

## A SURVEY OF THE LINGUISTIC PECULIARITIES OF THE ČAKAVIAN DIALECT AS SPOKEN ON THE ISLAND OF BRAČ

### Summary

The present paper gives a general survey of the characteristics of the čakavian dialect as spoken on the island of Brač, together with some specific information on how texts in that dialect are to be read and understood. The author believes that genuine dialectal material exists on the island, but that the collectors of folkloristic material have failed to find evidence of it because of their concentration upon informants whose knowledge of folk art was better than their knowledge of the genuine Brač dialect. This is not to say, however, that the language of the recorded texts is artificial or invented; it is just one of the many possible codes that an inhabitant of Brač uses today — particularly when talking to strangers outside his native region.

The čakavian dialect of Brač has more vowels and fewer consonants than the standard Croatian language. In Brač, on the periphery of Slavic languages, the čakavian dialect has been exposed to a powerful Romance influence, which is felt particularly in the diphthongs, in the closing of vowels, and in the simplification of »hard« consonantal clusters. The stress pattern is very old: it consists of three accents ( *ː ˘ ˗* ) which

form a very stable system and represent the most distinctive trait of the dialect.

Morphologically, the dialect is under a strong influence of standard Croatian, and all case-forms in nouns (with the exception of the genitive plural of all nouns and the dative, locative and instrumental plural of feminine nouns) are the same as those in the standard language. Among the verb forms, the Imperfect is missing and the Aorist is very rarely used.

In the lexical sphere, words from Romance languages abound — both ancient Dalmatian and more recent Venetian — while Romance influences in syntax are seen in the *za* + infinitive construction (*za krepāt*) and in the fusing of the locative and instrumental cases of all nouns with the accusative to denote local meanings (*bī san u Mākārsku, stō san pril kūcu i glēdo dimnje na poništru*).

The vocabulary lists some less well-known words from the texts. These are given with their dictionary meanings and the meanings that they have in particular contexts.

(Translated by Vladimir Ivir)