

Měto Nowak (Martin Neumann): Stasis, Change and the Law. On the Definition of the Sorbian/Wendish Area of Settlement in the Brandenburg Sorbian (Wendish) Law

The Sorbian/Wendish area of settlement in Brandenburg is defined in legal texts by applying various criteria such as location or proof of cultural or linguistic traditions. This so-called “traditional area of settlement” does however affect policies relating to the protection, cultivation and support of cultural forms of expression and identities. This paper examines first of all the supposed unambiguous nature of the settlement area concept and of the significance of an area defined in this way. It engages critically with the three defining criteria and their application in practice. In doing so, supposedly clearly defined sets of facts, such as proof of cultural and linguistic traditions and the logic of the criterion of location, or rather of a clearly demarcated Sorbian/Wendish area of settlement, are analyzed in the same way, as is the application of rigid legal definitions in the face of the dynamic nature of physical mobility and linguistic, cultural identities. Finally an attempt at a more flexible definition of settlement area is put forward for discussion.

Christian Wille/Malte Helfer: Economic Transformation Processes and Socio-Cultural implications for the Macro-Region

This paper examines structural and identity changes in the so-called “Macro-region”, which comprises a European cross-border region of cooperation in the South-West of Germany. This macro-region is a cross-border, European area of cooperation where four countries meet: Germany – France – Luxemburg – Belgium. Its core area was dominated in the past by coal mining, as well as the iron and steel industry. However, the coal and steel crises in the 1950s and 1970s caused the disappearance of important key sectors of industry. The development or increase in cross-border movements of labour were linked to the dramatic economic changes in the region. Cross-border commuting was directed more and more towards Luxemburg. As a result the Grand Duchy has – after Switzerland - the most cross-border commuters in the EU. There has as yet been no investigation in Luxemburg of what effect their large presence, representing 44% of the workforce, has on identity creation. This paper provides first indications of a renaissance of national identity structures in the context of cross-border commuting in the Grand Duchy.

Steffen Groß: Lusatia and its Prospects. Observations Based on an Economic, Institutional Point of View

The theory of “New institutional economics” relates to a quite recent strand of economic theory, which claims to treat questions of the development and structuring of regions in a much comprehensive way than is the case with traditional economics. The starting point for this approach is the fact that institutions and institutional arrangements have more than purely short-term effects on the growth development potential of a region. “Development” and “Growth” are in this context not only understood as quantitative economic growth but as development in an overall cultural sense, in which economic development is given an important role. This broad development and growth

concept is possible, as the institutional concept is extended beyond the economic sphere in its narrower sense. Informal institutions are also included, such as traditions and understanding of traditions, cultural influences and attitudes, which have been passed down the generations, mentalities, awareness of landscape, as well as emotional ties, all of which have at the very least an influence on behaviour.

The main part aims to clarify the institutional structure of Lusatia, in particular the existing lines of conflict and contradictions. Finally, an answer is formulated to the question whether Lusatia has prospects and opportunities, an answer, which is tentatively positive.

Dietrich Scholze: “Painters and Writers” and their National Mission. Měrcín Nowak-Njechorński (1900–1990) Died 20 Years Ago

The painter, journalist and writer Měrcín Nowak-Njechorński (German: Martin Nowak-Neumann), whose work spanned many decades, turned away from the avant-garde innovations of modernism at the beginning of the 1920s and chose a neo-romantic approach, designed to consolidate the national strengths of the Sorbs. As a painter and graphic artist he exploited the traditions of folk art and culture by focussing on the ordinary individual and in this way determined the preceptive rules of art. Nowak began to write professionally in 1924 as a reporter on the daily newspaper “Serbske Nowiny”. He introduced a new critical tone with his reports to the Sorbian press. His provocative attacks on the minorities policy of the Weimar Republic and the National Socialists required original means of expression: satire and irony, allegory and parable.

Nowak-Njechorński put his whole work at the service of the Sorbiannation, which had been deprived of its rights. The precarious nature of its situation moved him to produce polemical representations of reality. At the same time, he recognised the growing conflict between the traditional village way of life and economic and cultural modernisation. At the same time he recognised the national question intuitively as a social problem, which also provided the basis for his political outlook and his extensive journalistic work after 1945. It was only shortly before his death, at the end of 1989, that Nowak came to support the “new movement” of glasnost and perestroika, which had by now reached Lusatia.

