Auwera et al. (2002).

<sup>13</sup> The use of the “long subjunctive” with *kš* in independent clauses for volitional mood and in modal complementation in this language seems to be especially close to the Balkan situation: factual ‘that’ seems to be expressed not by *kš*, but rather by *dš* (Hoffman 1963: 264).

<sup>14</sup> Possibly Maori (Austronesian, New Zealand) should be added to the list. In this language, the preverbal particle *kia* is used for imperatives of adjectives and experience verbs (Harlow 1996: 13), as well as in modal complementation (Harlow 1996: 13, 41).

well as in some dialects of Southern Italy – there are realis complementizers,<sup>15</sup> which are used, for example, after embedding verbs like ‘say’ or ‘know’, and irrealis or modal complementizers, for example after a verb like ‘want’ (Sandfeld 1980: 175f., Hinrichs 1999a: 506). It is this type of modal complementizer that is used in main clauses with volitional mood meanings. In Serbian/Croatian and Slovenian there is no distinction between a realis and an irrealis complementizers; in this respect these languages behave like the Western Romance languages. In Table 1, the typical realis and irrealis complementizers of Modern Greek, Albanian, Macedonian, Bulgarian, Balkan Romani, the Southern Italian dialects, Serbian/Croatian, Slovenian and French are given:

Table 1. *Realis and irrealis/modal complementizers*

Language	realis complementizer	irrealis/modal complementizer
Modern Greek	<i>óti</i>	<i>Na</i>
Albanian	<i>që</i>	<i>Të</i>
Macedonian	<i>deka/oti</i>	<i>Da</i>
Bulgarian	<i>če/deto</i>	<i>Da</i>
Balkan Romani	<i>kaj</i>	<i>Te</i>
Romanian	<i>că</i>	<i>Să</i>
Southern Italian dialects	<i>ka</i>	<i>ke/ku/mu</i>
Serbian/Croatian		<i>Da</i>
Slovenian		<i>Da</i>
French		<i>Que</i>

How old is this picture? Consider Romanian. Its separate modal complementizer *să* derives from Latin *sī* ‘if, when’, distinct from *că* < *quid/quod* ‘that’. No other standard Romance language developed such a split. On the basis of the knowledge available to us, it is not possible to pin down this split in Romanian to, say, a Thracian (or, for those who prefer to see it as a distinct language, “Dacian”) substrate. The complementizer split and the expansions of the constructions involved in modal complementation could be one of those Balkanisms that arose roughly between late antiquity and the time the languages of South-Eastern Europe became

<sup>15</sup> Since it is the irrealis/modal complementizer that are relevant for this paper, we do not discuss the variation within the realis field, and in this sense, table (1) is not exhaustive.

standardized. This process affected South-Eastern Europe including Romanian and Macedonian, but excluding Serbian/Croatian and, of course, Slovenian. The phenomenon is not usually listed among the more established Balkanisms, such as genitive-dative syncretism or object doubling, but the fact that it is found in Balkan dialects of Romani has been interpreted as an areal typological feature by Friedman (1985: 382, 386), Boretzky (1994: 169) and Matras (1994: 220).<sup>16</sup> For Macedonian, Aromanian and Megleno-Romanian, Topolińska (1994: 107, 114f., 1995: 242) has made a similar claim regarding a “factive” / “non-factive” split, with the markers we have referred to as irrealis/modal being either non-factive or suspending the opposition (Topolińska 1994: 117f.).<sup>17</sup>

However, it should be noted that a contrast between a realis and an irrealis/modal ‘that’ is also made in Turkish (T). In this language, the two markers expressing the opposition are not free complementizers, but bound nominalizing suffixes. Kornfilt (2001: 187) contrasts a “‘factive’ (indicative)” nominalizer *-dik*, illustrated in (18), with a “‘non-factive’ (subjunctive)” nominalizer *-ma*. The example she provides for the latter, (18), contains a modal verb:

- (17) *Ali-nin geçen akşam nehr-in kenar-ın-da koş-tuğ-un-u* Tu  
 Ali-Gen past evening river-Gen shore-3Sg-Loc run-Fn-3Sg-Acc  
*gör-dü-m.*

see-Past-1Sg

‘I saw that Ali was running along the river the other evening.’ (Kornfilt 2001: 187)

- (18) *Ali-nin nehr-in kenar-ın-da koş-ma-sın-i* Tu  
 Ali-Gen river-Gen shore-3Sg-Loc run-Fn-3Sg-Acc  
*isti-yor-um.*

want-Prog-1Sg

‘I want for Ali to run along the river.’ (Kornfilt 2001: 187)

So Turkish makes a similar contrast in complements of modal and non-modal verbs, but with a different morphosyntactic strategy (morphological nominaliza-

<sup>16</sup> A similar modal/realis distinction is found with negators in Greek, Albanian, and Balkan Romani, but in this case we are dealing with a retention of an Indo-European distinction rather than a common innovation.

