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### Issues in Southeast European Language Emancipation

In his monograph on language policy, Spolsky (2004:113) reminds of a hierarchical structure of constitutionally monolingual polities: “Many countries of the world have a ... ‘monolingual but ...’ policy. They may name in their constitution or in their laws a single national or official language, but then modify the intolerance by proclaiming protection for one or more minority languages.” This modification of intolerance in Spolsky’s parlance presents an example of emancipatory politics per Huss and Lindgren’s (2011:1) terminology. According to them, emancipatory politics is “the changing of this hierarchical power structure, so that a new, democratic (or at least more democratic than before) structure emerges.” Ultimately, emancipatory politics concerned with language result in the *emancipation of a language* or else *language emancipation*, which is to be understood as “improving the position of an underprivileged language through political efforts and language planning. It is a process where the language and the linguistic environment of the people are changing so that the structures of inequality are broken down and circumstances more favorable to equality are created.”

Many countries in Southeast Europe have the *monolingual-but* language policy. At present, the underprivileged languages there find themselves in their own – and, at that, varied – language emancipation processes, whose outcomes – if, that is, there are any to be observed – are also manifold. This situation is by no means unique. We show that something similar is taking place in the Nordic region, as well. Still, we ultimately focus on Southeast Europe, in general, and the Banat Bulgarian and Bunyev languages there, in particular. Specifically, we employ the concept of *language autonomization*, proposed by Huss and Lindgren (2011), in examining the languagehood of Banat Bulgarian and Bunyev. We, eventually, question what Milroy (2001) terms the standard language ideology surrounding Banat Bulgarian and Bunyev. In the end, we attempt to contribute to answering to the so-called ethical question that Huss and Lindgren (2011:12) pose: “Is language emancipation a struggle for a place higher up on the pecking order, or is it a fight for justice?”

#### References:

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