

STEPHEN MAY. *Language and minority rights: Ethnicity, nationalism, and the politics of language*. Harlow, Essex, UK/New York: Pearson Education (Longman), 2001. Pp. 384. Pb. \$44.80.

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No review can do justice to a book like Stephen May's. It is complex and dense, and one of its main strengths lies in its sophisticated, tight and consistent argumentation, with the main concepts carefully defined. Also, most of my critical comments (I do have a few) would presuppose presenting the argumentation first; this is impossible within 1000 words. Only the more trivial ones (such as the inclusion of old or imprecise figures for languages) are straightforward. Likewise, some parts of the book were written much earlier, or with less up-to-date literature than others, fully legitimate for this kind of book, but some of the claims are therefore not quite correct, and May has also revised some pieces in later publications. My conclusion: read the book yourself! It is an intellectual must and will be a classic.

The book consists of an introduction and nine chapters (pp. 1–316), a substantial bibliography (pp. 317–357) and an index (pp. 358–384). The introduction gives a brief account of language loss, introduces some of the main concepts in the book (these are defined more thoroughly in later chapters), provides an overview of the book, and asks where this leaves us. The claims in the last part (if the demands from minority groups for more linguistic and cultural representation are not met, this lack of rights may lead to 'ethnic' conflict and demands for secession) echo closely what I and others have argued for many years.

Chapter 1, 'The denunciation of ethnicity,' presents and rejects the pejorative modernist, constructivist perception of ethnicity (which has been seen as essentialising, regressive, static, fictive, and unnecessary). After a thorough discussion of some of the dichotomies within ethnicity theorising, including post-modern criticism (premodern/modern, primordial/situational, intrinsic/instrumental, content/boundaries, objective/subjective, category/group, involuntary/voluntary, individual/collective, material/symbolic, minority/majority), May presents, with the help of Anthony Smith's notion of 'ethnie', a compromise solution, bringing in culture and language again, but not fully solving the problems he has raised. This is, in my view, unduly tame, after his insightful criticism

(even if I do not agree with all of it). May has certainly not said his last word here yet.

Chapter 2, 'Nationalism and its discontents,' after defining nation, nationalism, state and nation-state, presents both the German Romantics' linguistic nationalism and the modernist position (including Renan, Weber, Smith, Gellner, Anderson, Hobsbawn, and Balibar, as well as discussion of the major differences between them) and criticizes both. "As with situational accounts of ethnicity, however, modernist conceptions of nationalism and national identity may be overstated," he writes (p. 68). Primordial accounts which 'naturalise' nationhood, claiming that it is based on pre-existing ethnicity and/or language, and which list its (stable) contents, are as inaccurate as most modernist theories which have tried to explain nations as results of certain datable developments like industrialisation (Gellner) or print capitalism (Anderson). Modernists can explain neither the ongoing salience of ethnicity and nationalism, nor the fact that nationalism (which was supposed to supersede ethnicity in modernisation) has not been replaced by internationalism in the post-modern period. Again, both languages and ethnicity have to be brought back; political nationalism (leading to a nation seeking its own state) and cultural nationalism have to be seen as equally legitimate parts in nationalism; nations and nation-states have to be separated (there are hardly any nation-states where cultural and political boundaries converge; the term is a misnomer, but why then does May consistently use it in the book?). May calls this position 'ethnicist' – an unfortunate choice of terminology since ethnicism has already been used to denote culturally argued racism. An account follows of how the modernist rejection of ethnicity, an "overemphasis on the political and civic elements of nationalism at the expense of its cultural dimensions" (p. 77), enables a dominant 'nation' within a state to normalise their own ethnicity as hegemonic and legitimate their ethnic concerns as universal and civic ones. This legitimates assimilation as a necessary price for modernisation, and presents minorities as 'ethnics' and their legitimate cultural demands as disruptive. The chapter finishes with a short description of 'sociological minorities', following Hylland Eriksen – this would have greatly benefited from more technical definitions from international law. So would some of the other definitions – the German 'Volk' which is often, also here, translated as 'nation', corresponds better to 'a people' in international law, and here it is only 'a people' (i.e. not a minority) who have the right to self-determination – but a people is defined using characteristics which are historical-cultural. This multidisciplinary aspect would both complicate and clarify May's arguments.

