

## The Auxiliary Verbs in the Latin and Albanian Text of Kuvendi i Arbënit

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Doi:10.5901/mjss.2013.v4n2p601

### Abstract

The text of *Kuvendi i Arbënit* (Assembly of Arbën) is one of the most important text in the history of written Albanian language. It contains the Acts of *Kuvendi i Arbënit*, gathered by the order of Pope Clement XI, in 14 -15 january 1703. This text published in 1706, first in latin and then in Albanian, is an important source to elucidate most adequately the evolution of Albanian language in the beginning of XVIII century. Through this kind of text we may study Albanian common features in its grammatical structures. In fact it is not only a religious text, but also a text in which we can make several linguistic observations. Since our text is a translation from latin, it would be interesting to see how the auxiliary verbs of Latin are translated in Albanian. The author aims to point out the differences and similarities between Albanian modal verbs and Latin *verba servilia*, considering the important fact that both are indoeuropean languages.

**Key words:** linguistic observations, auxiliary verb, dialect, infinitive, subjunctive.

The text of *Kuvendi i Arbënit* (Assembly of Arbën) is one of the most important text in the history of written Albanian language. It contains the Acts of *Kuvendi i Arbënit*, assembled by the order of Pope Clement XI, in 14 -15 january 1703. The main assembly aim was to analyze the Catholic Church situation in the territory of Albania, construction of the churches in ruin and the strengthening of propaganda. Due to the spread of Islam the Catholicism in Albania was disappearing. That is why the acts and the decisions of this assembly were considered extremely important. We may know these decisions through the acts of the assembly, published in 1706, first in latin and then in Albanian, authorized and allowed to be published by the saint Congregation of Propaganda Fide in Rome.

Actually it is not only a religious text, but also a text in which we can make several linguistic observations. Through this kind of text we may study Albanian common features in its grammatical structures. It stands beside other old text written in Albanian becoming an important source to elucidate most adequately the evolution of Albanian language in the beginning of XVIII century.

In this study the author aims to point out the differences and similarities between modal verbs of Latin (*verba servilia*) and Albanian language, their features and uses in respective languages.

Most of the verbs which denominate actions are used in sentences with their own full meaning. But do exist also verbs which sometimes are used as full meaning verbs and other times are considered as grammatical means turning into auxiliary verbs. In many languages, romance languages or not, auxiliary verbs are considered those verbs which participate in the construction of analytic forms of the verb. The verbs *to have* and *to be* are called auxiliary when forming tenses including participle of the main verb<sup>1</sup>.

In Latin auxiliary verb (*verbum servile*) is considered only the verb to be when followed by the participle, participating in the formation of *perfectum*, *plusquam perfectum* and *futurum secundum*, in passive voice.<sup>2</sup>

The verb *habēre* – *to have*, in latin is a full verb with its own meaning and is not used as an auxiliary verb at *perfectum*, *plusquamperfectum* and *futurum anteriore*, at least not in classic latin, the language of Cicero, Cesar etc.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare the construction in Romance Languages, for example in italian *ho scritto, avevo scritto, avro scritto* etc ; in french *j'ai écrit, j'avais chanté*. The auxiliary verbs are noticed also in english, german, respectively *I have worked, I had worked, Ich habe gefreut*. For romance languages is accepted that this construction is related directly to late latin model *habeo scriptum*. Based on this kind of perfect in latin of Balcans is formed also the perfect in Albanian.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the verbal forms of indicative *laudatus, a, um sum, auditus, a, um eram, laudatus, a, um ero* etc., in subjunctive *scriptus, a, um sim, auditus, a, um essem*.

<sup>3</sup> To be mentioned the synthetic construction in active voice: *scripsi, dixeram, dixero, monuero, delevissem* etc.

In Albanian too, according to the functions they have in a sentence, the verbs are divided in auxiliary verbs and semi auxiliary verbs. In Albanian the auxiliary verbs are the verbs: *kam* –to have and *jam* –to be.

The semi auxiliary verbs which present a particular interest are these modal verbs:

- *mund* – *can*, which in standard Albanian is followed by a verb in subjunctive;
- *duhet* – *must*, followed by the participle of the verb or a verb in subjunctive.
- *do* + participle of the main verb;
- *kam* and *jam* followed by the infinitive *për të bërë*<sup>4</sup>.

These verbs lose their independence as verbs with lexical meaning and in order to complete their meaning are followed by another verb which plays the main role.

