

Walter Schmitz: Kito Lorenc – Poet of a Small People?

Kito Lorenc's literary work shows, in poetology and writing strategies, elementary analogies to the literature of migration. The central common themes are *homeland* and *representation*, which, for the poet belonging to an autochthonous minority, however, lead to his own perspective. Encouraged by Johannes Bobrowski, Lorenc also adopts German as literary language, developing his work in a constant exchange of languages and in the reassurance of a Sorbian literary tradition. In the midst of the rapid technological progress that destroys his native landscape, his early poem "Struga" opens up the timeless beauty of Sorbian folk culture. In the radical play with language in his later oeuvre, autonomous poetry turns against the arrogance of state power before 1989 and against that of the media society after 1989. Lorenc's dramas explore the facets of poetology under the terms of German dictatorships – between assiduous adaptation and courageous obstinacy. With his 'migrant' writing, which creates a 'bridge' between the Sorbian and the German, Lorenc belongs to a border-crossing community of poets in Germany, indeed in Europe.

Keywords: Kito Lorenc, literature of migration, ethnic minority, Sorbian literature, German literature, bicultural literature

Christian Prunitsch: *Podomk*: The Poetic Household of the Late Kito Lorenc

Kito Lorenc's late poetry in „Podomk“ (2010) and „Zymny kut“ (2016) underlines lexically as well as prosodically the vitality and creativity of current Sorbian poetry. Imbued with both melancholy and irony, Lorenc's Sorbian poems in these two collections largely lack corresponding versions in German, thus demonstrating a tendency to expose the lyrical self and his rather metonymically coined belongings in a poetical universe as clearly defined as richly differentiated. Lorenc's two last Sorbian-language books masterfully show the autonomy of Sorbian poetry and can be seen as a building block of a project of a bicultural poetics on equal rights with German. Lorenc pursues this goal for instance by exploring the semantical fields of water, river or ocean, allowing him to elaborate on the recurrent motif of the island which is deeply entangled in Sorbian literary history. These symbols and motifs are consequently crafted in strong reliance on rhyme.

Keywords: Kito Lorenc, Sorbian poetry, bicultural poetics, island motif

Franč Šěn: Kito Lorenc – An Authority on Sorbian Literature

Kito Lorenc (1938–2017) was not only an important Sorbian-German poet but he also published numerous essays and studies of poetic works when working as an academic in the department of literary history of the Institute for Sorbian Studies (Institute für Sorbische Volksforschung) (1961–1972) and later as the editor of a number of works on Sorbian literature. Worth mentioning here are his study of the free verse of Jan Lajnert, his description of rhyme in Sorbian metre, the origins of Slavonic modernism in the lyric poetry of Jurij Chěžka, the island motif in Sorbian literature and questions concerning the reception of the Sorbian literary heritage. It was above all the re-evaluation of older writers contained in his 730-page "Sorbisches Lesebuch" (Sorbian Reader) that revealed Lorenc as a major authority on Sorbian literature and its structures.

Keywords: Kito Lorenc, Sorbian literary history, island motif

Karlheinz Hengst: The International Year of Indigenous Languages and its Significance for Germans and Sorbs

This year sees a worldwide appeal being made to give particular attention to the still existing languages of the original autochthonous inhabitants of territories. The Slavs settled in the uninhabited areas of the present-day German language region east of the rivers Elbe and Saale in the early Middle Ages. For about five centuries they shaped the cultural and economic image of the country. Even under German supremacy from the 10th to the 12th century the Slavs formed the majority of the population. Slavonic dialects of Old Polabian in the north and of Old Sorbian in the south formed the basis for interethnic communication as the indigenous Slavonic language of the time. Cohabitation with a German minority of ruling representatives was superseded by the increasing assimilation of the Slavs by a growing German majority following land development and the influx of new German settlers from the end of the 12th century. Centuries of mutual tolerance were followed by a long period of deprecation of Slav culture, the effects of which stretch into the present. It is therefore important for academic research to correct an obsolete image of the Slavs.

Keywords: autochthonous population, memory culture, cultural legacy, linguistic inheritance, ethnic cohabitation and cooperation, integration und tolerance, intolerance and deprecation

Kito Kšižank: The Toponymy of Eastern Lower Lusatia in the Sorbian, German and Polish Language Contexts of Modern Times

Multiple names can be seen as the norm rather than as an exception in the context of post-national conceptions of history. It can hardly be seen as a peculiarity that when two different languages are in contact, the relevant systems of proper names influence each other. It is less common, at least in Central Europe, that such contacts involve three languages, especially when these influences are not only one-sided, but also mutual.

