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## *West Slavic Onomastics* – An introduction

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## ***West Slavic Onomastics – An introduction***

URSZULA BIJAK, IVETA VALENTOVÁ, AND MILAN HARVALÍK

This section of *Onoma*, a thematically-oriented collection of texts, contains the proceedings of the 27th ICOS Congress in Kraków symposia dedicated to onomastics in the co-hosting West Slavic countries. Initially, it was intended as a collection of articles presenting the achievements of onomastics in Poland, Czechia, and Slovakia. Faced with the war in Ukraine, which began on February 24, 2022, the academic world has unequivocally spoken out against Russia's aggression and supports Ukrainian scientists in their current research projects, as well as in popularizing the achievements of Ukrainian science. Even though the Ukrainian language belongs to the East Slavic group, we have decided to include articles pertaining to the achievements of Ukrainian onomastics in this volume. It is to be seen as our own modest contribution in aiding Ukraine, which is struggling to become part of the democratic, free Western world. We, the West Slavs, have already attained that goal, fortunately in a bloodless way.

The topical part of this issue of *Onoma* includes twelve articles, opening with Polish onomastics, then selected aspects of Slovak and Czech onomastics, and concludes with two texts by Ukrainian onomasticians.

The Polish researchers present the methodology, achievements, and research perspectives of the 4 main subdisciplines of the study of proper names: anthroponomastics, toponomastics, chrematonomastics, and literary onomastics, with a particular focus on the interdisciplinary approach.

Halszka Górny's article is a survey of the achievements of Polish onomasticians within the scope of research on personal names, ranging from the oldest anthroponyms to the modern names and surnames of Poles. The article considers and discusses anthroponomastics pertaining to the entire Polish territory, mainly the works of the Kraków onomastic centre, as well as the most significant monographs presenting the personal names of particular Polish regions, and works taking the sociolinguistic, pragmatolinguistic, cognitive, cultural, and textological-discursive approaches into account in their analyses of first names, surnames, and nicknames.

Urszula Bijak presents the history of toponomastic research in Poland, a tradition spanning more than 100 years. She divides it into a number of periods

but the lion's share of the space is dedicated to the last few decades of development and interdisciplinary research on geographical names. The author describes the Polish schools and centres of research on toponyms, discusses the most significant lexicographical works, and presents the typology of toponomastic monographs (including place, water, and field names). She also provides a critical analysis of the more recent works, concentrating on the methodology used, concluding that "new approaches neither prevail nor dominate the description of toponyms; they rather constitute a valuable supplement and extension to traditional historical-etymological methods".

In Poland, as in the other Slavic countries, newer subdisciplines are successfully practiced along the two traditional branches of onomastics.

In his text Artur Gałkowski supplies an interesting description of the development of chrematonomastics, a new subdiscipline of onomastics which has experienced dynamic growth in recent years. The author defines the notion and scope of chrematonymy before presenting the significant achievements and developmental perspectives of this branch of onomastics. He also dedicates a notable part of the text to taxonomy and chrematonomastic terminology.

The beginning of Polish literary onomastics is dated as 1953, when the first article was published on the names of literary characters (in Polish 18th-century comedy). Magdalena Graf presents the directions of development for this subdiscipline, indicating the interdisciplinary approach as the most significant imperative in such research; she also discusses the most recent trends in its methodology. This description shows literary onomastics as the most open branch of onomastics, one which is "crossing the boundaries of traditional linguistics, reflecting the multi-methodological and transgressive nature of modern science".

The development of Slovak onomastics (as well as its Polish counterpart) went from etymological analyses through the understanding of the content (designative) aspect of proper names and their specific features, to the description of onymic relations in a deep structure with regard to the use of proper names in social communication. Various methodological approaches began to be applied, e.g. linguistic analysis, functional and structural, pragmatic and communicative, textological, socioonomastic, semiotic, lexicographic, and areal or frequency method. This development is presented in three overview studies, which, in addition to the characteristics of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings, seek to show the results achieved within the basic onomastic subdisciplines – anthroponomastics, toponomastics and chrematonomastics.