<sup>17</sup> Given the high importance Topolińska (1994: 107) attaches to the explicit marking of the factivity contrast in a multilingual environment, it is somewhat unusual that *da* should be able to “suspend” this very opposition. As Topolińska (1994: 108) points out, *da* originally carried a notion of purpose (‘in order to’) in Slavic, much like *to* in earlier stages of English. With this in mind, one could take the “non-factive” uses as one specific instance of “bleaching” of the original meaning (from purpose to irrealis/modal), and the uses which are neither “factive” nor “non-factive” (cf. example (21) below) as an even more advanced stage of semantic bleaching. At any rate, main clause uses are all modal (Kramer 1985: 417, Topolińska (1994: 117f.))

tion). At least one other potential Balkanism – evidentiality (or “status”) – is not unlikely to have developed in some of the Balkan languages (Balkan Slavic, Balkan Romance and Albanian) through language contact with Turkish during Ottoman times (Friedman 2000: 357). In the same vein, it cannot be ruled out that Turkish triggered or reinforced a tendency to distinguish realis from irrealis/modal complementation. The difference in morphosyntax is not a counter-argument: Turkish generally has a much richer morphology, and it is not inconceivable that the semantic distinction was calqued and expressed with syntactic means in the more analytic Balkan languages. We are not claiming that Turkish must have been the origin of the complementizer split, but that the fact that an adjacent language makes a similar distinction calls for caution when it comes to the classification of this feature as a Balkanism.

To sum up matters until here: 1. With respect to the functions of their complementizer-constructions, the Balkan languages correspond to one another closely, and Western South Slavic corresponds to this model to a lesser extent, as does Western Romance. 2. The split into two ‘that’s and the use of the modal one as a periphrastic subjunctive with optative/hortative functions in independent clauses look characteristically “Balkan”.

## **6. Change in complementation in the languages of South-Eastern Europe**

One of the generally accepted Balkanisms is the regression of the infinitive.<sup>18</sup> As was observed by Greenberg (1996: 196), the use of complementizer-headed main clauses in the domain of volitional mood is linked to this feature. Of course, absence (or low frequency) of infinitives is not encountered only in the Balkans. Cross-linguistically it may be more common for a language not to have an infinitive than to have one. But among the surrounding languages, the Balkan languages stand out in having a remarkably low prominence of infinitives. Stolz (2002) points out that the South-Eastern European area of “infinitive avoidance” differs from a Middle Eastern one, where asyndetic constructions are involved in complementation. What makes the Balkan variant special, is the fact that the Balkan languages have two complementizers, and that the complementizer that is used as an alternative to the infinitive is a specifically modal one.

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<sup>18</sup> The loss of the infinitive was already included in Miklosich’s list of Balkanisms in 1861 (Steinke 1999: 79). Stolz (2002) prefers the label “infinitive avoidance”, a term which emphasizes the speaker’s choice to use an alternative construction. However, in the case of Albanian, it is unclear whether there has ever been any infinitive that speakers could have come to “avoid” (Hinrichs 1999a: 454), and Romani may have lost the infinitives of Old Indic before speakers of the language entered the Balkans.

Infinitives were attested in Classical Greek, Latin and Old Slavic, but they are marginalized (if at all existent) in grammatical constructions in Modern Greek, Bulgarian, Macedonian and Romanian. In certain constructions, complement clauses headed by a complementizer were at some time in the past available in the systems or some South-Eastern European languages (e.g. in Old Church Slavonic), even when the infinitive existed as an alternative. The plausibility of this assumption is supported by the situation in Serbian/Croatian: in both varieties, speakers can use an infinitive or a *da*-clause, but as a rule, Croatian speakers prefer infinitives, whereas speakers of the Serbian variety tend to use *da*-clause complements.<sup>19</sup> Dialectally, the Balkan feature of infinitive regression has spread not only to the South-Eastern Serbian (Torlak) dialects (which as a whole look typologically “Balkan”), but extends nearly to Belgrade (Alexander 1983: 18). On the other hand, Slovenian is outside the area of infinitive regression.

