

ALBANIAN STUDIES IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Speakers

Opening remarks: Associate Professor Ramona Gonczol, convener of PROLang Group (UCL SSEES)

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Session 1: TEACHING ALBANIAN ABROAD

Dr Mirela Xhaferraj has been teaching Albanian at UCL SSEES since 2017. She obtained her PhD degree in 2012 with a comparative study of the verbal systems of Greek and Albanian from the University of Tirana, Albania, where she worked as a Lecturer of Greek Language in the Faculty of Foreign Languages until 2016. Her research interests are focused on Albanian and Greek language, literature, and culture. She has authored several articles in scientific journals and has presented at various scientific conferences on the Greek and Albanian languages. Additionally, she is a published literary translator from Greek to Albanian.

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Lecturer Ledio Hala, an LMU Munich graduate in Albanology, he delves into language policies in totalitarian Albania. His recent monograph, "Censorship of Translated Literature in Totalitarian Albania: The Case of Robinson Crusoe" (2023), offers nuanced insights into censorship dynamics. Currently pursuing a doctorate at LMU Munich, Ledio is also a lecturer for Albanian at the University of Regensburg, emphasizing his commitment to advancing teaching methods for Albanian as a heritage language.

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Associate Professor Linda Mëniku is professor of linguistics at University of Tirana in Albania. She teaches in the Department of Linguistics, where she specializes in discourse analysis, text linguistics, Albanian as a foreign language, and media discourse. Linda has been teaching Albanian courses at Arizona State University, CLI, since 2003. She is the author of *The Gheg Reader*, published by Dunwoody Press, *Discovering Albanian*, published by University of Wisconsin Press and *Advancing in Albanian*, published by Slavica, Indiana University Press.

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Dr Jin Qiao, lecturer at the School of European Languages and Cultures, Beijing Foreign Studies University, researcher at the Albanian Studies Center and Balkan Studies Center, BFSU. Jin has been involved in the teaching of Albanian language for a long time, as well as doing extensive research on Western Balkan area studies and religious history of Albania. Jin participated in the compilation of dictionaries, published the monograph "Research on

Albanian Culture and Education"2021 (co-author); "Multi-lingual Proverbs of Central and Eastern Europe" 2018 (responsible for the Albanian section) ; Co-translated "My Life" (Ramiz Alia), 2016; published also several papers such as A probe into Albanian religious tolerance, 2019; Krahasim në rrafshin kulturo-shoqëror rreth tolerancës fetare të shqiptarëve dhe kinezëve, 2017; Albanians and bektashism, 2013.

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Associate Professor Flora Koleci graduated in Albanian Language and Literature at the University of Tirana (Albania) with a thesis in Linguistics. She also has a second Degree in Law (University of Shkodra, Albania). She obtained her PhD at the University of Calabria with a thesis in Generative Linguistics, entitled "Analysis of the relative sentences of the Albanian language from the generative point of view". From 2003-2007 and from 2010-2019 she was Researcher and Lecturer of Syntax at the University of Tirana, in between which (2007-2010) she was a Lecturer in Albanian at the University of Calabria. Between 2020-2023 she was a Researcher in Albanian at the University of Salento, Italy. She is the author of a manual of Albanian language syntax and a monograph; co-author of a handbook of Albanian language didactics for foreigners, as well as various articles in national and international journals.

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Dr. habil Lumnije Jusufi, an accomplished scholar in Albanian Studies, boasts an extensive academic journey. Currently holding a Lehrbefugnis in Southeast European Studies with a focus on Albanian Studies at Humboldt University, she completed her German habilitation at HU Berlin with a comprehensive study on Albanian borders in Dibra. Her Italian habilitation, spanning from 2018 to 2024, showcases her commitment to diverse research. With a rich history of postdocs, including projects on historical migrations and language of Dibra's masons, Lumnije's expertise extends to the intersection of linguistics and culture. Her impactful contributions include numerous publications, successful grant acquisitions, and pivotal roles in conferences and projects, affirming her status as a prominent figure in the field.

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Professor Aljula Jubani, Director of the Institute for European Studies at the University of Tirana, has been a linguistics professor for 24 years. Specializing in phonetics, phonology, and experimental phonetics, she earned her PhD in 2006 with the first acoustic study of Standard Albanian. Prof. Jubani's research extends to linguistics, gender studies, political linguistics, and cultural heritage. With a rich academic background, she has held key roles such as Head of the Department of Linguistics and Vice Dean at the University of Tirana. Recognized for her contributions, she received the "Pro Ecclesia and Pontefice" medal from Pope Francis in 2021.

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Professor Bardh Rugova obtained his doctorate from the University of Pristina in 2006. Since 1999, he has been a faculty member at the University, currently serving as a Professor and also heading the Department of Linguistics. Rugova is also the director of the International Seminar for Albanian Language, Literature, and Culture and is a member of the Academy of Sciences

of Kosovo. His research focuses on text grammar, discourse analysis, and Albanian phonology, with significant contributions to academic publications.

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Dr Maria Morozova, Albanologist, PhD (candidate of philological sciences) in Comparative, Typological and Contrastive Linguistics from the Institute for Linguistic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (2013). Senior research fellow at aforementioned institute (2013-present) and teaches Albanian Studies at the Department of General Linguistics in the Philological Faculty, St. Petersburg State University (2016-present). Active in the development of the Albanian National Corpus (2012-present, see <http://albanian.web-corpora.net/>). Research interests include language contact and bilingualism in Balkan speech communities, dialectology and quantitative studies of the Balkan languages, and corpus studies of Albanian grammar.

