

Robert D. Greenberg, *Language and Identity in the Balkans. Serbo-Croatian and its Disintegration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. x + 188 pp. Appendices, index.

A graduate of Yale University, Greenberg has taught Slavonic Studies at Yale, Georgetown and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Like many western Slavists, he was struck on his first visit to Yugoslavia by the intensity of feelings about ethnicity and language, things generally relegated by English speakers to 'all those crazy little people and languages out there', as 'phenomena that are really not fully civilized and that are more trouble than they are worth', as Fishman puts it, in a quotation with which Greenberg opens his book. Greenberg continues: 'Scholars appealing to English-speaking audiences have largely neglected the significance of the disintegration of the Serbo-Croatian unified language in 1991', a gap that Greenberg aims to fill with his book, 'the first comprehensive study devoted to the intersection of language, nationalism and identity politics in the former Yugoslavia'.

After reviewing issues such as language and nationalism, Greenberg presents a comprehensive history of the joint literary language in terms of three 'language unity models': centrally monitored unity, government-imposed unity and pluricentric unity. In the following chapters he discusses in detail each of the four successor languages, Serbian, Montenegrin, Croatian, and Bosnian. His analysis is based on close readings of a large number of contemporary primary sources, including articles by linguists and language politicians as well as instruments of the new codifications, such as dictionaries, especially orthographic dictionaries. Greenberg cites many useful websites, where readers can find much of this material themselves. Greenberg tends, in my view, to overrate the significance of scripts, suggesting on p. 41 that the unity of Serbo-Croatian might have been saved had the different nations been able to agree on the use of one single alphabet.

Strange as it may seem to English speakers, the general perception in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe is that a people without their own language is not really a nation at all. Hence it is hardly surprising that each newly independent state set out to codify its own standard language, and while Croats and Serbs could revive old traditions, Montenegrin and Bosnian (which some Serbs and Croats prefer to

call ‘Bosniac’) still have some way to go. Ironically, the disintegration of Serbo-Croatian was foreshadowed by the Novi Sad agreement of 1954, which, while it aimed to preserve linguistic unity, recognized a western variant, based on Zagreb, and an eastern one, based on Belgrade. This conferred official status on the division and provoked the question of the status of ‘Bosnian’ and ‘Montenegrin’. Greenberg has the objectivity of a non-participant from a distant country. He counters the perception in some quarters that the Croats broke away from the common language. The Serbs broke away from the 1850 ‘Literary Agreement’ and before the 1967 Croatian ‘Declaration on the Name and Position of the Croatian Literary Language’ a Serb, Miloš Moskovljevič, had published a divisive dictionary (quickly banned and pulped).

Greenberg’s account includes many quotations from the debate in Yugoslavia and the successor states, in English translations, with the original text in footnotes. It is very useful to be able to check the original, since some of the English translations are inaccurate, e.g. *ostalijeh je tma* means ‘the remainder are legion’, not ‘darkness’ (p. 42), *srpskohrvatski odnosno hrvatskosrpski* means ‘Serbo-Croatian or Croato-Serbian’, not ‘Serbo-Croatian actually Croato-Serbian’ (p. 56), the *mladoslovnjèarski smjer* is the ‘neo-grammarians school’, not the ‘young linguistic movement’ (p. 114), and *pretenzija* means ‘claim’, not ‘pretentiousness’ (p. 142).

The undifferentiated use of the term *dialect* is confusing. In the American tradition, Greenberg uses it to refer both to territorial and standard varieties, but how are we to understand the heading: ‘The battle between the ekavian and ijekavian dialects’? And in this connection it is hard to see why works on dialectology should be seen as instruments of codification (p. 57). It is strange that Greenberg refers to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, rather than a sociolinguistic source, to explicate terms such as *variant*, *idiom* and *expression* (p. 39).

The subtitle is more accurate than the main title. Greenberg does occasionally mention Macedonians, Albanians and others, but his book centres on ‘Serbo-Croatian’. It is not true (p. 53 footnote) that standard Macedonian now prefers *filosofija* to *filozofija*, while Croatian *filozofija* reflects German influence, not any supposed phonetic rendering of the original Greek (quite the opposite, in fact). A couple of Greenberg’s stylistic quirks grate, such as *hearken back* and *elaborate upon*.

Greenberg has certainly proved ‘the paramount importance of language in creating some of Europe’s newest states’ (p. 159). His book is a mine of information and analysis and will be the standard work for some time to come.

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Stephen Gregory (ed.), *The Wall and After: Australasian Perspectives on Europe*, Southern Highlands Publishers, Berrima, 2002, 138 pp.

Once past the expectation that a book entitled *The Wall and After* would focus on the political and economic developments within Europe following the 1989 collapse of the Berlin Wall, a multifaceted examination of how the European ideal was cultivated throughout the twentieth century can be appreciated. Spanning slightly more than the century, from 1896 forward to the present, this book addresses diverse issues ranging from political legitimacy, the impact of leadership and party formation, to the formulation of EU-specific social policies and the role of the media and literature, respectively, in the context of contemporary European politics.

In his introductory remarks, the editor, Stephen Gregory contends that this anthology reflects the ‘enormous complexity of which the erection and continued existence of the Wall . . . represented for Europe’, both East and West, throughout the Cold War (p. v). Gregory further argues, however, that while the most prominent symbol of divided Europe may have been demolished, other social and psychological boundaries have subsequently emerged across the continent, in direct response to the further integration of the European Union. In an effort to reflect this, *The Wall and After* could easily be sub-divided into generalised sections, with the first focussing on pre-1989 developments, and the second on the events leading to, but more importantly following the negotiation and ratification of Maastricht.

The first two articles, offered by Bruce Kent and Pierre Dapriani, accordingly address the economic and political components of the reconstruction of Europe following World War II. Kent firstly challenges