

REVIEWS

Marko Jesenšek. *The Slovene Language in the Alpine and Pannonian Language Area. The History of the Slovene Language.* Translated by Heather Pirjevec; proofread by Brian Halliday. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych UNIVERSITAS, 2005. 365 pp., 36.60 zł. [= \$11.58] (paper). ISBN: 8324205772.

In the last decade or so, to the extent that the outside world has concerned itself with the complex histories and fates of the Slavic languages in the aftermath of the crumbling Ottoman and Habsburg Empires, the majority of attention has gone to the language-formerly-known-as-Serbo-Croatian, the product of a more than century-and-a-half-long effort to create a unified language among highly variegated speech territories and widely differing societies. In that project, language became employed as a proxy for highlighting national differences, in contrast with the post-Enlightenment interest in unifying language to serve the ideal of equality of citizenship in the framework of the nation-state. So, today, we count three languages—Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian—with the possibility of an emergent fourth, Montenegrin. No less linguistically variegated, and, arguably, more so, were the speech territories that came to be known as Slovene. It was no more obvious from the perspective of, say, 1789—or, for that matter, 1850—that a single standard language and a unified national identity would issue from them. Slovene, however, is in this regard a success story. Jesenšek's book guides us through the tensions and vicissitudes of constructing linguistic

unity from the famously richly differentiated Slovene dialects and their corresponding nascent literary traditions, but in a departure from the typical, the story is told not from the center, but the periphery.

A leading philologist and language planner in Slovenia as well as, by way of disclosure, a respected colleague of the reviewer, Dr. Jesenšek is known both for his scholarly work on the history of the Slovene language as well as his activities on behalf of the present-day Slovene standard language both domestically and in the framework of the European Union; as such he is a significant and highly active figure in the efforts for language maintenance of Slovene. A search of the database of the Co-operative Online Bibliographic System & Services Virtual Library of Slovenia (www.cobiss.si) on the author's name yields upwards of 200 hits. The present volume presents a selection of twenty-four articles—his greatest hits, as it were—that appear for the first time in an English-language version, thus making them accessible to readers who cannot read Slovene. Eleven of the articles fall under the rubric “Prekmurian Standard Language” and the remaining thirteen under “Eastern Styrian Standard Language.” As is clear from these designations, the emphasis on the formation and development of the eastern standard varieties of Slovene gives non-specialist readers a rare glimpse into standards that failed to emerge as national languages. Jesenšek's account affords a look at a kind of Burgess Shale of the history of Slovene standard varieties, giving the reader the opportunity to imagine how things might have evolved had developments taken other paths. On the other side of the coin, the Prekmurian and Eastern Styrian language varieties relate to extant spoken dialects that are connected with local and regional identities as well as distinct geographies, landscapes, and political circumstances that differ both subtly and saliently from the central dialects and cultures that prevailed in the formation of today's national standard language. Jesenšek's book reminds us that even a language with some two million speakers has its Languedoc, its Bavarian, or its Neapolitan. Just as these important dialects have made their contributions to their respective national languages, so, too, have the eastern varieties of Slovene to the central-based Slovene standard. This book gives a clearer and more comprehensive view than previous accounts of the precise contributions that eastern Slovene dialects (Jesenšek's “Pannonian language area”), and their leading intellectuals, made to the formation of a unified national language and, by extension, a singular national identity.

