

Roland Marti: Symbolism and linguistics: writing and orthography in the Slavonic languages

Written language is generally regarded as little more than a visual representation of a spoken original. Writing, however, carries an additional symbolic load, and in the creation and revision of writing systems the symbolism of the various aspects of writing is often more important than linguistic considerations. This is shown in the article as regards the choice of alphabet (Glagolitic, Cyrillic, Latin as well as Greek, Arabian, and Hebrew), the script (round and angular Glagolitic, ecclesiastic and secular Cyrillic, Gothic and Roman Latin script), the relationship between sound and letter (monographic, pleographic, and combinatory writing) as well as the level of representation (phonetic/phonological, morphological, and historical). Additional aspects are the sequence of letters in the alphabet, the letter names and their numerical function, the rendering of foreign words and special “shibboleth letters”. The analysis shows that symbolic considerations are often at the basis of decisions in these areas and neglecting them may doom proposed revisions. Linguists should therefore pay more attention to the symbolic side of writing.

Sonja Wölke: Upper Sorbian Language Use in the Internet

The subject of this piece is the idiomatic language actively used by speakers of Upper Sorbian. The source material is the language used in both (predominately Upper Sorbian) Sorbian-language Internet forums: www.interserb.de and www.internecy.de. This selection allows access to texts, which are produced predominantly by young people and at the same time are close to everyday spoken language. In total 691 instances of the use of 465 idioms are considered. The language corpus, which is established, shows that German language use plays a fundamental role in the active use of Upper Sorbian idioms. Above all, idioms are used which have formal equivalents in German; there are also numerous examples of loan translations and hybrid formations of German origin.

Dietrich Scholze-Šolta: The Reception of Sorbian Novels from 1945 to the Present

The author traces the development of the reception of Sorbian novels, which did not become established as a literary genre until the second half of the Twentieth Century. As an introduction the author describes the increased interest in reception studies in the literary studies of the GDR and the Federal Republic since the 1960s, which created the basis in cultural policy for a reappraisal of the relationship between writers and their readership. He takes six significant works from different decades as examples (almost all published in Sorbian and German versions) and then discusses the changes which occurred in the reception of Sorbian literature both within and outside Lusatia, from Kurt Krenz’s novel *Jan* (1955) to Jurij Brězan’s satirical novel *Die Leute von Salow* (The People of Salow, 1997). The study finishes with a short survey of the present state of Sorbian publishing.

Franc Šěn: The Beginning of Sorbian Romanticism. A New Perspective on Sources and Inspirations

The poet Handrij Zejler (1804–1872) had already produced a mature body of literary work when he was a student in Leipzig, which was to become a milestone in literary

history and turned its author into the founder of a Sorbian national literature. The author investigates the question of how Zejler gained access to the poetry of Romanticism and how he discovered folk poetry for himself. In the academic literature up to now the predominant view has been that he already began to record songs as a schoolboy, encouraged by his patron Handrij Lubjenski, and in 1826 collected folk songs in Lower Lusatia together with the Pole Andrzej Kucharski.

In reality Lubjenski's view of folk poetry was similar to that of Josef Dobrovský. Zejler's interest in folk poetry began with the discovery of a 50-year-old Lower Sorbian manuscript of the folk song collection of Count von Bünau, which was in Lubjenski's possession. Zejler linked his early work at first to the poetic tradition he had discovered. In the early summer of 1827, inspired by his contacts with A. Kucharski, F. Palacký, F. L. Čelakovský and S. Milutinović, Zejler developed his romantic style by playing poetically with models produced by his fellow students in Leipzig and by free translations of folk songs into Upper Sorbian. In the process he produced texts which have become some of the most well known in Sorbian literature: the "Nationale Ode" (National Ode), "Rjana Lužica" (Beautiful Lusatia) and the love song "Lubka lilija" (Darling Lily).

