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Slavonic Onomastics. Encyclopaedia. A Review

Flourishing in Poland since the middle of 19th century, onomastics has come to deal with various categories of proper names. Monographs treating of hydronymy, urban names, zoonyms, literary and biblical onomastics as well as dictionaries of personal and place-names, good language dictionaries, and ethymological and sociolinguistic studies have made their appearance beside traditional works on place- and personal names.

This richness of the onomastic literature was provoking theoretical questions, especially of the terminological and the methodological kind. Similar problems were discussed not only in the neighbouring countries, which Polish scientists regularly cooperated with, but also world-wide. The encounter of the Polish or, more broadly, Slavic science with international scientific milieus at conferences and international congresses (especially ICOS) have also inspired synthetic presentations and summaries of progress in various areas of research on proper names. At the turn of the 21st century such overviews appeared in Poland in the form of encyclopaedia or of collection of synthetic articles (*Polskie nazwy własne...*). Similar collections have been published slightly earlier in the Czech Republic and Germany. A wide interest, not limited to the academic milieu, with which these publications have met, inclined the Commission of Slavonic Onomastics of the International Committee of Slavonic Specialists to undertake a project of a holistic review of the whole Slavic onomastics, its achievements to date, of the scope of research undertaken in various countries and research centres, and of methodologies, terms and concepts used in the research. The review was to be prepared according to uniform principles, which would facilitate comparisons and extrac-

tion of data. International cooperation of similar sort among the Slavic countries had brought splendid results with regard to the series of contemporary grammars, so it was expected that it would do likewise in the case of onomastics.

The great international work on the encyclopaedia of Slavic onomastics was organized and coordinated by a Polish team, supported by specialists from twelve countries¹: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany (parts concerning the regions of Lusatia and Polabia), Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia. The programme was financed by the Polish State Committee for Scientific Research. A questionnaire in the form of a list of issues had been sent to the twelve countries. It took several years to work out the final conception of this synthesis and to collect and edit the abundant and variegated material provided by co-operators. Finally, the work was published in two thick volumes. The first volume is devoted mainly to theoretic and anthroponymic issues while the second is focused on geographic names and on the newer currents in research (chrematonymy, literary onomastics etc.). The material is presented in the form of thematic chapters. There are twelve articles in each chapter – responses from the countries mentioned above. The final effect is not so much an encyclopaedia as a report on the state of onomastic research in particular Slavic countries. It also reflects the authors' evaluation of the achievements of their respective countries. The subjects of chapters are as follows:

- history of onomastics in the given country
- research methods
- terminology
- state of research
- etymological research related to proper names
- pre-Slavic traces in proper names
- foreign influences in the recent name stratum
- names in border regions

- linguistic policies and pragmatics
- anthroponymy (names, surnames, other items)
- toponymy (place-names, microtoponyms, oronyms, hydronyms, urban names)
- zoonymy
- chrematonymy
- proper names in the social context
- literary onomastics
- onomastics in the religious context
- changes of names in the 20th century (within categories of names)

The purpose of this basic scheme (for additional sub-points see below) was twofold. The first was to present uniformly, individual character of received texts notwithstanding, the Slavic onomastics in the comparative perspectives: historical-genetical and typological. The second was to bring to light methodological principles of research: basic assumptions, manners of classification, aims of scholarly works etc. The *Encyclopaedia* has successfully accomplished these two objectives. What emerges is, on the one hand, a confirmation of the known unity of Slavic regions with regard to certain lexical and grammatical categories and, on the other, a picture of specificity of names of every country which depends mainly on its history and linguistic and cultural (also religious) contacts. As Ewa RZETELSKA-FELESZKO writes in the Introduction: "the aim of the SOE is to present both what is common as well as what is different in contemporary Slavonic countries. It is to show proper names, from the oldest to the newest, to give a description of all the categories of names (names that are personal, geographical and so on), taking into consideration the influences of non-Slavonic substrata, adstrata, borderlands and language islands, and wherever possible, also Slavonic islands with foreign surrounding" (v. I, p. XXVI).

