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Štokavian Influences on the Čakavian Local Speech of Primošten Burnji

The local speech of the area north of the town of Trogir and south of Šibenik pertains to the South Čakavian Ikavian dialect, which means that is a Čakavian dialect in which the Proto-Slavic phoneme *yat* is reflected as the phoneme /i/.

Some of these dialects are under a pronounced Štokavian influence.

The influences are especially noticeable on the phonological level (accentuation, vowels, and consonants), as well as on the morphological and lexical levels.

In the 10th century, in his work entitled *De administrando imperio*, in a list of Mediaeval Croatian counties, the Byzantine emperor Constantine Porphyrogenet mentions Primorska (Coastal) County, extending across this area, from the mouth of the River Krka to the River Cetina.

The examples selected for the purpose of illustrating this lecture are primarily based upon the local speech of Primošten Burnji.

Primošten Burnji consists of several small villages, the oldest one being *Prhovo*.

In 1298 Prhovo had a population of 376, and the oldest church in the village dates from the 13th century.

Until the 15th century, during the period when the Croatian dialects were being formed, this area was characterised by the spoken variety today referred to as the South Čakavian Ikavian dialect.

Many of the Čakavian features listed below can still be heard in the aforementioned local speeches, including the local speech of Primošten Burnji:

- the first systematic Čakavian metatony of the old three-accent system which had not affected the final closed syllables of the initial forms of nouns pertaining to the a-declension and the central syllables of the present tense verb forms
- a reflex of the Proto-Slavic front nasal
- the absence of the phoneme *dž*
- the reflex of the primary and secondary Proto-Slavic group **dj*
- changes of various consonant clusters, e.g. *čk > šk; kt > ht; ts > s*
- the interrogative-relative pronoun *ča*
- present tense verb forms typical of the South Čakavian Ikavian dialect
- the gender of the noun *doba* grammatically is feminine
- a part of the lexis.

Some linguistic features are common to the Čakavian and archaic Štokavian speeches that were spoken until the 16th and 17th centuries along the Croatian coast, from the mouth of the River Cetina southwards, as well as parts of west and north Herzegovina and Central Bosnia:

- the *šćakavian* reflex of the Proto-Slavic consonant clusters **skj* i **stj*
- the verb *iti* with various prefixal derivatives
- rotacism in the present forms of the verb *moći*
- the sequence *re* in words such as *kresti, resti*
- the genitive form *česa*
- old plural case endings
- numerous lexemes and their meanings.

However, all the dialects of the area, including the local speech of Primošten Burnji, are characterised today by a strong Štokavian influence, as listed below:

- phonological level (accentuation, vowels, consonants),
- morphological level (primarily pronominal conjunctions and declension forms),
- lexical level.

However, it may be necessary to point out that not all Štokavian influences on this dialect are equally old.

The first stage of the partial Štokavisation of these dialects began from 1390, when the area of Primošten Burnji came to be populated by the settlers from Livno, Duvno, Rama, and Hum. This influence resulted in the following:

- the vowel /u/ as a reflex of the Proto-Slavic prefix of the preposition *vъ* (i.e. *v* + *semivowel*) in particular examples
- the phoneme *ć*
- at least a part of the examples in which the phoneme *h* is not articulated
- compounds containing the pronoun *što*
- a part of the lexis.

The second stage of Štokavisation can be said to have commenced in the 16th and 17th centuries, when the hinterland was inhabited by a Štokavian-speaking population, which even at that time had partially, and later completely, adopted neo-Štokavian characteristics. It is due to their influence that the following phenomena may be observed in the local speech of Primošten Burnji:

- the neo-Štokavian rising accent
- the shift of stress to the proclitic
- new examples of the reflex of *v* + semivowel > *u*
- systematic vocalisation *l* > *a* at the syllable end
- characteristic vowel contraction

- some examples with the initial *cr-*
- at least part of the cases in which the phoneme *h* is not articulated
- examples of changes, such as *hv > v*
- the new iotation
- infinitives with analogical iotations due to the influence of present-tense realisations
- the sequence *-ni-* in verbs of type II
- neo-Štokavian plural case endings
- neo-Štokavian endings following the palatal bases
- new-Štokavian nominatives, e.g. *ćer* and *mater*
- examples of dative forms in the function of possessive pronouns and adjectives
- some fixed syntagms
- new lexis and new meanings.

Since the mid-1900s the local speech of Primošten Burnji has also come under the influence of the standard Croatian, which is based on the neo-Štokavian dialect.

The following phenomena have been observed since the mid-twentieth century:

- lexemes exclusively containing the ijekavian reflex of *yat*
- dative and locative forms in which sibilisation has been thoroughly implemented
- a part of lexis, mainly the items pertaining to the administrative and political registers.