Romanian and Bulgarian correspond closely concerning modal complementation. Infinitival complements occur after verbs for ‘can’ in Romanian and (literary) Bulgarian. In both languages, the infinitive is still involved in constructions for the future and the prohibitive, but in the vast majority of modal complements, a clause headed by the modal complementizer is used. In Aromanian, there is no infinitive left, not even after ‘can’, where it is still used in Daco-Romanian (Rohlf 1958: 737; Solta 1980: 211, footnote 152; Mayerthaler et al. 1993: 102).<sup>20</sup> The areal and diachronic North-South cline in Romanian and its varieties has often been noted: no infinitives in Aromanian, comparatively many in North Romanian dialects (Hinrichs 1999a: 453), and an ongoing spread of *să*-headed subjunctives at the expense of infinitives in Standard Romanian (Dyer 1985, Solta 1980: 211, footnote 149). In Bulgarian, the infinitive is even more restricted than in Romanian (Solta 1980: 212), which is also a noteworthy areal observation, and in Macedonian it is practically non-existent.

Gheg Albanian has a periphrastic infinitive and so does Tosk Albanian, but the “infinitive” form in the latter is regarded as a recent formation, has no main clause functions and is commonly used with the purpose meaning of ‘in order to’. Tosk Albanian, and the standard language of which it forms the basis, show only limited uses of an infinitive with the compound particle *për të* + participle, whereas Gheg uses a periphrastic infinitive with *me* quite regularly in complementation of certain verbs, as well as in the future tense (Solta 1980: 212). So again, the use of

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<sup>19</sup> Given the current trend to construct these languages as separate entities, this process is likely to continue and even gain momentum. After all, this feature is one of the few salient ones in grammar which set apart “Croatian” and “Serbian”.

<sup>20</sup> It is not surprising that the infinitive should be retained longer after ‘can’ than after ‘want’, as with ‘can’ the subject of the dependent clause is necessarily coreferential with the subject of the modal verb. There is no ‘can’-counterpart to ‘I want you to leave’.

infinitive constructions is more restricted in the Southern variety. A parallel between Gheg Albanian and Romanian is the existence of an infinitive particle – *me* and *a*, respectively.

Balkan Romani does not continue any Old or Middle Indic infinitives, probably due to influence from its contact languages (Boretzky and Iglá 1999: 723).

In Greek, the infinitive is confined to residual functions as a verbal noun, in some future constructions, and infinitives of the aorist in compound tenses (Solta 1980: 212f.). The inception of this process was already evident in the Koinē and completed by the 16th century (Joseph 1983: 181). Solta (1980: 213) reports that Balkanists such as Sandfeld and Jokl have interpreted this picture as pointing to a spread from Greek. There is also evidence that the trend to replace infinitives with complementizer-headed subjunctives goes back to New Testament Greek, but it must be noted that we have no comparable information on the simultaneous state of affairs in the other Balkan languages.<sup>21</sup>

An argument for the crucial role of Greek in the areal phenomenon of infinitive regression and the development of finite constructions headed by a modal complementizer comes from Italy (Rohlf's 1958: 733, 742f.; Mayerthaler et al. 1993: 102). The dialects of Southern Italy<sup>22</sup> share the feature of low infinitive prominence with the Balkan languages, with some correspondences to the situation in Romanian. What is more, here, as in the Balkans, new modal complementizers arose that only functionally continue the Latin *ut* (Rohlf's 1954: 74-80). Whereas standard Italian has a polyfunctional complementizer *che* 'that', in the Southern Italian dialects we encounter a "Balkan"-like split between factual *ka* and modal *ke* (e.g. in Lazio and Campania), *ku* (Terra d'Otranto) or *mu* (Southern Calabria). The modal complementizers combine with an indicative or subjunctive verb form in what looks like the replacement of an infinitive after modal and other verbs (Cristofaro 1998: 503). Just like their counterparts in the Balkan languages, they

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<sup>21</sup> If Greek really was the source where the phenomenon originated, this would go against the idea expressed by Schaller (1975: 103) that Albanian, Macedonian, Bulgarian and Romanian are the "primary Balkan languages" or Balkan "Kernsprachen", assuming, as he does, that only a primary Balkan language can be a donor of Balkanisms. In this model, Greek is a "secondary Balkan language" just like Serbian/Croatian – a view which has not gained general acceptance. Interestingly, Schaller (1975: 119) does accept Sandfeld's view that the regression of the infinitive in the Balkans should be attributed to Greek.