Of special note is Jesenšek's focus on the form, usage, and history of gerunds and participles in *-č* (present active) and *-ši* (past active), which, according to his systematic analysis of the phenomenon, made a comeback in the central standard language in the nineteenth century under the influence of the eastern regional standards.¹ This is an impressive example not only of a periphery influencing a center, but also of a successful return of a linguistic category from marginal to robust status, a topic that gets relatively little attention in historical and typological studies.² Jesenšek charts a path from the Freising Folia, which he connects to Pannonian Church Slavic, to their continued use in the Pannonian Slovene dialects, which had evidenced the dying embers of gerunds and participles as such in the eighteenth century (they lived on primarily as lexicalized adjectives, e.g., *vroč* 'hot' < *vbrěti* 'to boil'), where they were nevertheless more strongly represented than in Carniolan and Carinthian dialects. Though used sparingly by non-Pannonian writers and translators (e.g., Matevž Ravnikar, Fran Metelko, Fran Cegnar), the gerunds and participles were employed fully and systematically in the works of the Pannonian writers Števan and Mikloš Küzmič and Jožef Košič, from whose works the use of the gerunds and participles caught on in the language of important writers from the Slovene center in the second half of the nineteenth century (189–90). In contrast to more "organic" reversals of fortune among linguistic categories in dialect speech, the return of the gerundial and participial forms is a function of their compositional elegance, giving "an impression of a proper and cultured language, since they were not used in dialects" (190). Here I would additionally suggest that writers of the second half of the nineteenth century could not have failed to notice that participial forms were available in the world languages of the day, especially German and Latin, with which they would have been familiar and they no doubt at least subconsciously strove to emulate.

Jesenšek's study of participial forms begs the question of the extent to which continuity can be demonstrated between the language of canonical Church Slavic (referred to in the book under review as Old

¹ For further details see his monographic treatment: Marko Jesenšek, *Deležniki in deležja na -č in -ši. Razširjenost oblik v slovenskem knjižnem jeziku 19. stoletja*. (= Zora 5; Maribor: Slavistično društvo, 1998).

² A notable exception is Laura A. Janda, *Back from the Brink: A Study of How Relic Forms in Languages Serve as Source Material for Analogical Extension* (= *Lincom Studies in Slavic Linguistics* 01; Munich: Lincom, 1996).

Church Slavic and Glagolitic texts) and the language of the Pannonian writers and translators. As one would expect, the chain of events is hard to establish (because there is no continuous extant record of writings) or the evidence is ambiguous. For example, the author claims that "although there is no evidence that [Števan Küzmič] used Old Church Slavic texts additionally to the Greek original, in *Nouvi Zákon* he preserved present active participles and past active participles as they had been used in Old Church Slavic translations of the gospels. Mikloš Küzmič applied that system with the same consistency, and in his *Szvėti evangyliomi* (1780) he almost entirely preserved various possibilities of Old Church Slavic, including the -č and -ši structures" (191–92). Yet one of the most central uses of the participles in canonical Old Church Slavic was to express subordination by means of the "dative absolute" construction,³ a construction that is absent in the works of Š. Küzmič (per Jesenšek 1996: 262). The absence of this construction suggests that it could no longer be parsed by eighteenth-century Pannonian Slavic speakers, such as the Küzmičes, who would therefore have been less likely to revive the construction in creating the standard language. It is equally likely that their models were not so much canonical Old Church Slavic prototypes (and, even less, direct preservations of the Proto-Slavic system) but, rather, contemporary, non-Slavic European ones in addition to the Greek originals from which the Küzmičes evidently worked.⁴

³ See, for example, Henning Andersen, "The Dative of Subordination in Baltic and Slavic," *Baltic Linguistics*, ed. Thomas F. Magner and William R. Schmalstieg (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State UP, 1970) 1–9.

⁴ The question of relatedness among systems of subordination is a fascinating one and a line of inquiry likely to yield advances in our understanding of the dialect differentiation of Proto-Slavic. At about the time of the extant canonical Church Slavic texts (11–12 cc.) there was heavy competition in the formation of complex constructions between subordinate clauses formed by participial phrases (archaic) and complementizers (innovative), the latter veritably exploding with variety over the Slavic-speaking territories. I have commented on this issue in a short study on the rise of the marker -r in creating new complementizers in South Slavic: Marc L. Greenberg, "Multiple Causation in the Spread and Reversal of a Sound Change: Rhotacism in South Slavic," *Slovenski jezik/Slovene Linguistic Studies* 2 (1999): 6; also available on-line at: <http://hdl.handle.net/1808/803>).