One of the rules accepted for this international project was that the authors should write in their native languages. Thus we have

a multilingual work in our hands, which makes it all the more precious for any slavist but may be slightly troublesome for non-specialists. The editors have preserved the original style of the received texts, respecting not only the specificity of different countries and of onomastic schools prevailing there, but also individuality of the authors. The number of authors was significant, especially from countries where onomastics is a well-established discipline. In some cases whole teams of scientists have undertaken the work, for example, from the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Poland and Germany. The articles presented by them are perhaps the most detailed and specialized, since particular topics matched the specialities of the writers. Materials from certain countries were submitted by three- or two-person teams (Slovakia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Serbia). Finally, sometimes the burden of discussing all the issues was handled single-handedly by one scholar (Russia, Byelorussia, Macedonia, Croatia).

The abundance of material has made it necessary to divide the *Encyclopaedia* into two volumes, as mentioned above. Let us now take a closer look at their contents. Volume I deals with the following topics: history of onomastics (34 pages), onomastic theories (21 pages), methods of research (21), terminology (13), the current state of research (30), etymologies (27), pre-Slavic and Slavic proper names (31), more recent foreign influences (26), border regions (45), linguistic policies and pragmatics (35), names of persons (88), surnames (86), other personal names (60). The first volume also contains the Preface (in Polish, German and English) by Ewa RZETELSKA-FELESZKO and an introductory chapter by Rudolf ŠRÁMEK entitled *Onomastická teorie ve slovanské onomastice*. The main body of articles is preceded by a list of authors of volume I, bibliography of works quoted in volume one (listed by countries) and by a list of abbreviations (also listed by countries).

In the Preface Ewa RZETELSKA-FELESZKO sets out the aim of the book, the scope of gathered material and the manner of its presentation, the conception of the whole publication and its part and finally

gives an account of the process of writing and editing of the *Encyclopaedia*. Rudolf ŠRÁMEK's article can be regarded as programmatic for the whole work.

It goes well beyond the framework of the chapter "Onomastic Theories". The result is a personal account of the history of Slavic onomastics from the perspective of basic assumptions, ideological premisses and conceptions of the place of onomastics among other disciplines which were current in different periods. The author is notable for his great scholarly achievements (especially in the theoretic-methodological field) and wide knowledge of the current achievements of onomastics, not only in the Bohemian or Slavic areas, but world-wide, being a member of the ICOS board. In the article he shares his experiences and opinions on the current state of research. He does not seek to hide that in many cases the progress (or lack of it) in onomastics and its position among other disciplines depends on the low level of theoretical reflection which accompanies gathering of material.

Chapter 1 is devoted to the history of onomastics, with the special focus on the following (sub-)points: 1. the status of onomastics in relation to other disciplines, 2. most important achievements, 3. biograms of distinguished scholars. Articles from Russia and Slovenia provide the most extensive information on these points. A look at the list of names which appear in point 3 (biograms) might be interesting. In the Polish section, W. TASZYCKI, S. ROSPOND, H. GÓRNOWICZ and H. BOREK are mentioned. The authors present only persons no longer alive and, with some exceptions, other sections follow the suit. The Bohemian section contains the biograms of V. ŠMILAUER and J. SVOBODA, the Slovak – of J. STANISLAV, B. VARSÍK, V. BLANÁR, R. KRAJČOVIČ and M. MAJTÁN. From Lusatia and Polabia A. MUKA and R. TRAUTMANN are mentioned, from Russia – A. A. REFORMATSKI, A. P. DUL'ZON, E. M. MURZAJEV, from Byelorussia – M. B. BIRYLA, from Bulgaria – V. I. GEORGIJEV, I. V. DURIDANOV, J. D. ZAIMOV, N. P. KOVAČEV, from Serbia – M. PAVLOVIĆ, M. BUDIMIR and R. BOŠKOVIĆ, from Croatia – T. MARETIĆ and P. SKOK, from Slove-

nia – F. MIKLOŠIČ, L. PINTAR, F. RAMOVŠ. In the Ukrainian and the Macedonian section there are no biograms, only a list of the most distinguished – according to the authors – onomasts².