<sup>22</sup> It is common to classify Italian dialects into three groups: Northern, Central, and Southern. In the case we are analyzing, at least some of the Central dialects, e.g. Abbruzzese, join the (proper) Southern ones, but on the other hand it does not seem to be the case that "Southern Italian" in general (as opposed to "Northern Italian" above the La Spezia-Rimini line) behaves in a uniform way in having such constructions. One problem is that the system with a single, polyfunctional complementizer is gaining ground all over Southern Italy, probably due to influence from the standard (Ledgeway 2000: 71). The complementizer split extends to Sicily, but not to Sardinia.

can even head independent clauses. An example from Puglian (Lecce), where this construction is an exhortative, is given in (19). The optative use of *mu* in Calabrian is exemplified in (20).

(19) *Ku fáttsa éé bbóle!* SIIt  
 that.Mod do.Subj.3Sg what want.Pres.3Sg  
 ‘Let him do what he wants!’ (Stehl 1988: 707)

(20) *Mu ti via ammazatu!* SIIt  
 that.Mod you.Sg see.Subj.1Sg killed.M  
 ‘May I see you killed!’ (Rohlf 1954: 79)

One could think that *ku* is only a morphological replacement of the Latin modal complementizer *ut*. In this case, the dialects of Southern Italy would be retaining a distinction that was lost in Tuscany and the North. However, Vulgar Latin replaced *ut* with *quod* and later *quid* (Rohlf 1954: 80). It is certainly possible that factual and modal ‘that’ were conflated in all Italian dialects before the distinction was reintroduced as an innovation in the South. In this case, influence from Greek is likely, as modal complementation with a modal complementizer *ti* is attested in Calabrian Greek.<sup>23</sup> The decreasing use of infinitives in the Southern Italian dialects suggests that this interpretation is more plausible than that of a mere continuation of Latin structures.

To conclude, it is clear that the regression of the infinitive and its replacement by constructions involving a specialized complementizer used in modal contexts is found in the Balkan languages and in dialects of Southern Italy. As for the Balkans, there is a general consensus that this is a contact phenomenon (Joseph 1983: 253, Greenberg 1996: 196), and Greek has been named as the source for many a Balkanism. Dialects in the South of Italy, which have been in contact with Greek for many centuries, display the feature as well.

## 7. Retracing the development of modal complementation

Synchronically, we find that the Balkan languages and the Southern Italian dialects have similar structures in two respects. First, they show a low degree of infinitive prominence, preferring dependent clauses headed by a complementizer. Second, they use a special modal complementizer in independent clauses for the expression of volitional mood. We will now investigate the possibility of a diachronic link between the two features.

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<sup>23</sup> Arbëresh – the Tosk Albanian dialect spoken in Southern Italy and Sicily – might have also given external support for the expansion of finite modal complementation on a local level. But it is unlikely that Arbëresh could have triggered this development in the way that Greek might have.

In Macedonian, a language with two different complementizers (see Table 1 above), the modal complementizer<sup>24</sup> *da* has some non-modal uses, such as in (21):

- (21) *Počna da pee.* Ma  
 begin.Aor.3Sg that.Mod sing.Pres.3Sg  
 ‘He began to sing.’ (Kramer 1986: 37)<sup>25</sup>

But it is more commonly found in modal contexts, such as negated future (22), condition, finality, intention (23), or necessity (24):

- (22) *Nema da odi.* Ma  
 has.not that.Mod go.Pres.3Sg  
 ‘He won’t go.’ (Kramer 1986: 30)

- (23) *Sakaše da zamine.* Ma  
 want.Ipf.3Sg that.Mod depart.Pres.3Sg  
 ‘He wanted to depart.’ (Kramer 1986: 24)

- (24) *Mora da odi.* Ma  
 must.Pres.3Sg that.Mod go.Pres.3Sg  
 ‘He must go.’ (Kramer 1986: 54)