The article by Iveta Valentová and Ľubor Králik presents the main theses of Blanár's functional theory of proper names, which is the basis of the Slovak school of onomastics. The methodology of modelling proper names is briefly described, one which was mainly applied to the material of the so-called "living" (unofficial) anthroponyms from central Slovakia. The authors further

characterize the most important analytical and synthesizing studies, monographic and lexicographical works on the origin and development of the Slovak anthroponymic system, on the first names and surnames from the territory of Slovakia and from Slovak language enclaves in the so-called Lower Land (especially in present-day Hungary and Serbia).

The article by Juraj Hladký and Andrej Závodný focuses on research results in Slovak oikonymy and anoikonymy, which followed up on the works of Vladimír Šmilauer, Ján Stanislav and Branislav Varsik. The authors also characterize the current toponymic projects aimed at processing the lexis of Slovak anoikonyms (minor place-names) and especially hydronyms according to the basins of large rivers (*Hydronymia Slovaciae* project).

Mária Imrichová and Veronika Gondeková dedicate their article to the research of chrematonyms and presents studies by Slovak linguists who are devoted to the forming, motivation, classification and orthography of certain types of chrematonyms. In particular, they describe logonyms, and a current project dealing with the naming models of chrematonyms.

The authors of papers introducing Czech onomastics approach the study of proper names from three perspectives – linguistic (Milan Harvalík), historiographic (Jiří Martínek) and geographic-cartographic (Irena Švehlová).

Milan Harvalík focuses on the development of Czech onomastics in the second half of the 20th century, when the process of the transition of onomastics from the former auxiliary science of history to the modern discipline of linguistics came to fruition in the works of Vladimír Šmilauer and his followers. He shows how a qualitatively new stage in the development of the study of proper names in Czechia was achieved thanks to the progress of onomastic theory and methodology. This progress stems from the increasing use of general linguistic approaches, such as the study of references, tendencies towards categorization, the understanding of proper names as a specific type of semiotic unit, etc., in the works of the most important Czech onomasticians.

The role of onomastics in Czech historiography is noted in the article by Jiří Martínek, with the main emphasis placed on the contribution of onomastics to historical geography and especially its subdiscipline of settlement history. The second part of the text is devoted to the study of changes of toponyms, mainly street names and to a lesser extent oikonyms, in connection with the development of Czech society and historical, political, economic and cultural events that have influenced Czech toponymy.

Irena Švehlová's article documents the work conducted on the standardization of geographical names in Czechia. It provides detailed information on the stages of the standardization of toponyms in the territory of contemporary Czechia, from the creation of independent Czechoslovakia in 1918 to the present day, on the work of the commissions that were established for the purpose of the standardization of geographical names, and on the most important

personalities who participated in the standardization of Czech toponyms.

The two texts by Ukrainian onomasticians concern the study of place names and unofficial anthroponymy.

Yaroslav Redkva and Mykhaylo Lukashchuk present the history of research on Ukrainian settlement names in the last 60 years, a history dominated by historical and linguistic regional studies. The authors discussed more than a dozen of the most valuable toponomastic monographs. The regional trend in research on the oikonymy of Ukraine is continued, and it will enable the development of a nationwide onomasticon in the future.

Halyna Matsyuk introduces the results of very up-to-date research on unofficial names used by soldiers and commanders participating in the Russian–Ukrainian war of 2014–2022. It is an interesting sociolinguistic study of contemporary so-called *call signs*, containing an analysis of their lexical basis.

In summary, it can be stated that onomastics is developing successfully in West Slavic countries. It has become a subdiscipline of linguistics, studying the origin and functioning of proprial naming systems, their implementation in specific social, temporal and local conditions, and analysing individual elements of these systems. West Slavic onomastics is characterized by its interdisciplinarity and cooperation with other linguistic and non-linguistic disciplines, by its specific research material, linking research methods with its own theoretical starting points, by the thematic diversity of its research work, its special onomastic journals, numerous publications, and by its permanent and effective links and ties with higher education.