

Madlena Mahling, Fabian Kaulfürst: Two Sorbian Letters by Johannes Jacobæi. Historical and Linguistic Insights

This article deals with two texts from 1745: They comprise the two oldest known letters in Sorbian language. The sender, Johannes Jacobæi, was born in the former Habsburg-Hungarian town of Modra, and had studied in Wittenberg. He was a resident of Dresden at the time of writing these letters. These documents were created in the context of his, in the end, unsuccessful application to obtain the post of the Sorbian diacunate in Lübben. Certain linguistic features contained in both documents are discussed in the article. The question of whether Jacobæi composed these letters in Lower Sorbian/Wendish himself, or whether he received help from someone proficient in the language cannot be answered definitively. Certain Czech and Slovak linguistic features used in the texts perhaps indicate that Jacobæi was the author himself.

Keywords: Oldest letters in Sorbian language, Lower Sorbian, Johannes Jacobæi, Lübben, Sorbian in administrative contexts, linguistic analysis

Piotr Palys: Silesian Uprisings in the Sorbian Press

The article analyzes the reports of the Sorbian press about Polish uprisings in Upper Silesia. These events were reported by two Upper Sorbian magazines: “Serbske Nowiny” and “Katolski Posoł”. The materials posted there were characterized by journalistic professionalism. Attempts were made to maintain the greatest objectivity, using not only German sources of information, but also Polish, French and American sources. At the same time, sympathy for the Polish side was not hidden.

Keywords: Upper Silesia, Silesian uprisings, Lusatia, Sorbian press, Serbske Nowiny, Katolski Posoł

Robert Lorenz: Three-Countries-Corner. On Upper Lusatia as an Interrelated Region Using the Example of the Football Club “Upper Lusatia” of Neugersdorf

This article uses the example of the Neugersdorf football club as part of a micro-ethnographic field study designed to investigate the state of amateur football in Upper Lusatia after 1990. The game and the club are seen as the place to negotiate the consequences of the transformation process, with which this border region and the industrial community of Neugersdorf, which has been a traditional part of it, finds itself confronted after German reunification. Against this difficult background, those responsible in the club have succeeded in putting the club into the position of being the most successful amateur football club in Upper Lusatia by occupying a place in the highest German amateur league for a number of seasons after 2010. Part of their successful strategy consisted in integrating experienced, well-trained footballers from neighbouring Northern Bohemia into the club. In the context of the field studies and four interviews within the club, the study pursues the question as to whether those involved in this process of internationalization began to revise their view of their club, of the border region and of their German-Czech surroundings, and also whether a new regional concept is starting to develop, which crosses frontiers. The findings of the investigation in this respect make clear that for the people involved sober cost-benefit calculations represent the most important

element in confronting the challenges of being situated in this peripheral border area, and out-of-date perceptions of foreignness are only slowly being undermined by common everyday experiences. This observation leads in the conclusion of the study to questioning in this discussion the dominant metaphor of (Upper) Lusatia as “providing a bridge”. In its place, the concept of an interrelated region is considered more fruitful for a scientific analysis, and five theses are presented for further discussion within Sorbian studies on this German-Slav area of contact.

Keywords: Frontier region, Upper Lusatia, transformation process, amateur sport, ethnography of football, interrelated region, German-Czech relations, Sorbian studies

Christian Zschieschang: Onomastics and Sorbian Studies. Potential Joint Fields of Research

Onomastics is a very broad, diverse area of research. It is not only a branch of linguistics, but it also offers numerous points of contact with historical, social and cultural studies. In the past, research into Sorbian names concentrated on diachronic studies, especially on place and personal names. In future, it will be necessary to broaden the attention to other questions, which are presented in the article. From these will flow potentially fruitful areas of knowledge for Sorbian studies. These are not only to be found in the “classical” thematic areas of diachronically organized etymological investigation. The focus is rather on areas of research, which concentrate on the present day, namely on the function of names in the most diverse areas of culture and society, on the communication of current onomastic knowledge to those interested outside an academic audience, and on the integration of onomastics into interdisciplinary contexts. The relevant areas of research are outlined thematically.

Keywords: Data bases, field names, names of inland waters, interdisciplinarity, Linguistic Landscape, lexicography of names, place names, personal names

Jan Mahling: On the Place Name “Schiebock”

The second name “Schiebock” for the town of Bischofswerda was developed in the 20th century as a playful abbreviation of the real place name. This kind of process can also be demonstrated in relation to other four-syllabled place names in Upper Lusatia. There is no evidence of the influence of Sorbian on the formation of the name Schiebock. There is also no firm historical evidence of a popular etymological derivation of the name from the use of pushcarts, nor of a linguistic derivation from a fictitious Sorbian place name *Přibok*. There is no need to claim that there was a Sorbian village of Přibok on the banks of the Wesenitz, and as a result the problem of the handing down of the name, not documented until 1973, disappears. The connection to the pushcart, as a subsidiary association, remains in place in the derivation presented, without there being an assumption that there is a connection to particular historical events in the history of the town.

Keywords: Bischofswerda, nickname, Upper Lusatia, Schiebock, special language, second name

Thomas Menzel: The Gender Linguistics of Sorbian: Foundations in Inflectional Morphology

Preferences in gender linguistics can include both making clear gender distinctions in speech in relation to individual persons, as well as using gender-neutral descriptions of people. Both aims can only be fulfilled in Sorbian by using complex formal structures, as the inflectional category of gender in Sorbian is based on the obligatory expression of gender differences when referring to people. In particular, the claimed departure in German gender linguistics from the “generic masculine” could only be achieved in Sorbian at the expense of linguistic economy. This applies more to Upper Sorbian than to Lower Sorbian, which has after all given up gender differentiation in plural inflection, also in parts of the dual. It is proposed that any gender linguistic moves in Sorbian should take Slavic languages as their model, e. g. Polish, rather than German.

Keywords: Gender linguistics, comparison between Slavonic languages, inflectional morphology, noun declensions, grammatical gender and animacy