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Professor Alexander Rusakov, Albanologist, candidate of philological sciences (PhD, USSR, 1985), Doctor of philological sciences (Russia, 2005), principal researcher at the Institute for Linguistic Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg (since 1985), Professor in Albanian Studies and General linguistics (since 2006) at the St. Petersburg State University, Philological Faculty. Researcher at the Center for Albanological and Encyclopedic Publications, Albanian Academy of Sciences (since 2022).

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Session 2: ALBANIAN STUDIES ABROAD

Professor Eda Derhemi, after teaching for five years at the University of Tirana and living and working for another five in Italy, Professor Derhemi completed her graduate studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign earning a Master's in Linguistics and a Ph.D. in Communications. Her extensive career includes two postdoc studies funded by IREX (in Kosovo) and Fulbright (in Albania), and an internship at UNESCO focusing on indigenous languages and cultures. Today she is a professor at the University of Illinois where she has taught several courses in communications and linguistics. Endangered languages and the state of linguistic minorities in Europe (principally in the Mediterranean area) have been the focus of her teaching and research for the last decade. In her most recent co-edited book, "Endangered Languages in the 21st century" (Routledge, 2023), she theoretically analyses phenomena that occur as languages die.

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Associate Professor Enkeleida Kapia, affiliated with the Academy of Albanian Studies in Tirana and the Institute for Phonetics and Speech Processing at Ludwig-Maximilian University of Munich, specializes in speech processing and psycholinguistics. Her research explores linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of acquisition, variation, and change at the syntax-phonetics/phonology-pragmatics interface in both monolingual and multilingual Albanian-

speaking adults and children. She has published several books and articles on these issues. Recently, she was an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow and won a German National Science Foundation grant to continue her research.

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Professor Ardian Marashi, born in Albania, graduated from the Faculty of History and Philology of the University of Tirana, where he obtained his Albanian doctorate in 1997, followed in 2002 by the French one in modern letters from the University of Rennes 2. In 1997 he obtained a position as lecturer at the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations in Paris, where he has been heading the Albanian studies section since 2006. He is the founder and first director (2008-2016) of the National Research Centre for Albanian Studies in Tirana, bringing together the Albanological institutes of the Albanian Academy of Sciences. His centre of interest is transversal research in Albanian studies, linking the literary, historical, linguistic and anthropological fields. Author of school textbooks, of a French-Albanian-French dictionary and numerous works and research articles, he is also a bilingual literary translator, from and into French.

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Dr Orkida Backus Borshi is a scholar specializing in the synchronic structure of Albanian. Her expertise encompasses contemporary Albanian in contrast and comparison with other languages, especially English and French. Holding a PhD in English Linguistics, her dissertation focused on the formal expression of definiteness in Albanian compared to English. She has been an expert assistant and coordinator for Albanian language and studies at Charles University in Prague since 2009. Orkida has contributed to various grants, research projects, and publications, including works on Albanian-Czech relations and the revival of Albanian studies at Charles University. She has also translated into Czech, works of two Albanian writers, Ismail Kadare and Ag Apolloni.

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Professor Emine Teichmann, graduated with distinction from the University of Tirana in 1969. After a two-year journalism course, she became an editor at "Zëri i rinisë" in Tirana, championing literary liberalization. Following critique in 1974, she moved to Elbasan. In 1980, Emine commenced her academic career at the "A. Xhuvani" University. From 1992 to 1996, she pursued language courses and collaborative research in Germany, culminating in her doctoral degree in 1994. Remaining in Germany, she engaged in diverse academic activities, including lectures, publications, and collaborations. Recognized as a professor in 2012, Emine continues her impactful contributions to linguistics.

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Associate Professor Teuta Toska, graduated in Albanian language and literature from the University "Aleksander Xhuvani" in 1997. In 2008, she earned a Master's in General Linguistics and later a Ph.D. from the University of Tirana. Awarded associate professorship in 2017, she lectures at the University of Elbasan, holding roles such as deputy dean and current

head of the linguistics department. Specializing in lexicology, ethnolinguistics, and 19th-century Albanian philology, Teuta is a Committee member of the Institute for Albanian and Protestant Studies. An accomplished author, she contributes to works on the history of Albanian Protestantism and serves on the Bibla Pro project's editorial board for the Albanian Bible translation.

In 2022, Professor Toska was honored with the prestigious national Alex Buda award by the Academy of Sciences of Albania in recognition of her outstanding work, "Parashqevi Qiriazi and her Year 1919."

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Associate Professor Blertë Ismajli is a lecturer in German language and German as foreign language at the Department of German Studies at the University of Prishtina. She received her PhD from the Institute of German Studies at the University of Vienna (OeAD scholarship). Research fields: Contrastive morpho-syntax with a focus on verb modes as a grammatical category and modality as a semantic category, translation of linguistic means for expressing modality, acquisition of these linguistic means in German as a Foreign Language, status of German language in Kosovo. She is author of numerous articles, monograph, and organizer of several conferences, summer schools, readings, exhibitions of German speaking authors in Kosovo. She has several Erasmus+ stays at universities in Germany, Czech Republic, Italy, as well as research stays at the Institute of German Studies, University of Vienna.

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Dr Michiel de Vaan teaches Historical Linguistics of Latin, Greek and other Indo-European languages at the universities of Basel and Geneva. Until 2014 he taught at Leiden University in the Netherlands. He is currently leading a research project called 'The Albanian Language in Antiquity', which aims to get a clearer picture of the language contact of Proto-Albanian with Latin and with Greek in Antiquity.

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