Walter Wenzel: New Interpretations of Upper Sorbian Place Names

While working on the *Oberlausitzer Ortsnamenbuch* (Upper Sorbian Book of Place Names), a work of popular scholarship, the author was able to present new explanations for a series of place names compared to earlier interpretations. But in view of the limited space in this work and the nature of the book, which is aimed at a wide readership, it was not possible to give detailed evidence for the reinterpretation of these names and to support this with comparative names from other Slav languages. As a result of progress made in German, international, and in particular Polish, onomastics, as well as in Sorbian anthroponomastics, 50 place names can be explained from a different point of view or their previous interpretations can be explained more precisely. Amongst them are *Cannewitz, Cortnitz, Dehsa, Demitz, Denkwitz, Döschko, Gaußig, Kodersdorf, Mulkwitz, Oppach, Putzkau and Ratzen*.

Rudolf Kilank: Bishop Christian Schreiber and the Sorbian clergy: On the conflicts of the 1920s

After the recreation of the Catholic bishopric of Meißen in 1921, with its seat in Bautzen, conflicts developed between Bishop Christian Schreiber (1872–1933) and a number of Sorbian priests. These disagreements were caused by certain decisions made by the new Bishop, which Sorbian Catholics considered to be discriminatory: for example the proceedings of the first Diocesan Synod of the Meißen bishopric in the St Marienstern convent in 1923, the appointment of a German priest to the Sorbian parish in Bautzen, attacks on the Sorbian and the Czech press, as well as the overall relationship of the Bishop with Sorbian Catholics.

Using previously unknown correspondence between Sorbian priests, which the author received in 1973 from the papers of the teacher and writer Jurij Kubaš-Worklečan (1902–1983), he traces the main strands in the conflicts of this period. The varied reactions of the Sorbian clergy to the leadership of the Meißen bishopric in the 1920s can be seen in this correspondence.

Rudolf Urban: Under the Sign of German-Polish Reconciliation. The Life and Work of the Sorb from Wittichenau, Günter Särchen

The Polish-German author describes in his biographical study the life and work of Günter Särchen from Wittichenau/Kulow (1927–2004), who throughout his life was conscious of his Sorbian origins. As a long-term worker in the Episcopal office in Magdeburg, Särchen was from the 1950s onwards considered to be one of the pioneers of civil reconciliation with the Polish people, who had in 1939 become the first victims of aggression by Hitler's Germany. Through acts of solidarity, pilgrimages and publications about Poland, Särchen attempted to put the relationship of the East Germans with the Poles on a new footing. At times as a result of his initiatives, he came into conflict not only with state authorities but also with members of the Church hierarchy who wanted to avoid any kind of involvement in GDR politics. Nevertheless he can be seen as preparing the way for the opposition in the 1980s.

Andrea Pawlikowa: The Traditional Costume of the Catholic Sorbs

The traditional costume of the Catholic Sorbs in Lusatia is one of the last still worn today in Europe. This piece evaluates the empirical studies, which were carried out in preparation for the exhibition "Traditional Costume as an act of faith. The traditional costume of the Catholic Sorbs" (24. 9. 2006–18. 2. 2007) in the Sorbian Museum in Bautzen. It should be seen as supplementing the results of costume research from the 1950s and the 1980s and concentrates on the knowledge of the few women, already advanced in years, who have always worn their costume in their everyday life. Many different examples show how the costumes of everyday life and those worn on feast days were adapted, despite strict norms, to fit in with modern fashion influences; this has ensured their survival to the present day. The search for a symbiosis between handed-down traditions and modifications, which are up-to-date from an aesthetic and practical point of view, will determine the future of traditional costume.

Katharina Elle: "A Rough, Stubborn and Devious Nation". On the Development of a Stereotype of the Sorbs of Upper Lusatia

This study is concerned with the stereotype of the "devious Sorbs". Evidence is presented that this stereotype has been handed down through history and has survived to the present day. During the Enlightenment a counter image developed as a result of arguments about this stereotype. The image – above all towards the Germans – of the "faithful Sorb". In empirical data gained from interviews the tendency to find explanatory models for the perceived differences are clear: in doing this the stereotypes handed down through history are cited in a stereotypical fashion. Stereotypical characterisations also play a part within the ethnic group itself, when for instance distinctions are made between different confessional, and/or geographical identities (Catholic–Protestant, town–country, Radibor–Crostwitz etc.). The purpose of identifying differences however stands alongside the desire to analyse critically the content of the traditional stereotypes.