Chapter 2 is concerned with onomastic theories, and particularly with typologies. As Volume I is opened by a separate article on onomastic theories by R. ŠRÁMEK, the Bohemian section contains only a short note. In contrast, the article concerning Russia, written by A. SUPERANSKAJA, a distinguished specialist in this field, is very comprehensive both with regards to theories and typologies. It is to be regretted that the names of W. TASZYCKI, S. ROSPOND and H. BOREK have not appeared in the article in the Polish section. In consequence, they are mentioned only in other parts of this chapter: in Lusatian-Polabian, Bulgar, Serbian, Croatian sections. I liked particularly the typology of all proper names mentioned in the Slovak part: bionyms (proper names of living beings), geonyms, chrematonyms. Cosmonyms are left out, however, since they are not contained in the category of geonyms – the opposite is true³.

Chapter 3: Research methods and their evolution (sub-point: the relation between methods and theoretic achievements of onomastics worldwide). The majority of authors presented their answer in the form of a long stretch of text without subpoints. To some extent, this seems to be an illustration of R. ŠRÁMEK's theses about weaknesses of theoretic inquiry in most of Slavic countries. One can find a few more detailed presentations, however, for example, V. BLANÁR'S article from Slovakia.

Chapter 4 treats of onomastic terminology, including international (Slavic) terminology published in 1983. The content of the book has partly a character of response to a survey as the presence of this subpoint clearly shows. It also reveals specific interests of some members of the editing board who were engaged in creating a unified onomastic terminology. Responses leave no doubt, however, that the influence of dictionaries of terminology (which were published in 1974 and 1983) in Slavonic countries is negligible and strongly shaped by indigenous tradition⁴. In many parts of this

chapter, additional terms functioning in a given country (for example, in Slovakia) were mentioned⁵. I have found chapter 4 and the supplementary index of terms by countries in volume II a highly interesting reading. It is surprising, for example, that the richest collection of terms was submitted by Ukrainian scholars (whole 6 pages!), while in case of other countries 2-3 pages were sufficient (which gives approximately 300 terms). Unfortunately, the terms are usually not coupled with definitions, contrary to what reader might expect from an encyclopaedia. The terms are a methodological tool which urgently needs the consideration of linguists. It is necessary to organize coherently the pool of terms in every country – creating tables of words and their meanings is just one of the ways to achieve this. Linguists-onomasts must also take into consideration the existing terminological traditions of geographers⁶ and historians.

Chapter 5 describes the state of research. Co-operators were asked to write about the base of research as well (i. e. about dictionaries, sources etc.). The chance of gathering information on unpublished sources has unfortunately been forfeited, since the instruction had not clearly demanded it. An index of publications such as dictionaries and atlases is necessary for an encyclopaedia of course, but there was also an opportunity of familiarizing the readers with the sources piled up in archives. Such information (including call numbers of archival sources) was sent only from Ukraine, Byelorussia and Macedonia; in other parts only general information on types of sources worth excerption was provided.

Chapter 6 is devoted to etymological studies related to proper names. Subpoints contain information on actual research, achievements in this field, examples of etymologies of proper names were also given. It seems that the authors had problems with deciding what, besides examples, should be included in the answers. Hence, many references to other chapters of the *Encyclopaedia*. The result of the suggestion to include examples was a rather haphazard collection of words, which nonetheless merited a separate index.

Since such index is lacking, and some authors have provided quite extensive etymological accounts, I have taken the liberty to list the words here:

Examples from Poland: *Chrobry, Warszawa, Kraków, Mickiewicz, Sienkiewicz,*

from The Czech Republic: *Jizera, Vltava, Milotice,*

from Russia: *Kursk, Bakša, Korsuń/Korsun, Arist, Aristarch, Afanasij,*

from Ukraine: *Karpaty, Čeremoš, Larha, Lypov'any, Sadahura, Čyšma, Novoselyc'a, Kalka, Kajala, Tarama, Berda, Al'ta, Jaroslav', Rus',*

from Byelorussia: *Palata,*

from Macedonia: *Skopje, Bitola,*

from Serbia: *Jerez, Mal'en, Povlen, Klina,*

from Croatia: *Stobreč.*

Remaining national sections do not contain examples.