It is just one step from those modals to our volitional mood uses in main clauses if the modal gets left out (for a similar line of reasoning regarding Bulgarian, see Lempp 1985: 430). In Macedonian, the construction is marked as modal solely by the presence of irrealis/modal *da*. Depending on which modal meaning is interpreted as present in the elliptic constructions (in (25) – (27) it could be “wish”, “order” or “suggest”, respectively), these can be optative (25 [= 7]) or imperative-hortative – imperative in (26), hortative in (27):

- (25) *Da pukneš!* Ma  
 that.Mod burst.Pres.2Sg  
 ‘May you burst!’ (Kramer 1986: 41)

<sup>24</sup> Originally, *da* was a paratactic conjunction in Common Slavic (Asenova 1999: 226f.).

<sup>25</sup> Fiedler (1999: 506, footnote 25) points out that with *verba sentiendi*, the contrast between the two complementizers is regularly neutralized in the Southern Balkans.

- (26) *Da*            *dojdeš!*            = *Dojdi!*            Ma  
 that.Mod        come.Pres.2Sg    come.Imp.2Sg  
 ‘Come!’ (Kramer 1986: 32)
- (27) *Da*            *gledame!*            Ma  
 that.Mod        look.Pres.1Pl  
 ‘Let’s look!’ (Kramer 1986: 32)

Sedláček (1968: 55f.) holds the opposite view. According to him, the Balkan subjunctive syntagms headed by a particle/complementizer originated as independent expressions of a wish and spread to dependent uses later. He relates this development to a general “folk” character in the syntax of the Balkan languages. We do not deny the evidence for elements in the syntax of the Balkan languages which are reminiscent of oral language, e.g. in the case of object doubling. But in this case, we are not convinced by Sedláček’s scenario. We agree with Meyer-Lübke’s (1900: 146) assessment of the development of *să* + subjunctive in Romanian:

*Le point de départ de ce să doit naturellement être cherché dans des propositions subordonnées telles p. ex. que voîŭ să vînzî (je veux que tu viens). Mais alors il put arriver que, sous l’empire de l’émotion, le terme exprimant la volonté fût réprimé et suppléé par un simple geste : on acquérait ainsi la possibilité d’employer aussi să pour introduire des propositions simples lorsque ces propositions devaient contenir l’expression d’une volonté; et c’est en effet ce qui est arrivé d’abord là où la langue manquait d’une forme flexionnelle pour distinguer une simple énonciation de l’expression d’une volonté ou d’un désir.<sup>26</sup>*

The main clause constructions headed by a modal complementizer underwent grammaticalization to the point where *da* and the corresponding markers in the Balkan languages became a particle or modal marker. A similar process of syntactic grammaticalization can be observed in Judeo-Spanish, where *ke* (~ Spanish *que*) can stand in verb-adjacent rather than clause-initial position, like in Greek and the other Balkan languages (César Montoliu p.c.):

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<sup>26</sup> ‘The beginning of the development of *să* should undoubtedly be sought in subordinate sentences such as *voîŭ să vînzî* ‘I want that you come’. But it could happen that, in emotional contexts, ‘I want’ is replaced by gesticulation; thus, it came to be possible to use *să* to introduce simple sentences because they express a wish or desire; and that is actually what happens in a language that does not have morphological means for the expression of will or desire.’

- (28) *En ganedén ke esté!* JSp  
 in paradise that be.Subj.3Sg  
 ‘May s/he be in paradise!’ (César Montoliu p.c.)

## 9. Conclusion

We have identified a modal construction consisting of a complementizer and an independent main clause. It occurs in the Balkan languages (Romanian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Albanian, Balkan Romani and Greek) and in Southern Italian dialects as a distinct type with a specialized, modal complementizer. This contrasts with similar constructions in Western South Slavic and the rest of the Romance languages, where there is no complementizer split. The constructions are polyfunctional within volitional mood: they can express optative, imperative, and (co/ex-)hortative meanings. The origin of these constructions possibly lies in the complementation of modals, where they became more frequent when infinitives were avoided. In other words, these constructions are connected to a better-studied contact phenomenon. The modal functions of complementizer-headed main clauses were already noted by Sandfeld (1930: 179f.). Friedman (1985: 382, 386) considered the “modal subordinators” a Balkan feature and described the uses for ‘let’ and ‘may’ as well. The modal construction consisting of a complementizer and an independent main clause have more recently been considered a potential Balkanism by Pappas (1996), with a positive evaluation by Greenberg (1996: 182f., 196)<sup>27</sup>. Yet they are not usually included in the standard inventories of syntactic Balkanisms, such as the one provided in an introductory article by Hinrichs (1999a).