Alongside analyses of linguistic structures and their selection, Jesenšek also discusses in several chapters the views and activities of nineteenth-century movers and shakers of Slovene corpus planning, bringing to life the personalities, contributions, and incremental decisions resulting in the stable system of a Slovene standard language that has been in place from the end of the nineteenth century to the present day. The narrative of history is written, goes the old adage, by the winners, and the winners were in the center. Jesenšek's story fills in the gaps from the periphery, defined as such and demarcated by the center. For example, Jesenšek discusses Škrabec's crucial role as arbiter of linguistic taste in reinforcing the Carniolan dialects as the basis for the standardization of Slovene and rejecting the peripheral, i.e., the eastern dialects, and, in particular, Dajnko's work, which he deemed as both inferior and too Kajkavian (155). Of interest, too, are the sketches of the not insignificant number of eastern Slovenia's harmless drudges —lexicographers and grammarians who, with ardor and dedication, recorded and cultivated the language of the eastern periphery, e.g., Ivan Anton Apostel, Ivan Žiga Janez Valentin Popovič, Andrej Čebulj, Mihael Zagajšek, Anton Janez Murko, Vid Penn, Oroslov Caf, as well as the great Slavic philologist, Franc Miklošič. Much of the fruit of their labors found its way into Pleteršnik's dictionary, the watershed work that codified the lexical contours of Slovene in roughly the form it is found today.

Lest there be any doubt that the eastern varieties of Slovene could have made the grade as polyvalent standard languages, Jesenšek demonstrates that these codes could manage to convey much more than everyday conversation and the Gospels. Prekmurian, in particular, could also accommodate all variety of text in between, from intellectual discourse to advertising language. Witness both the form and content of the following excerpt from a 1905 Prekmurian publication (*Kalendar*): "*Pride csasz, i ne je dalecs, gda bomo vu nasen maternom jeziki csteli dobra, csedna, postena, dūsi i teli hasznovita dela ...*" 'There will come a time, not long from now, when we shall read in our mother tongue good, appealing, wholesome, works, beneficial for body and soul...' (90). Another excerpt from *Kalendar* demonstrates commercial coercion that could hold a candle even to Yankee hucksterism: "*Tiszti betezsnik, steri moja pripravo Nr. 888 45 dni nūcza i ne dobi nazaj zdravja, nazaj dobi peneze*" 'Any sufferer who uses my preparation No. 888 for 45 days and doesn't get his health back will receive his money back' (92).

The major shortcoming of the book, which is otherwise well crafted, is the unfortunate English translation. While the expository language passes for understandable, it takes a reader cognizant of the original context to make sense of many passages. For example, in pp. 176ff we find the place-name Freising consistently referred to as *Freisling* (sic). The non-Slavist English reader would be puzzled by “word treasure” (97), a calque of *besedni zaklad*, which should have been translated ‘word-stock’; or be utterly baffled by a phrase like “the keeping of non-existent vowels” (117), a mistranslation of, evidently, *ohranitev neobstoječih polglasnikov* ‘the preservation of fleeting vowels’. There are so many typos, misspellings, and translation gaffes—something of this kind on nearly every page—that one wonders what the function of the title “proofreader” denoted in this case.

In sum, this is an important work for both the detail and perspective it gives on the historically occluded account of the eastern Slovene contributions to the modern Slovene literary language. It is a story that deserves not only to hold a place in Slavists’ store of knowledge but also to be integrated into a more elaborate and nuanced understanding of the emergence of new forms of public language connected with the national entities knit from the threads of unraveling empire.

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Alenka Barber-Kersovan. *Vom “Punk-Frühling” zum “Slowenischen Frühling”: Der Beitrag des slowenischen Punk zur Demontage des sozialistischen Wertesystems.* Hamburg: Reinhold Krämer Verlag, 2005. 577 pp., 44.90 euros (\$52.53, paper). ISBN: 3-89622-073-X.

What is it, what we are holding in our hands? A politico-historical work? Or a musicological analysis? Both and much more! In any case, both the title and the illustration¹ on the cover of the book arouse the viewer’s curiosity and interest.

Punk: this is a social phenomenon that also has relevance in the world of art (and especially music). Nevertheless, general encyclopedias

¹ Cf. <http://images-cu.amazon.com/images/P/389622073X.01.LZZZZZZZ.jpg>; the picture is one of the typical provocative covers from the student magazine *Mladina*.