Chapter 3, 'Liberal theory, multiculturalism and minority rights,' discusses the old pluralist dilemma of reconciling the demands of minority individuals and groups with the claims of the (nation-)state as a whole, presenting two positions which May calls 'liberal pluralism' (just as much a misnomer, in my view, as 'nation-state,' since most of its proponents see, wrongly, pluralism as a threat to the nation-state) and corporate pluralism. After presenting some of the right-wing (Porter, Schlesinger) and more leftist (Gouldbourne) liberalists and critiquing them, May discusses in detail a position that he supports, combining Young and Kymlicka, who show that it is, again, not a question of either/or but both/and. Also in this chapter some of the distinctions are unclear – indigenous peoples (often called 'groups' by May!) are lumped together with national minorities in discussions of self-determination and self-governance (likewise, with more disturbing effects, in Chapter 8), and Kymlicka's differentiation between multinational (the result of "the colonising, conquest, or confederation of national minorities") and polyethnic (the result of immigration) countries is misleading – thus national minorities and indigenous peoples do not possess ethnicity! It is also difficult to understand why May necessarily wants to find a solution within 'liberal theory' rather than looking further ahead.

Chapter 4, 'Language, identity and minority rights,' using Irish and French as examples, argues, partially with the help of Bourdieu, that language policy decisions are mainly political decisions, and that even decisions by minority language speakers themselves to abandon their languages are in most cases far from 'voluntary,' as the opponents of the maintenance of these languages claim. The opponents' arguments against the languages and for modernisation through assimilation are not neutral but political value judgements. Chapter 5, 'Language, education and minority rights,' demonstrates the pitfalls of multidisciplinary approaches – there is some conceptual confusion (e.g., mixing only partially overlapping concepts from sociology and international law) and even small errors. Chapter 6, 'English hegemony and its critics: North American debates,' dissects the English Only position in the USA, with a short and partial discussion of bilingual education, and deems it both completely misguided and illiberal, after a comparison with French in Québec. Chapters 7 ('Extending ethnolinguistic democracy in Europe'), and 8 ('Indigenous rights: Self-determination, language and education') continue with thorough case-study presentations (Catalonia, Wales, Aotearoa), together with some additional legal data.

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 and the short concluding chapter, are the central theoretical chapters where May is at his best and has really done some

excellent hard thinking (even if one may disagree with some of the results). The rest, even if much of it is detailed and often excellent, has been said in other books too (including my own latest one). But May's liberal stance makes his argumentation partially reinforce the denial of both full state-paid cultural rights to immigrant minorities (as opposed to, e.g., Extra) and (probably unintentionally, by suggesting for them an emphasis on cultural demands – just as for national minorities, rather than the more comprehensive self-determination demands) proper land rights to indigenous peoples.

MICHAEL BYRAM (Ed). *Routledge encyclopedia of language teaching and learning*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002 (first published 2000). Pp. xx, 714. Hb \$165.

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Editor Michael Byram describes the *Routledge encyclopedia of language teaching and learning* as “an authoritative account of the discipline of language teaching in all its complexity” done in a way “which makes that account readily accessible, whether for quick reference or as a means of gaining an overview and insight in depth of a particular issue” (p. xiii). While a tall order, Byram and the 13 members of the editorial team have put together a refreshing and valuable collection. The volume (677 pages, plus index) consists of 195 total entries, written by nearly as many contributors. The articles range in length from several lines to 3,000 words. Arranged alphabetically by title, the entries are also indexed in a thematic list in the beginning of the book. Thematic categories cover a wide range: *learners and learning*; *teachers and teaching/assessing*; *methods and materials*; *curriculum and syllabus*; *systems and organization of foreign language teaching and learning*; *languages*; *history and influential figures*; *evaluation and research*; and *contexts and concepts*. As for the entries themselves, Byram states that “there are many entries which are expected and, I hope, many more which are not” (p. xv). Some of the more surprising entries range from “linguistic psychodramaturgy” and “tandem