In latin language the respective verb of semi auxiliary in Albanian *mund* and *duhet* are *posse* and *debēre*. These do not have only one form as it happens in Albanian<sup>5</sup>.

They cannot stand alone and are known as *verba servilia/ auxiliary verbs* whose meaning is completed only followed by infinitive of the main verb. All these cases can be noticed in the examples below. In latin these verbs are always followed by infinitive, whereas in standard Albanian they are followed by verbs in subjunctive.

In the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit, all these verbs mostly, are not followed by the subjunctive. This is quite normal because our text, is written in gegë dialect, exactly in this text are reflected features of west-north gegë dialect.

In the examples we will notice that after the auxiliary verbs there is always the infinitive *me ba*, exclusively used in gegë dialect. This kind of infinitive is used with the same characteristic functions of indoeuropean language, including the infinitive of latin. The auxiliary verbs have their importance and are used quite often in sentences. In the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit many examples are found.

*nec ullo modo fingi possit* (f. 34)  
*duhetmeu scitune, ndo me rrejtune* (f. 25)

*An Infans datus a Turcis, ut baptizetur.....possit ficte baptizari?* (f. 34)  
*A mundet meu paghezuem Famuli i Turchiet vece per pune chi mos te chielbet ....* (f. 25)

*possunt tamen, et debeant ea, quae pacis sunt, procurare* (f. 72)  
*po mundene, ende i perket, me luftuem per ato cacsia* (f. 69)

*In christi fidelibus nihil non sanctum, ac religiosum, veraeque Fidei protestativum tollerare debent* (f. 21)  
*S'duhet me duruem nder te Feescimit te Cristit ndogni scegn, chi mos te jete secundrese asct feja jone* (f. 8)

*Sed aperta Fidei confessione, instante quoque vitae periculo, respondere debet* (f. 21)  
*Po i duhet celscim me refyem Feene e vete, ende se te jete per te i vot cryet..* (f. 9)

On the other hand in our text there are also examples when the semiauxiliary verbs are followed, according to us, by the subjunctive, even though the typical particle of albanian subjunctive *të* is noticed nowhere. The use of subjunctive after these verbs is something new in syntactic structure of Albanian. This construction is encountered also in the gegw dialect, mentioning the fact that it is attested in Meshari (1555), the first book in the history of written Albanian.

According to Mansaku<sup>6</sup>, « in about 43 constructions with the modal verb,duhet, Buzuku has used the infinitive 32 times, 11 times the subjunctive and only once the past participle».<sup>7</sup>

In the books of XVI-XVII century, written in gegë dialect, after the modal verbs *duhet* and *mund* is always found the infinitive *me ba*. This is a common feature of all the old texts including the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit, which is influenced especially by Bogdani's *Çeta e Profetëve*. Nevertheless, in these books we have encountered the use of subjunctive, illustrated by the examples below.

<sup>4</sup> To know more about these verbs see *Gramatika e gjuhës shqipe*, Tirana, 1995, p.260.

<sup>5</sup> Although, in Albanian the verb *mund* –can when used at past tenses, is conjugated: for example:*munda të vija, nuk kemi mundur të mbarojmë- I could come, we could not finish ...*

<sup>6</sup> Mansaku *Seit, Ndërtimet me foljet modale mund dhe duhet*, Studime filologjike, 1979 /3

<sup>7</sup> E këqymni mos trembni; Përse duhetë gjithë këto kafshë të jenë, por nuk anshtë hera. “ Videte ne turbemini; oportet enim haec fieri, sed nondum est finis (Buzuku, 347)

possunt tamen, .....et idoneitatis penuria **agere et contractare**....(f. 72)  
....e et tiera fialla te buta, tue luftuem a mund **mpaccognene** me te mire detyren e haraccit ...(f. 70)

nemo salvus **esse** potest (f. 17)  
as cusc mund **te scelbohet** (f. 4)

An cum sacerdotes coguntur a Turcis, ut baptizent eorum filios, non ut Christianos efficiant, sed pro corporali salute .... (f. 34)  
A **mund scitren** Mescetarete (tue i ngremuem Turit) me pagheuem famijat e tyne, io chi te i bagnene (f. 25)

Sic enim abiectis operibus tenebrarum, induet arma lucis, ut **possit resistere** in die malo... (f. 32)  
Asctu mbas se elarguene prej vetehi vepera terretat, te vviscene armete e se dereitese, kinese **te mund chiendrognene** nde ditte .... (f. 22)

