

Ladislav Futtera: Pillars of a Bridge. The Regional Perspective of Czech-Sorbian Relations in the Interwar Period

The regional specifics of Czech-Sorbian relations in the interwar period are considered in this article, using the example of the Northern Bohemian region around the Jizera river in three probes. In this part of the country, interest in the Sorbs was not only derived from the concept of Slav reciprocity, latently experienced, as also in other Czechoslovak regions, but equally from an identification of the Sorbs with the so-called Czech “frontier inhabitants”. The Sorbs were in particular treated as equals, especially in the support of the Sokoł association.

The example of the local group of the Czech-Sorbian association in Jabkenice then shows that the Sorbian question, which was above all treated sympathetically by people living in towns, could also be attractive for country people, but only under certain circumstances: These included a clear goal for any project, as exemplified by the regular holiday visits by children, as well as a capable organiser.

Finally, any consideration of the the demonstration in favour of the rights of the Sorbs on Mužský hill on 5 June 1933 has to be confronted with its image in historical writing. After the memorandum adopted during the demonstration was ignored by the League of Nations, the interest in the Sorbs, which had been strong up until then in the region, disappeared as a result of disillusionment. The Sorbian problem was swiftly overtaken by other topics.

Keywords: First Czechoslovak Republic, Jabkenice, Mužský hill, Mladá Boleslav, Northern Bohemia, Czech-Sorbian reciprocity

Marcel Langer: Between Constructions of the Philosophy and Spatial Perceptions of the Sorbian/Wendish Settlement Area. What We Can Learn from Critical Cartography

Everyday procedures in life are increasingly linked to the use of maps and cartographical representations. The aim of this article is to promote a critical discussion of the medium of maps and cartographical representations of the Sorbs/Wends in Lusatia. On the one hand, the role of maps and their influence on our perception of spaces is analysed. On the other hand, reasons for developing a more sensitive view of maps are initiated. Is it furthermore our goal to establish the criteria according to which the relevant maps were drawn up? Is there information missing from cartographical representations? What further elements need to be portrayed? The article approaches the sovereign interpretation of maps with a number of different questions and demonstrates the need for maps to be deconstructed, in order to open up a greater sensitization of the way in which we approach maps.

Keywords: critical cartography, maps, critical geography, space, perception of space, Sorbian area of settlement, Sorbian culture, Lusatia

Thomas Menzel, Jana Piňosová, Jana Šolcína, Pětš Šurman: The Varnsdorf Generation – the Large, Small World of the Children from Lusatia in Czechoslovakia. An Interdisciplinary Project at the Sorbian Institute: Current State of Linguistic and Historical Investigations

Between 1945 and 1950, a secondary school system conducted in the Sorbian language was established for the first time in Varnsdorf and other towns in northern Bohemia as a result of a private initiative. There were obvious gaps in the culture of remembrance of this episode of Sorbian history in the GDR before the political changes in 1989/90. It was not until 1993 that the significance of the education of several hundred schoolchildren in the (post-war) Czechoslovak Republic for the formation of an elite, which influenced public Sorbian life in the GDR on all levels, was openly discussed. This process came increasingly to be linked with the concept of the “Varnsdorf generation”, which implies a community of people who share similar experiences. The analysis of its success reveals themes and strategies linked to socialization. The memories of, now very old, former schoolchildren are being collected, in the form of interviews, as part of an interdisciplinary project at the Sorbian Institute. The first results from this project provide an overview of the memories from this educational initiative, including the sense of a collective identity and, in certain cases, the feeling of being part of an elite amongst the graduates, the creation of a linguistic identity in the everyday life of boarding schools, and teaching methods, which are still very relevant today.

Keywords: Varnsdorf, Česka Lípa, Liberec, culture of remembrance, creation of elites, intelligentsia, contemporary witness(es), generation building, self-thematization, collective positioning, ethnic identity, literary language, Sorbian schools, school concepts, teaching methods, language of instruction

Theresa Jacobsowa/Ines Kellerowa: Greater Visibility for the Sorbs? The Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Sorbs: Reflections, Challenges and Perspectives

This article is devoted to the application process used by the Sorbs concerning the recognition of their customs and festivals in the course of the year as intangible examples of their cultural heritage in 2013/14 to be included on the federal list of UNESCO in Germany. Starting from fundamental theoretical considerations on cultural heritage and the general significance of intangible cultural heritage, above all with regard to the UNESCO, the Sorbian application process is presented in detail. The article reflects on the short- and long-term effects, seen sometime after the event, as well as on reactions in the media, and responses on the level of cultural policy. A consideration of the risks, challenges and perspectives shows that the application has up until now fulfilled the expectations of the actors involved. Long-term consequences on cultural practice, however, require further critical scientific monitoring.

Keywords: Customs, Domowina, valorization, cultural heritage, cultural security, Lusatia, minority, Sorbs, UNESCO

Evelyn Fiebiger: Study of a Slavonic Folk Song from Papers Left by Karl Eduard Hering

The Bautzen Town Museum contains in the papers left by the composer Karl Eduard Hering (1807–1879), who worked for many years in Bautzen, a sheet of paper from 1846, headed with the title “Slavonic Folk Song”, which presents a composition based on the text of the Southern Slav folk song “Nemam mira ni pokoja”. It also contains his own version in German. The text is clearly not original, but is blended together with a well known folk song, “Kad te vidim na sokaku”. The same contaminated version of this song was published a few months earlier by Adolf Grünhold in the journal *Das Ausland*. This discovery in the archives provides evidence of the interest of K. A. Kocor’s music teacher in contemporary popular Southern Slavic folklore.

Keywords: Karl Eduard Hering, accompanied solo song, Slavonia, Adolf Grünhold, Southern Slavic folk music, Korla Awgust Kocor

Hauke Bartels, Fabian Kaufürst, Marcin Szczepański, Sonja Wölke: The Monitoring of Sorbian Literature. Theoretical Bases and the First Annual Report of a New Research Project

This article is conceived as research report for a new, long-term project of the Sorbian Institute, in which an essential part of all Sorbian printed materials published in a calendar year – starting with the year 2019 – is processed in digital form into corpus texts of high quality; it is then subsequently examined with regard to the vocabulary used in it. The background, methodology and aims of the research project are explained. In addition, this article represents the first annual report, which presents the results of the analyses of the corpus texts of the first year of monitoring. As well as presenting a current picture of the lexicon used in the latest literature, which involves the identification of “new words” and a perspective on the changes in the vocabulary of Upper and Lower Sorbian, this new monitoring process offers an enormous potential for Sorbian linguistics, especially with regard to a synchronic and up-to-date description of both the two Sorbian literary languages, but also, in the long term, with regard to phenomena of language change.

Keywords: monitoring of literary language, neologisms, Sorbian, corpus linguistics, language documentation