

opportunity have created and sustained the catastrophe to which this work eloquently attests.

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Sprachliche Aspekte des Nation-Building in Mazedonien: Die kommunistische Presse in Vardar-Mazedonien (1940–1943). By Torsten Szobries. Studien zur modernen Geschichte, no. 53. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999. 251 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Tables. Maps. DM 88.00, paper.

A book affirming the fact that standard Macedonian was not invented in 1944 but arose from processes predating the ASNOM (Anti-Fascist Assembly for the National Liberation of Macedonia) declaration of that year is to be welcomed. It is unfortunate, however, that the author sets the starting point no further back than the communist press in 1940. The main purpose of this book is to give linguistic support to the thesis that the modern Macedonian standard language, like modern Macedonian national identity, of which it is a key manifestation, has its origins in communist activities beginning with the Comintern decision of 1934 and culminating in the activities of the Macedonian-language communist press from 1940–1943. This is basically a modified version of a “soft” Bulgarian line, namely that modern Macedonian language and identity are the product of Josip Tito’s ideology.

Emphasis is a key issue. The importance of the communist movement in harnessing Macedonian sentiment is undeniable, and the significance of the communist press encouraging the development of linguistic consensus was noted by Horace Lunt (“The Creation of Standard Macedonian,” *Anthropological Linguistics* 1 [1959]: 23). Szobries’s thesis, however, requires that all earlier and other manifestations of a separate Macedonian ethnic consciousness and attempts at creating a Macedonian standard be treated as insignificant. Moreover, by focusing on the territory that eventually became the Republic of Macedonia, the events in Greek Macedonia are entirely elided. The result is a description of some orthographic, phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic features as well as observations on the content of the Macedonian partisan press and a brief survey of the preceding century and a half, including a one-paragraph dismissal of pre-World War II Macedonian literature as a mere “end in itself” (*Selbstzweck*) not necessarily intended for language planning purposes (87).

Such a dismissal, aside from implying that literature is unimportant for standardization movements in general, begs the question of why authors would choose to write in a language that displays exactly the same types of consistencies and inconsistencies as the partisan press and predates it by years and even decades. Another question left unanswered by the author is the actual distribution of the analyzed materials. According to Blaže Koneski (personal communication), partisan papers and leaflets were rare and hard to come by during the war and were extremely dangerous to possess: To be caught by the Germans or Bulgarians with such material meant death. And yet, one of the arguments adduced against the significance of earlier attempts at Macedonian language and consciousness formation is that the concrete documentary evidence (including virulent attacks on “Macedonianists” in the nineteenth-century Bulgarian-language press) represents a tiny group. One could just as well argue, however, that this earlier evidence is the intellectual expression of what Rossos (1995, 229) has called “the Macedonianism or *našism* [literally, “ours-ism”] of the masses.” Although not available to Szobries, Alexander Panev’s dissertation “Orthodoxy, Modernity and Nationality in Macedonia, 1800–1878” (University of Toronto, 2000) makes ample use of archival sources that demonstrate the processes of Macedonian identity formation in the nineteenth century, and it is worth noting that Bulgarian archives still refuse to release documents pertaining to nineteenth-century Macedonian identity formation, apparently fearing evidence against the thesis that it all started with the communists and Tito.

Nonetheless, the bulk of Szobries’s book is taken up with linguistic details of the partisan press, and regardless of the ideological framework in which it is cast, the data them-

selves are interesting, the style is clear and readable, and typographical errors are minimal. The table for 1940–41 has eleven features from five publications. Those for 1942 and 1943 give ten of those features plus five others for ten publications each. Crucial issues like the use of the third-person auxiliary with first-person forms (absent in the west, pragmatically conditioned in the east), the inseparability of the modal subordinator *da* from its verb phrase (a rule of Macedonian often violated under Serbian influence), and object doubling (grammaticalized in Macedonian but pragmatically conditioned and excluded from formal style in Bulgarian) are not treated systematically and do not show up in any of the tables, although the author does indicate the use of *da* as a factive clause subordinator. Despite these criticisms, however, this book is an extremely important contribution to the history of the standardization of Macedonian. The author has given us an enormous amount of valuable data not available elsewhere, and this book can be read with profit by anyone interested in the history of Macedonia and Macedonian.

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The Radical Right in Interwar Estonia. By Andres Kasekamp. Studies in Russia and East Europe. New York: St. Martin’s Press, in association with the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 2000. ix, 218 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Tables. \$65.00, hard bound.

The “dictators” who came to power in interwar Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia—Konstantin Päts, Antonas Smetona, and Karlis Ulmanis, respectively—claimed that they installed authoritarian regimes to preempt a takeover by “real” fascists. Andreas Kasekamp’s well-researched book dismisses that notion, as far as Päts is concerned, by showing that the leaders of the *Eesti Vabadassojalaste Liit* (Estonian War of Independence Veterans’ League) had “indisputable patriotic credentials” (12) of their own. Artur Sirk, Generals Andres Larka, Ernst Pödder, and Captain Johan Pitka all fought in the war of independence, itself central to nation building in Estonia.

The book approaches the Veterans, or Freedom Fighters, after a useful survey of the political parties in postwar Estonia, emphasizing the divisions between the two major agrarian groups, as well as the fact that the largest party, the Social Democrats, went into opposition in 1920. Even so, the constitutional provision enabling any group of citizens to present a bill to the *Riigikogu* (Parliament) upon collection of 25,000 signatures was used only once during the 1920s, indicating that the impact of the Estonian radical right was minimal before the 1930s.

Indeed, the Estonian Guardian League founded in 1920 by Pitka and the National Liberal Party were short lived, although both left ideological traces on the Veterans. Brief, too, was the existence of the Estonian Demobilized Soldiers’ League formed in Tartu in 1921, whose demise in 1926 coincided with the formation of the Tallinn Estonian War of Independence Veterans’ League (TEVL). Artur Sirk was one of TEVL’s two deputy chairmen. The Tallinn-based organization only became a nationwide body in June 1929, with the establishment of the Estonian War of Independence Veterans’ League. Most of its leaders were decorated fighters.

Given the assertiveness of Sirk and General Larka, however, Kasekamp’s distinction between the league’s early preoccupation with welfare and its later politicization is arguably too rigid. The constitutional reforms mooted at the Veterans’ second congress in 1931 and the decision to allow nonveterans into the organization were important stages in the league’s ultimate transformation into a political party in November 1932. Certainly there were other nationalist organizations in Estonia, but Kasekamp gleefully emphasizes that the only *fascist* party was the “obscure and insignificant” Estonian National Fascists’ Assembly.

Yet there was widespread yearning for constitutional reform aimed at reducing parliamentary deputies and freeing the president from dependence on quarrelsome parties. Tellingly, Päts was initially keen to have his own plans for a directly elected president sup-