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ROBERT D. GREENBERG, *Language and identity in the Balkans: Serbo-Croatian and its disintegration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. Pp. x, 188.

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This book is an important contribution to the field of Serbo-Croatian and Balkan studies, as well as to general sociolinguistics. In a world that is reconfiguring its identities quite drastically, Greenberg targets one of the most complex, sensitive, and politically charged areas, that of the former Yugoslavia. The whole book attends closely to the unfolding drama of a people whose linguistic fate has followed various controversial attempts to keep the Serbo-Croatian language united, ultimately leading to its disintegration and the emergence of the languages of the relatively recently established new national entities. These are the outcome of the breakup of Yugoslavia: Serbia-Montenegro, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina (not to mention the predominantly non-Slavic-speaking ethno-geographical units).

In his analysis, Greenberg combines a detailed examination of the Serbo-Croatian data, in which he is very well versed, with an infusion of major sociolinguistic theories, particularly those that are related to issues of language planning and models for unified languages. He proceeds by mapping the Serbo-Croatian material and the controversies surrounding the issue of one united language vs.

many separate languages onto three basic “language unity models” in language planning. These are “centrally monitored unity,” in which a language academy or other state-sponsored institutions bear responsibility for language planning; “government-imposed unity,” which characterizes primarily totalitarian systems; and “pluricentric unity,” in which more than one cultural center could lay claim to promoting a vernacular literature and language.

No attempt at unification has been immune to the opposite forces of disintegration of the Serbo-Croatian language. Even the term “Serbo-Croatian” that this reviewer and the author use (when appropriate) sounds like an ironic, oblique reference to the struggles carried out by the former Yugoslavia’s ethnic nationalities to keep their languages and literary traditions separate. Two major events, textualized as the Vienna Literary Agreement (1850) and the Novi Sad Agreement (1954), the bodies of which are given by the author as Appendix A and Appendix B, stand as witnesses to unification efforts, but with the seeds of various controversies already included between the lines of the Agreements’ texts. And it has not been only a question of language in its spoken form. Issues concerning alphabets (Cyrillic and Latin), spelling rules, and pronunciations have been laid on the table of the controversies and tough negotiations.

In the book’s chapters, the author shifts attention from the Introduction to Serbo-Croatian, to Serbian, to Montenegrin, to Croatian, and finally to Bosnian. In the Conclusion, a critical skepticism is expressed as to the possibility of a future ethnic reconciliation that could lead to language convergence. The Central South Slavic territory has been divided into three main dialects whose names are derived from the forms of the interrogative pronoun ‘what’: *kaj* in Kajkavian, *ča* in Čakavian, and *što/šta* in Štokavian. The Kajkavian and Čakavian dialects are spoken exclusively by Croats, whereas the various Štokavian subdialects do not sort out neatly so as to correspond to ethnolinguistic entities in an uncontroversial manner.

Major reformers in the diachronic process of the solidification of and cleavages over literary language traditions were the Serb Vuk Karadžić (generally known as Vuk) and the Croat Ljudevit Gaj in the 19th century. Gaj was associated with the formation of Croatian national identity and led the so-called Illyrian Movement. Vuk was a firm believer that the Serbian language should be based on the vernacular, a point on which planning efforts and linguistic ideologies have differed substantially between the Serbs and the Croats, the latter leaning more toward purification. In the long and complex history of the Tito and post-Tito Central South Slavic linguistic landscape, language manuals, grammars, handbooks, and other tools of linguistic planning and engineering have made their appearance, and academic bodies have heatedly debated the issues.

In the case of the Serbian language and in the context of questions concerning alphabets, pronunciations, and competing variants, three main factions have emerged in linguistic circles. These are the “status-quo” linguists, who firmly believe in the natural evolution of Serbian from the former eastern variant of the

common language; the “neo-Vukovite” scholars, advocating a return to the principles of the 19th-century Serbian language reformers; and the “Orthodox” linguists, who promote an ideology of extreme nationalism based on the premises of an Orthodox Serbian language, orthography, and culture. Such controversies led to orthographic chaos in the early to mid-1990s, and to battles between the Ekavian and Ijekavian variants of the Štokavian major dialect branch. It is interesting that even within the ethnolinguistic unit of the Serbian area (and this also holds true for the other groups) a deeper dialectic runs, in the sense that each ethno-national entity is almost always on the alert for potential hegemonic moves and attitudes on the part of the others.