This is the case in the eastern regions of Lower and Upper Lusatia, where, as in other areas of German-Slavonic contact, numerous Slavonic geographical names have been adopted in German linguistic usage. Here, on the eastern periphery of the Sorbian language area, the opposite case, the borrowing of German name formations by Sorbian, can be easily observed, to a certain degree. Added to this, the collection of Sorbian names in the 19th century, coinciding with the Sorbian cultural renaissance, had the aim of providing quasi-official name formations for Sorbian linguistic practice. It was inevitable that on the periphery of the Sorbian language area at that time this process led to reconstructions, which can be described as conversions of German place names into a Sorbian form. After the transition of these areas to the east of the River Neisse to Poland after 1945 the process of converting these place names into Polish began. Although this process was completed quickly, the creation of new names was not done in an arbitrary fashion. There was rather extensive recourse to older traditions, in particular to the store of Sorbian names. The three toponymies of the region are therefore linked to each other through a variety of processes. This is described in detail in the article; all the place names of the eastern region are subdivided and then statistically evaluated. The main focus lies on the modern processes of Sorbianization and Polonization, which have until now been given less attention.

Keywords: toponymy, language contact, Lower Lusatia, borrowing, German, Polish, Lower Sorbian, proper names

Robert Lorenz: Counting Sorbs. Arnošt Muka and his “Statistika lužiskich Serbow”

Between 1884 and 1886, the Sorabist Arnošt Muka published one of the most influential Sorabian scientific works of the 19th and 20th century. His “Statistika lužiskich Serbow” (Statistical Study of the Lusatian Sorbs) can be regarded as the first Sorabian sociological study in history as well as one of the most significant texts of early *Volkskunde* (ethnology) in Central Europe. Despite this fact, the study was never appropriately acknowledged by German scholars, nor could it escape the narrow interpretation of its findings by the vast majority of the Sorabian scientific and public community up to the present day. This essay examines some of the attitudes and intellectual discourse that have led to this present situation and encourages a fresh look at Muka’s work.

Keywords: Sorabian studies, early sociology, field work, population statistics, *Volkskunde* (ethnology), minority, Slavonic-German relationship, imagined communities, writing culture, Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, Richard Andree

Jana Piňosová: The Image of Sorbian in the “Sächsischer Heimatschutz” (Defence of the Saxon Homeland) 1908-1941

For more than thirty years the “Grüne Hefte” (Green Numbers), the proceedings of the society “Sächsischer Heimatschutz”, was *the* central place where images of the Saxon homeland were devised, discussed and distributed. This article focuses on one of these images. It is the image of Sorbian, which crops up again and again in this journal during the years of its existence from 1908 to 1941. A series of selected texts published in the “Grüne Hefte” show that Sorbian is granted little space amongst the wide variety of themes in the journal, but it was nevertheless recognized as representing a part of the Saxon homeland. The manner in which Sorbian was treated in the “Grüne Hefte”, how it was evaluated, and localized geographically and chronologically, indicates the status it held in the Saxon homeland movement of the time. The essay starts by giving a short introduction to the history and significance of the society and shows the phases of its development as a society, in which a particular interest in Sorbian existed. Following this, the central theses are supported by an analysis of the selected sources. Finally, there follows a short summary of the most important events and a statement of further questions that need to be considered.

Keywords: homeland movement, Saxony, Sorbs, society “Sächsischer Heimatschutz”, Upper Lusatia, regional history, first half of the 20th Century

Cordula Ratajczak, Nicole Dolowy-Rybińska: Lost Potential. The Problematical Question of the Sorbian “New Speakers”

This article draws on sociolinguistic fieldwork among students of an Upper Sorbian school, where the revitalization project of the minority is continuing in a threefold educational model designed to produce new speakers. It discusses the problems of these new speakers of the Upper Sorbian language within the context of this educational structure in different respects: the problem of how to acquire different areas of competence in Sorbian, how to get access to the language-speaking community and how to gain social practice in the language. This ethnographic research sheds light on the complicated process of identity building and on linguistic ideological issues that are raised about the legitimacy and authenticity of Sorbian language learners in the context of strictly divided

Sorbian-German worlds. The article shows further how the lack of hybrid identity models prevents integration into the language-speaking community and the reversal of language shift in former Sorbian-speaking families.

Keywords: Sorbian, New Speaker, language revitalization, education, legitimacy, identity, hybridity

Franc Šěn: Four Songs of Praise to the Peasantry

There are four small anonymous printed leaflets in the library of the National Museum of Prague. They are undated with no indication of location or year and contain four hymns of praise to the peasantry, written in the Upper Sorbian Catholic language variant. Based on the themes and details of the print, they seem to originate from the 1790s. Two texts are formally different translations of Gottlob Wilhelm Burmann's song, "The Peasant is a Noble Man". They contain in one case two and in the other case three additional verses critical of the nobility and town folk, which have not yet been found in any German version. Two further texts, which present an idealized picture of the life of the Sorbian peasant in winter, could have been written by Bosćij Michał Wićaz (= Sebastian Michael Lehmann, 1747–1803) from Prautitz. If these leaflets were not confiscated as a result of the more severe censorship in relation to the peasant uprisings in 1790 in Electoral Saxony, the prudent printer or the author himself may pulped them.

Keywords: Sorbian folk songs, praise of the peasantry, Bosćij Michał Wićaz, Gottlob Wilhelm Burmann