Chapter 7 is entitled *Pre-Slavic and Slavic Proper Names*. Not every country has sent materials, hence the information is not complete (for example, there is no article from the Czech Republic, in the Byelorussian part only Slavic names were considered). Other authors have extended their articles, however. In the Russian part, for example, beside the data on pre-Slavic names of Indo-European origin, we also get remarks on non-Indo-European elements. In the Polish and Croatian articles, the reader will find useful maps illustrating the range and location of geographic names having pre-Slavic roots.

Foreign influences – substrata, adstrata, superstrata – are discussed in chapter 8. In this chapter again there is no article from the Czech Republic. The authors of the Lusatian-Polabian part refer readers to other chapters. A map of routes of German colonization of Polish lands can be found in the Polish part.

Chapter 9 on names in border regions is one of the most extended in the first volume. The following subpoints were included in the instruction for authors:

- 9.1 Slavic-Slavic borderlands
- 9.2 Slavic-non-Slavic borderlands
- 9.3 mixed regions
- 9.4 Slavic names in Hungary
- 9.5 Slavic names in Romania
- 9.6 Slavic names in Greece

The authors of the questionnaire wanted to take into account not only borderlands, but also language islands, which explains the appearance of Hungary, Romania and Greece. In Slovenian section there is also an information on Slavic names in northern Italy. A general reference to other chapters in the Lusatian-Polabian section lacks a specific reference to chapter 14, where Slavic place names in Bavaria are considered.

Policies and pragmatics related to proper names are the subject-matter of chapter 10, which contains the following subpoints:

1. attitudes towards names functioning in minorities
2. standardization of proper names
3. laws pertaining to proper names
4. purist and liberal attitudes.

Almost all countries have sent in articles – which is probably due to their taking part in the international cooperation in standardization within the UN framework. For obvious reasons there is no article about Polabia. Unfortunately, no information on point 1. has been provided in articles on the Czech Republic, Lusatia and Byelorussia.

Chapter 11 opens a series of chapters devoted to anthroponyms. It treats of first names, one of the oldest and well-studied topics in onomastics. No wonder then, that the received articles treated at length, and quite exhaustively, the following points:

1. Slavic names
2. Christian names
3. foreign secular names, their motivations
4. hypocoristic and diminutive names
5. feminine and masculine names
6. the state of research.

In Polabian section there is obviously no information on point 3. Similarly extended is treatment of surnames in chapter 12. Its sub-points are:

1. typical official structures
2. surnames of spouses and children
3. development of surnames
4. word-formation and semantics
5. foreign surnames
6. the state of research.

Unfortunately, there is no mention of foreign names in the Byelorussian section.

Chapter 13 devoted to remaining categories of personal names is less homogenous:

1. nicknames, monikers
2. pseudonyms
3. ethnonyms
4. heraldic and dynastic names
5. other categories.

Particularity of various countries is especially clearly visible in this chapter. Those countries which in middle ages were in a state of political dependence, which for a long time did not have their own state, do not have sections on heraldic and dynastic names (Slovakia, Macedonia, Byelorussia). In Russia, the category of patrony-

mics ("otčestva") is alive and vital, hence it was treated at length. Similarly in the Slovak section, much attention was devoted to unofficial system of identification, which for many years has been studied with excellent results by V. BLANÁR. In the Croatian part there are interesting remarks on names (first names) of unwanted and abandoned children. The structure of particular sections is rather diverse, which is due to different scope of research in particular countries. These differences are, in turn, largely determined by the history of respective societies. In the Lusatian section there is no material related to nicknames, monikers and pseudonyms, in the Byelorussian, Bulgar and Slovenian parts – to ethonyms. This chapter certainly needs to be supplemented, as gaps are not always due to a complete lack of monographs, but for example to authors' difficulties in reaching diffused and often hardly accessible works on time. But dialect names, school nicknames, not to mention ethonyms, undoubtedly function in all the Slavic regions.