In the case of Montenegro – which was, when this book was written, part of what was left of the former Yugoslavian state – Nikčević and his followers have tried to construct an authentic Montenegrin identity on the basis of Njegos’s (a prominent intellectual and public figure) epic poetry. (As of the writing of this review, the majority of Montenegro’s citizens had voted for its independence from the coalition with Serbia.) Here too tension shows up between the pro-Serbian neo-Vukovites and a pro-Montenegrin group that follows a nationalist constructionist agenda. In addition to planning interventions related to new letters and pronunciations, Nikčević has attempted to reintroduce archaic morphological endings that reflect practices characteristic of the Northwestern Montenegrin Neo-Štokavian/Ijekavian dialect forms. This constitutes a case of ideological erasure par excellence (Gal & Irvine 1995), since it focuses selectively on certain features in an attempt to construct a language and a literary tradition in the service of national independence.

In Croatia, the emergence of the new Croatian language has fought its way through oblique glances toward the threat of perceived Serbian hegemony and the shadow of a Croatian past infested with suspicions of Nazi collaboration. The new Croatian language, however, should overcome such obstacles and embark upon planning efforts that have been instrumental in solidifying a literary standard. In the case of Croat, elements of the Čakavian and Kajkavian dialects, particularly their lexical stock, have continued to be an important factor in shaping the emerging identity of the standard language and literary tradition. Prescriptivist and descriptivist tendencies in orthographic controversies have been in a tense relationship. Nevertheless, infusing the new standard with native Croatian forms has been a cornerstone of the new language and identity.

Bosnian has been a no less complex case. Controversies over the name, “Bosniak” or “Bosnian,” (not unknown to the peoples of former Yugoslavia) have not left the Serbs and Croats residing in the Bosnia-Herzegovina territory indifferent. These groups have strongly opposed the decision of Bosniaks to call their language “Bosnian” (the two terms having different etymological histories). The three ethnic groups in the entity, Orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croats, and Muslim Bosniaks, are hard pressed to reach agreement on this issue and language matters more generally. The Symposium on the Bosnian Language, which took place

in September 1998 in Bihać, brought together various points of view and raised consciousness about the Bosnian language. Several prescriptivists claimed that features such as the phoneme /h/ and a Bosniak-specific vocabulary should be considered indispensable elements of the Bosnian language.

In this book, Greenberg describes and interprets in a masterful manner the sociolinguistic drama of the people of the Central South Slavic territory, focusing attention on what Hymes 1974 long ago described as the tension between intelligibility among various languages, dialects, and varieties on purely linguistic grounds, on the one hand, and socio-ideological factors constraining this intelligibility, on the other. Since Greenberg's focus is on identity, one would have wished to see in the book also some discussion of ethnolinguistic identity as negotiated at the micro level of daily interactions among people in the street. That is, a complete dialectic should be able to show the nuances of both the micro and the macro levels. Such an approach is badly needed in the field of Balkan studies, in which major, turbulent sociohistorical events should not be allowed to obscure the interactional actualities that are shaping and being shaped by identities. Nevertheless, this work constitutes a very significant and valuable contribution to Balkan studies, general and macro sociolinguistics, and language planning and policy studies, as well as political thinking.

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LEONIE CORNIPS AND KAREN P. CORRIGAN (eds.), *Syntax and variation: Reconciling the biological and the social*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2005. Pp. vi, 312. Hb \$144.00.

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Cornips & Corrigan's *Syntax and variation: Reconciling the biological and the social* presupposes that we have a biological and a social dimension to linguistics, that the biological dimension is represented by generative syntax, and that the two dimensions require reconciliation. Cornips & Corrigan (C&C) consider this reconciliation possibly to be "the initial phase in the creation of a mature scientific community" (p. 2). These presuppositions should be ques-

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