Envoi

We have focused in this final chapter on the lessons learned about sprachbunds in general and the Balkans in particular, as the originally identified, and still relevant, exemplar of the concept. But there are important findings having to do with contact linguistics that are worth recounting here. We have already mentioned our innovative notion of ERIC loans, and we trust that our arguments for this notion can be relevant for scholars working in other regions. Similarly, we hope that our enunciation of our "FOUR-M model" for sprachbund formation will find echoes and applicability elsewhere.[1] But especially, given the continued, if unjustifiably controversial, status of the claim that the borrowing of structure and grammar is possible, a controversy brought to the fore in the modern linguistic era through the discussion in Thomason & Kaufman 1988, we consider it important also to remind readers, in closing, that the Balkans offer numerous instances in which structure and/or grammar have clearly made their way from one grammatical system into another. The preceding chapters are filled with relevant cases, but we mention here several particularly strong ones, one of which was already explicitly observed by Leake 1814: 380, others subsequently, but some of which have not received attention in general handbooks:

a. prepositional marking of direct objects (see §6.1.1.1.2)
b. double ethical datives (see §6.1.1.2.5)
c. definite article enclisis (see §6.1.2.2.1)
d. double determination (see §6.1.2.3)
e. impersonals of internal disposition (see §7.8.2.2.5.1)
f. narrative imperatives (see §7.8.2.2.8).
g. the development of evidentials (see §6.2.5)
h. the expansion of 'have' and 'want' as auxiliaries (see §6.2.3 and §6.2.4)
i. the replacement of infinitives with analytic subjunctives (see §7.7.2.1.5)

Here we must say explicitly that for us it is immaterial whether one calls such cases borrowing or imposition or transfer or copying or whatever; that is, the exact mechanism involved seems to us to be of lesser importance – what matters is that some feature or construct that was not a part of one language system ("A") at one stage of its development but is a part of another language system ("B") makes its way into A and becomes part of A. That, after all, is the essence of change through language contact, and in a very real sense, consequently, that is what the study of the Balkans is all about.

[1] In a small way, we hope too that our graphological nativization of *sprachbund*, i.e., with a lower-case initial letter and a plural in *-s*, also finds general acceptance.

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