The main part of the second volume begins with chapter 14 on names of towns and villages, containing the subpoints:

1. classifications
2. oikonyms in relation to processes of settling of Slavic peoples
3. semantic categories
4. word-formation categories
5. evolution of names, new and most recent names
6. names of towns
7. toponymic atlases
8. the state of research.

Even though it is the longest chapter in the whole *Encyclopaedia*, responses to some subpoints are missing. In the Slovakian section, there is no information on the new and most recent names and, astonishingly, on the state of research. In the part on Lusatia there are no data on names of towns. On the other hand, German authors extended the material by including Slavic names in Bavaria

(2 pages!). The information on toponymic atlases is missing in the Russian article.

This chapter contains interesting maps in the Polish, Lusatian-Polabian and Macedonian parts.

The treatment of microtoponyms in chapter 15 is organized according to the following subpoints:

1. definitions, terminology
2. recent classifications
3. semantic categories
4. word-formation categories
5. regional features
6. changes in names, standardization
7. state of research

The Bohemian article was divided in two sub-sections, one devoted to Bohemia proper, the other to Moravia and Silesia. In the first part, subpoint 5 has been omitted, while the second part has not been divided into subpoints.

In chapter 16, devoted to oronyms, the names were divided as follows:

1. pre-Slavic names
2. Slavic names
3. recent non-Slavic names
4. tourist names.

To my surprise, Bohemians and Slovaks have presented very short articles, in contrast to Russia (where subpoints 3 and 4 are missing), Ukraine, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. Understandably, no article came from Byelorussia. A classification of mountain names in Bulgarian section is worth attention.

Studies on Slavic oronymy are relatively sparse, in contrast to hydronymy, which is presented in chapter 17 in several subpoints:

1. pre-Slavic names
2. Slavic names
3. specificity of a given country
4. semantic classification
5. word-formation classification
6. foreign, artificial, administrative names
7. changes of names
8. the state of research

Quite detailed information was provided by all countries, which facilitates evaluation of the advancement of hydronymic studies in Slavic regions. Only the lack of subpoints 3–6 in the Russian article might present some difficulties.

Urban names can be found there, where are Slavic towns. This obvious truth explains why in chapter 18 (Urbanonymy) there are no data from Polabia. No material was sent from Slovenia either, which is harder to understand.

Chapter 19 (Zoonymy) has the following construction:

1. specific characteristics of animal names
2. folk names and urban names
3. the state of research

There are no articles concerning Polabia and Slovenia.

Chapter 20 is devoted to chrematonymy. The following issues were discussed:

1. definition of chrematonymy
2. particular properties of various chrematonyms
3. functions of chrematonyms
4. foreign and local chrematonyms
5. policies and practices related to chrematonyms
6. the state of research

No articles were prepared about Byelorussia, Croatia, Lusatia and Polabia, and some subpoints are missing e.g. subpoint 5 in the Polish section, or 4 in the Russian section.

Chapter 21 is entitled *Proper names and social issues*. The topics were:

1. social differentiation of names
2. name and national and ethnic identification
3. prestige and names
4. other problems.

The study of this subject matter has not been very advanced so far, as many gaps in this chapter show. No material was provided on Lusatia and Polabia, Byelorussia, Croatia and Slovenia. In articles from Russia and Macedonia subpoint 3 has been omitted.

Literary onomastics (Chapter 22) is a relatively new branch of onomastics. It was presented in the subpoints:

1. functions of names
2. relations with literary currents and genres
3. typologies
4. proper names in translations
5. proper names in folklore.

Polish scholars have significant achievements in this field. Many works are published in Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria and Serbia as well. In the Bohemian article only names in folklore were discussed. Sometimes the information on typologies is lacking (Macedonia, Croatia). No materials were sent from Polabia, Byelorussia and Slovenia.