Peter Kroh: Jan Skala and the Hambach Festival

Sorbian and German history are closely interlinked, as well as the ideas and traditions accompanying them. We are therefore reminded here of Skala’s demand that Sorbs should also preserve and defend the ideals of German humanism while maintaining their understandable national interest as a Slav minority in Germany. The Hambach festival of 1832 is undoubtedly part of this. It symbolises the striving for freedom of speech and of the press, for the sovereignty of the people and equal rights between nations and nationalities, for legal security, for respect for the dignity of every nationality as well as support for their language and culture. In view of the recent desecration of Sorbian wayside crosses and place name signs, but also because of political decisions endangering their future, it is high time that Sorbs conduct a broad public and political debate about the future path of their nation, self-confidently, democratically and freely, in the spirit of the Hambach festival.

Marcel Černý: Czech Roots of Bulgarian Sorbian Studies

From the last third of the 19th century until 1945 Czech scholars have played a substantial part in informing the Bulgarian public about the Sorbs, as well as arousing the interest of Bulgarian Slavists in the subject. One of them was the Czech mathematician, translator and journalist, Vladislav Šak (1860-1941), who, in addition to a number of articles on the subject, published in 1907 in Sofia a popular scientific book under the title “Лужицките сърби” (Lusatian Sorbs). Even before the First World War a number of Bulgarian historians and Slavists published essays and treatises about the Sorbs in Bulgarian periodicals. The three brothers, Stefan, Nikola and Ilija Savov Bobčev were especially prominent in this respect. In the inter-war period it was above all the works of the Czech Slavist and Sorbian specialist, Josef Páta (1886–1942), that were published in Bulgarian. St Ognjanov translated Páta’s monograph, “Lužice” (1919) into Bulgarian. This broad survey of Lusatia and the Sorbs appeared in 1924. Over the following years the Slavist Boris Jocov, the Germanist Dorič and the brothers Bobčev translated further works by Páta into Bulgarian and also published their own works on Sorbian topics.

Sonja Wölke: Current Observations on Sorbian-German Interference

Using the results from the linguistic surveys carried out in 2007 by Ludmila Budar in the Sorbian day nursery in Crostwitz, the author examines how far the interference of Sorbian is apparent in the German of bilingual pre-school children who have been brought up with Sorbian as the dominant language. A comparison with earlier studies (MICHALK & PROTZE 1974, MICHALK 1968 AND 1977) shows that such influences have declined further in the Upper Sorbian core area. It appears that the development from complex to coordinated bilingualism, which had already been detected in the 1960s in Radibor, has continued.

Bernd Koenitz: *Unwürde, Lubij, Dažin, Stwěšin* and Other Names of Old Sorbian origin. Miscellanea and Some Arguments of a Systemic Nature (Part I)

In this paper (to be continued) attempts are made to give convincing explanations of some Lusatian place names, which have been objects of dispute or points of interpretational embarrassment (such as *Mikel/Minakał* or *Melaune/Měrjow*, respectively). Apart from a polemic about the name *Unwürde/Wujer*, a somewhat more intense review of the field has led the author not only to new ideas concerning single names but also to more insight into certain systemic connections. In the course of searching for a plausible explanation of the form *Lubij*, an otherwise heterogeneous group of names appeared, esp. of those containing *-j-* derived from palatalized *w*. What has been emphasized as a stimulating aspect in analysing Sorbian place names is a consideration of the possibility that they could have been falsely (per analogiam) rebuilt on the basis of detoponymical adjectives or in terms of inhabitants. An important methodological principle is also to attach a much higher value to a possible continuity between authentic New Sorbian forms and the corresponding ones of previous periods.

Walter Wenzel: Problematic Meanings of Lusatian Place Names

This essay is a reaction to the critical reviews by H. Schuster-Šewc of our popular scientific books on Lusatian place names. While we can accept a number of his corrections, many others have to be rejected, since they infringe principles of name formation and motivation. They were also hardly ever supported by comparable names from other Slav languages. In addition, H. Schuster-Šewc frequently interpreted names from Sorbian, which can reliably be explained from German.