

Note on Transliteration and Names

Serbo-Croatian is a single language (with, of course, dialectical differences) written with two alphabets, Latin for Croatian and Cyrillic for Serbian. Thus the Croatian Latin scheme is a natural one to use for transliterating Serbian names. Furthermore, it seems to me a better system than any other now being used to transliterate Bulgarian and Russian as well. Thus, following Croatian, the following transliteration scheme is used:

c = *ts* (except in words already accepted into English such as *tsar*)

ć = *ch* (soft)

č = *ch* (hard)

h = guttural *kh* (though I have left the *kh*, since it is standard, for Turkic names such as Khazars, khagan, Ispirikh)

j = *y* (as in *yes*)

š = *sh*

ž = *zh*

The Slavic softsign is indicated by a single apostrophe (').

The Bulgarian hardsign has been rendered with a double apostrophe ('').

Greek was undergoing evolution at this time with the *b* coming to be pronounced as a *v*. However, I have consistently stuck with the *b* in transliterating names, thus *Bardas* rather than *Vardas*. The same thing was happening to *u*, with its pronunciation shifting from *u* to *v*. I have almost always stuck to the *u*; thus *Staurakios* rather than *Stavrakios*. A major problem with Greek names is also the fact that their latinization has already become standard in English. Thus *k* tends to be rendered as *c* rather than *k*. I have reverted to the less ambiguous *k* in all cases (Kastoria, Nikopolis, etc.) unless names have already become commonplace in English: e.g., Nicephorus, Lecapenus, etc. In the same way the Greek *os* tends to be latinized to *us*. In names already commonplace in the English literature I have stuck with the *us*, otherwise I have used the *os*.

Since control of particular territories in the Balkans has changed over time from Romans or Greeks to different Slavic people to Turks, it is not surprising that there are many different names for some cities. On the whole, I have chosen the name used in the Middle Ages by the power that controlled

that place most. Upon first mention (and also in the index) I give the variant names for each place (e.g., Philippopolis [modern Plovdiv], or Durazzo [Dyrrachium, Durres], etc.).

Personal names have presented an insoluble problem, at least to an author making an attempt at consistency. Originally I intended in all cases to use Slavic names; however, how could I say Ivan Alexander when his Greek counterpart was John Cantacuzenus? I then tried to make a distinction between ultimate rulers and nobles, so that I could at least retain the Slavic flavor with the nobility. However, should we then suddenly change the name of Djuradj Branković to George when he became the ruler? As a result I threw up my hands and anglicized all first names, merely providing the Slavic forms on first mention. The only exception is Stephen (a name with various spellings in English as well as Slavic) whose significance on occasions went beyond that of a mere name. Its adoption by Serbian rulers came close to being part of a title, and its subsequent adoption by the Bosnian rulers—after Tvrtko's 1377 coronation—indicates the Serbian origin of Bosnia's kingship. Thus I have used the forms Stefan and Stjepan as they are appropriate.