Responses concerning proper names in the context of religion are also fragmentary. Chapter 23 is devoted to these issues:

1. pre-Slavic names

2. Slavic mythological names
3. Christian names and names in other religions
4. laicization

We find no articles at all in Slovakian, Polabian, Byelorussian and Slovenian sections, and fragmentary treatment in the Bohemian (subpoints 1 and 4 lacking), Lusatian (subpoints 1, 2 lacking) and Croatian ones (subpoint 4 missing).

Volume II is closed by "Changes in names in the 20th century" (Chapter 24). Especially worth notice are extended articles from Byelorussia and Bulgaria. Materials from Croatia and Slovenia are lacking.

The above review reveals many gaps in information. Reasons are diverse. Most gaps – nine – are in materials from Polabia, as this is only historically a Slavic territory, so all new phenomena concerning proper names are not present there. A highly selective interest in onomastic issues is visible in Byelorussia and Slovenia, where the oldest, traditional branches of scholarship are cultivated (toponymy, anthroponymy). I would trace other gaps back to a lack of interest on the part of teams engaged in works on *Slavonic Onomastics*.

The instruction for cooperating authors was designed in such way, that some issues appear in many places so that various aspects of the same topic are illuminated (for example, methodological and terminological issues, classifications, foreign influence, legal aspects of functioning of proper names etc.). The reader should not be disheartened by scant information in one place, since by using the index of terms, and sometimes through index of names and bibliography, she can extend and supplement it.

This encyclopaedia, as most works of this type, brings a necessarily limited material. Due to the accepted conception of constructing the *Encyclopaedia*, it is the knowledge of individual authors, their preferences in selection of bibliography and use of methods that determine the value of provided information. Some authors

preferred to structure their work around problems, some – around persons. Perhaps it was the demand to meet all the points of the project that resulted in some fragments of *Encyclopaedia* being rather vague.

Like so many international initiatives, this too was not easy to realize. Hence there are many errors, some of which are corrected in the errata at the end of Volume II. In the first volume only 5 errors were noticed, although there are more, to mention for example "choronyms" in the Introduction, p. XVI, as a variant form of "mountain names" instead of "oronyms". This error does not occur further in the text. One can also find substantial errors, as for example in the discussion of Polish eastern borderlands, where personal names derived from local names with *-ski* ending and patronymic names with *-icz*, *-owicz* endings were treated as Polish names (v. I, p. 218).

The *Encyclopaedia* gives a very general information on the current state of onomastic studies. It brings many detailed classification in relatively new fields of onomastic studies, for example, studies on oronyms (v. II, p. 212), theonyms (v. II, p. 496), proper names in literature (v. II, p. 472–473). Another attraction of the book are maps, unfortunately we find no index thereof. It might be regretted that proper names in diaspora have not found their way to the list of topics, even though there are relevant works on names, surnames, geographical names functioning in emigrant societies, on the issues of adaptation etc. No information was provided on the functioning of proper names in Internet, although there are studies devoted to this topic. Yet the gaps in *Slavonic Onomastics* are very inspiring and open the way for supplementary works. Knowing the fate of other international programmes (e.g. of the onomastic atlas), we might be glad that this work has been finished and published. It is necessary indeed for any onomast-slavist.

Anmerkungen

- 1 These are Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany (parts concerning Lusatia and Polabia), Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia.
- 2 Note W. PIANKA, a Polish scholar, in the Macedonian section.
- 3 Nota bene, in chapter 4 which is devoted to terminology, the following classification can be found in the Bohemian section: *toponymum* with the division into *kosmonymum* and *geonymum*, the latter divided into *choronymum*, *oikonymum*, *anoikonymum*.
- 4 I have observed an analogous situation in discussions of linguists, historians and geographers in the course of proceedings of standardization commissions. Each discipline preserves its own terminological tradition and the only solution is to define a given term in relevant contexts.
- 5 The term *kosmonim*, included for example in the Bohemian index, is lacking in the Polish part, even though there are monographs on the subject.
- 6 For many years UN has been publishing a multilingual dictionary of terms used in standardization of geographic names.