There are three difficulties with calling the expansion of modal ‘that’-clauses a Balkanism. First, volitional mood is served by independent clauses headed by a complementizer in Slovenian and Serbian/Croatian as well. In this case the correspondence is not very close, as the West South Slavic languages use a general complementizer and not a specifically modal one. Second, Turkish does share the semantic distinction of realis versus irrealis/modal complementation with the Balkan languages. Again there is a difference: the morphosyntactic strategy of expressing it. Thirdly and most significantly, the dialects of Southern Italy show exactly the same pattern as the Balkan languages: low infinitive prominence and

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<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately, we were not able to use Pappas’ unpublished paper discussed by Greenberg (1996: 182f.). Greenberg points out that the avoidance of imperative forms for pragmatic reasons such as politeness – a tendency he finds manifested in Serbian and Macedonian, but not in Bulgarian or North Slavic (Greenberg 1996: 50, 182) – is common outside the Balkans as well. However, on the basis of the syntactic similarities the Balkan languages display with respect to the constructions that are used instead of straightforward imperative forms, he does not hesitate to consider these periphrases “an areal Balkan feature” (Greenberg 1996: 183). Regarding the more complex picture with Balkan prohibitive constructions, see Greenberg (1996: 187-191).

the expansion of the modal complementizer clauses that have ousted earlier infinitive complements of Latin to independent uses for volitional moods (optative and hortative). To put it bluntly: can something be a Balkanism if it occurs in Italy?

We can give three preliminary answers to this question. First, the fact that a phenomenon which is arguably a contact phenomenon in the Balkans may have spread beyond the Balkans, i.e. to Southern Italy, should not in itself be taken to mean that this feature is different in nature from the more established Balkanisms. Second, perhaps the dialects of Southern Italy are indeed somewhat Balkan on independent grounds. To mention just one example, object doubling, which is recognized as a typical Balkan feature, is found as a more or less regularized in these dialects – though at least in some contexts it also occurs in dialects of Northern Italy (Poletto 1997: 141). Third, it is possible also that the convergence between the Balkans and the South of Italy does not really involve one zone of (Greek) influence, but rather two separate ones. Greek may well be shown to have exported the phenomena we have described to Southern Italy, independent of its involvement in the Balkan language situation. Even on the Balkans, it is conceivable that Greek acted as a contact language outside of its role in the Balkanisms, viz. in its influence on Judeo-Spanish (Joseph 1983: 252, see also Montoliu and van der Auwera [this volume]). In that case, the Mediterranean is big enough for both a Balkan *Sprachbund* and a Greek sphere of influence in Italy.

It has long been understood that defining a language area does not presuppose exact boundaries which confine all or even most of the isoglosses. Instead, *Sprachbünde* typically have a core and a periphery, and so does the Balkan area (van der Auwera 1998: 263). Regarding the construction we have investigated here, the “classical” Balkan languages could be said to form a core, with Western South Slavic and Turkish showing only some peripheral correspondences. By contrast, the dialects of Southern Italy show a high degree of “Balkanness” in the expression of volitional moods.

The Balkan *Sprachbund* cannot be defined through a litmus-like feature, nor a certain percentage of a set of features that a language must have to be regarded a Balkan language. The more peripheral a member is in the areal sense, the harder it is to distinguish it from an outsider which displays some of the constituent features either by accident or through language contact with an individual member of the neighboring language area. In addition, the history of the relevant contacts, in particular those involving Greek in Italy, must be taken into account as well. We suspect that the parallelism of the Southern Italian dialects with the Balkan languages in the expression of volitional moods is not accidental. Maybe the Balkan *Sprachbund* needs to be redefined as being part of a larger language area of the Eastern Mediterranean. More research is required for a confident decision, but we believe that this approach could prove to be fruitful.

Speaking of “Balkanisms” is much more problematic today than it was in Sandfeld’s time. However, since there are not that many areally significant syntactic features shared by all the Balkan languages, it is worth keeping an eye on this one.

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