



Nicole Dołowy-Rybińska: The Upper Sorbian Intelligentsia in Relation to the Slavs

This article reports on part of a research project conducted within the context of a Sorbian Institute scholarship concerning relations, contacts and influences between Upper Sorbs and other Slavs. The first part of this article presents the results of the survey based on a questionnaire, conducted within four age groups of Upper Sorbs. The questions relate to declared passive and active knowledge of Slavonic languages, especially Czech, Polish and Russian; the opinion of Upper Sorbs concerning the usefulness of Slavonic languages in different spheres of life; the frequency of trips to and stays in Slav countries; the nature of relations with people belonging to other Slav nations. Another group of questions concerns the existence of a “Slav community” and the role Slavs could play in safeguarding the Sorbian language and culture. The statistical results are presented and discussed. The second part of the article is based on interviews with representatives of the principal Upper Sorbian institutions. Four problems concerning the present institutional relations between Upper Sorbian and Slav institutions/organisations are pointed out: 1) the nature of these relations; 2) the question of the attractiveness of Slav states for Upper Sorbs; 3) their functioning in the capitalist system; 4) the problems for Sorbs related to declaring a preference for Slavs over other nations.

Keywords: Upper Sorbs, Slavs, Relations between Upper Sorbs and other Slavs, Slavonic languages and mutual intelligibility, Upper Sorbian intelligentsia

Michael Richter: Wendish/Sorbian Majorities? Controversial Censuses between 1925 and 1951

The question of the proportion of the Wendish/Sorbian population in relation to the German population has been controversial throughout the 20th Century. The National Socialists were not the first ones to ignore Wendish ethnicity by regarding the Wends as Germans who spoke a Slavonic language. The Domowina questioned the validity of the figures given in the census of 1925 for the Wendish-speaking population and organised its own count, which did not however produce any statistically reliable results. The census of 1939, in which almost all Wends suppressed their links to Wendish ethnicity in the face of threats of repression, had no validity. After the end of the Second World War in 1945 the Domowina also questioned the validity of the censuses ordered by the Soviet occupying power, and as in the Weimar Republic reacted by producing its own figures. These exaggerated statistics were just as irrelevant as the official figures. Overall, the results from censuses between 1910 and 1946 show a steady, sometimes sharp decline in the Wendish/Sorbian population in the period from the Weimar Republic to the Soviet Occupation Zone.

Keywords: Census, Domowina, Wendish, Wendish/Sorbian Majorities, Saxony, Lower Silesia, Lusatia, Bautzen, Kamenz, Löbau, Hoyerswerda, Rothenburg, Language, Ethnicity

Grzegorz Szpila: English Borrowings in the Contemporary Upper-Sorbian Press

The paper examines the presence of English borrowings in contemporary Upper-Sorbian newspapers and magazines. The article discusses the process of borrowing from English into Upper-Sorbian in the context of language contact between the three languages:



Upper-Sorbian, German, and English. The author analyses the collected lexical material (600 items) from various perspectives: parts of speech, spelling, and morpho-syntactic features. The English borrowings in Upper-Sorbian are also scrutinized semantically: they are discussed in terms of lexical fields they form in Upper-Sorbian as well as in terms of semantic adaptations that occur in the process of borrowing. Additionally, the author discusses derivational processes that English loanwords may undergo in the Upper-Sorbian language. Last but not least, the author talks about the reasons for the occurrence of English lexical borrowings in the Upper-Sorbian press of recent years as well as in this Slavonic language in general.

Keywords: Loan Words, Anglicisms, Upper Sorbian, English, German, Upper Sorbian Periodicals

Edmund Pech: Sorbian Church Life in Lower Lusatia during the Weimar Republic based on Reports of Church Visitations in the Parishes of Briesen, Dissen and Drachhausen

There were nine parishes in the Church Province of Brandenburg after the First World War, in which services in Sorbian were still held, although it was only in the parish of Dissen that a service in Sorbian was held every Sunday, much to the credit of Pastor Bogumił Śwjela. A service in Sorbian was only held once or twice a month in the other parishes. The 1920s saw a further decline in the use of the Lower Sorbian language in the churches. The reasons for this lay on the one hand in the decline of the number of clergy who spoke the language, on the other hand in the low level of interest in Sorbian shown by parish councils or members of the congregation. In the district of Cottbus there were still only four pastors in office in 1930, who could be considered bilingual. As a result, Pastor Bogumił Śwjela was given the task between 1931 and 1933 to give tuition in the Sorbian language in Lower Lusatia to German pastors and students of theology. Despite these efforts, the regular holding of services in Sorbian was stopped in all parishes by 1934, with the exception of Dissen. At the same time, again with the exception of Dissen, confirmation classes in Sorbian for children stopped.

Keywords: Sorbian Church Life, Congregation, Parish Council, Church Service, Confirmation Classes, Lower Lusatia, Church Province of Brandenburg, Sorbian/Wendish, Briesen, Dissen, Drachhausen, Ethnicity, Language, Weimar Republic

Franc Šěn: The Correspondence between Jan Skala and Ota Wićaz (1921–1935)

Jan Skala (1889–1945) was a journalist, politician concerned with minorities, editor of “Kulturwehr”, the journal of national minorities in Germany, and also a Sorbian writer. So far only extracts of his correspondence have been published. This article contains the complete correspondence with Ota Wićaz (1874–1952), the grammar school teacher and Sorbian cultural historian living in Stollberg/Erzgebirge. The correspondence discusses issues related to literature and cultural politics. Skala also reports on his failed attempt as editor to revive the daily newspaper in Bautzen, “Serbske Nowiny”.

Keywords: Jan Skala, Correspondence, Sorbian Literature, Lyric Poetry, Weimar Republic, 20th Century