Quia vero in mala tempora incidimus, Sanctissimam Eucharistiam digno honore, publica, et cauta veneratione in Parrochialibus Ecclesiis **conservari nonposse** dolemus (f. 40)  
Pò persè jemi raam nde kohe te kecchie, nadhimbet, se e Scendenuescimeja Eucaristia **smund ruhet** nde Kiscia te Parochiavet.. (f. 32)

The examples above confirm the thesis that in gegë dialect does not exist only the use of these verbs followed by infinitive, but also the use of modal verbs followed by subjunctive, attesting the fact that this is an early phenomenon and a typical syntactic structure of Albanian. This use is noticeable quite often in the Albanian of XVIII century, even though our text has got a strong influence by the original text.

In latin some irregular verbs are considered as auxiliary ones. These verbs are *queo - can, nequeo - can not, soleo - to be accustomed*, and are always followed by the infinitive, to indicate an action as possible or not, depending on the circumstances. In both texts, the albanian and the latin one these verbs are followed by the infinitive. See the following examples.

Quoniam vero in messi multa, Operarii pauci **nequeunt** in omni spirituali exultatione, et abundantia **metere** (f. 25)  
E persè nd'are te maçe Corresit pak **smund cuotene** me gith gazimend te scpirtit, e me berechiet (f. 14)

quo minus sciscitandi iudici publica auctoritate suffulto **facere**, aut ambigue **tergiversari queat** (f. 21)  
Posi te pyes Nierii Sundetaa, sicuur Pascia, Kadiia, o tieteri, ci kaa pusctene, **s'mundet me hesctune, as me nderruem** fiallete (f. 9)

sacrilega postmodum reiteratione, ex ignorantia, ut **fieri solet**, violetur Sacramentum (f. 35)  
mos te Kreemohen per se dyiti per harrimi, ndò per te paa diitun, **si here here banet**, ani biine mcat te Sciacrilegit, tue u Kreemuem perseriju (f. 26)

In latin language to express the necessity of doing an action, is used a special construction. This is called *coniugatio periphrastica passiva*, which is formed by the verb *esse + gerundive* of the main verb. This linguistic construction has been translated with the modal verb *duhet + infinitive*, in order to indicate the necessity or the obligation of an action.

ut sincero cordis obsequio, et devoto obedientiae candore ab omnibus **sit colenda** (f. 34)  
paa lye, e paa ndogn faj, chi githeve i **duhet mei beganissune** me zembre te bardhe e me ndere te devoccimi. (f. 24)

ideo **curandum est**, ut homines in contrahendis Matrimoniis (f. 45)  
prasctu **duhet me sciucuem**, kinese Njerece tue u martuem (f. 38)

*Coniugatio periphrastica passiva* in albanian text is translated with the verb *to be / jam* followed by the infinitive of the type *për të bëjë*. In Albanian the verbs to have and to be can be used to express the obligation of an action. See the following examples:

*Ducunt in malis dies suos, nostra non cupiditate **opprimendi**, sed **charitate sublevandi** (f. 52)*

***Nuk jane pra per t'u sctrenguem, po per t'u ndimuem me te dasciunit** (faqe 46)*

*neque **permittendum est**, ut Turcae, vel Schismatici, Patrini fungantur munere, quod ad solos Fideles (f. 36 -37)*

*As **jane per te laane Turit**, ndo Schismatici me mbaitunecand; perse vece te kersctenevet, chi jane Cattolich i bie per lig (f. 26)*

*maiore cordis dolore **deplorandum est** (f. 40)*

*maa **fort asct per tu chiaam** me giak te εembrese (f. 32)*

*Etenim cum nomen Domini **invocandum sit** in veritate, et in spiritu, ac omnimoda certitudine adorandum (f. 28)*

*Prasctù **tue kiene** Emenit e Tinezot **per tu permendune** me te vertete, e per tu adhoruem me scpirt, e me te vertetunit (f. 18)*

The text of Kuvendi i Arbënit, an important text of the beginning of XVII has a special place in the history of written albanian language. In this text common linguistic features with the texts of XVI-XVII century can be observed, but on the other hand in it there are new structures which belong to today's Albanian. In this study the author pointed out the similarities and dissimilarities of modal verbs in Latin and in Albanian, as two indoeuropean languages. These linguistic observations and others that can be made in different levels of language, attest a stable Albanian, attributing to the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit important linguistic values.

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