

Anthroponyms of the Polish-Czech border area – The Moravian Gate

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Abstract

The author describes in the article project of researching the anthroponymy of the Polish-Czech borderland on the section of the Moravian Gate (Gorzyce – Krzyżanowice municipalities on the Polish side and Hat – Hilšeřovice – Bohumín municipalities on the Czech side). The described borderland belongs to the so-called transitional borders, whose characteristic feature is the mixing of the population of two or more nations (or ethnic groups), and the effect of it is movement of the population in this area. As a result, the so-called third culture has developed, which had a major impact on the shape of names of the inhabitants, as well as on the choices of names for their children. Another factor in changing the form of surnames is the interference of an official who has often changed the spelling form of the surname in accordance with the language norm in force in his native language.

The border area around the Moravian Gate is inhabited by multilingual and multicultural population, who have been living here for centuries, so any boundaries between individual communicative communities have been always changing and they still elude any unambiguous and detailed classification. The co-existence of the groups is visible not only in mixed dialects (for example Lach dialects), but also in proper names (anthroponyms, toponyms, chrematonyms, in particular oronyms). Names and surnames are one such group of onyms, reflecting the multiculturality of the inhabitants of the Polish-Czech border area around the Moravian Gate. The choice of the name by the bearer was not random, but its form in a given period was usually a result of random factors.

1. Objective of the research

The objective of our project is to examine names and surnames on tombstones to show the variability, variants and multicultural nature of anthroponyms in the Polish-Czech border area around the Moravian Gate in the 20th and at the beginning of the 21st century. The research will focus on names and surnames of people who lived and died in the area. We would like to focus on unassimilated variants of anthroponyms than forms assimilated by the authorities, and to identify their location-based relations with respect to similar anthroponyms in Poland. This is all the more important since the form of anthroponyms in the area was also significantly affected by migration and cognitive factors. The onomastic material in tombstone inscriptions is a very diverse collection (especially in the case of surnames) and its elements are a product of the linguistic and cultural mosaic on the border where different ethnic and linguistic groups and cultures interact, which has not been investigated before. It is worth adding that the status of the area changed over the centuries, as it was part of either Polish or Czech and Slovakian territory.

We start with a hypothesis that the anthroponymy in this area of contacts between different ethnic groups (Polish, Czech, and German) and overlapping linguistic and cultural impacts resisted pressure on uniformization and adaptation exerted by the foreign onymic system (in this case German or Czech for Polish system) and produced its own, hybrid system, reflecting intensive relations between the ethnic groups (e.g. Balowski 2016). We also intend to carry out a thorough analysis of the process of merging Polish (and Czech) anthroponyms with other anthroponyms to create a specific system, which is typical of language border areas, as reflected in the material with anthroponyms (in particular surnames). The process is the evidence of historical differentiation of ethnic groups and their gradual integration (e.g. Siwek, Kaňok, 2000; Siwek 1996). The naming system which developed in such circumstances is rich in anthroponymic forms with different semantic roots as well as phonetic and morphological forms. To

interpret these facts (which are often difficult to interpret) we need to take into account a number of aspects – often extralinguistic – information such as local circumstances, historical and current information on the border area where the material was collected (its specific nature, geopolitical context), ethnic and linguistic landscape, substratum languages or language interference (Polish-Czech–German), or finally hybrid forms. In addition, a number of onyms have the same Slavic roots because the surnames from the area, which reflect its multiethnic and multicultural nature, originated much earlier. Genetically, their roots are not always diverse and the anthroponym models often overlap. They can be divided into three groups based on their linguistic origin (Polish, Czech, and – later – German). There are also other influences, for example from English.

What also needs to be taken into account is that the inhabitants of the area often had their surnames changed by the authorities, either phonetically (e.g. Kral, Obruśnik) and/or in terms of spelling (e.g. Gawellek, Krall, Kaschny) to make them comply with the official linguistic (graphic) and onomastic system which was in place at the time (quite often the only motivation was political). In this project we undertake to identify changes in the name-generating process that these names have undergone in the area of border contacts (which diachronically was an area of contact between related languages, and synchronically between unrelated languages) and to explain, as far as possible, the role that linguistic as well as historical and cultural factors play in shaping the anthroponymy (for this we will use an environmental interviews). Our hypothesis is that the form of a name or surname is not indifferent to the bearer and to his/her functioning within a given community. Consequently, we aim to analyze four aspects:

1. **G e o g r a p h i c a l d i s t r i b u t i o n o f s u r n a m e s** – geographical relations;
2. **S t r u c t u r a l m o d e l s o f a n t h r o p o n y m s**;
3. **N a m i n g s y s t e m**;

4. **M o d i f i c a t i o n s o f a n t h r o p o n y m s** – hybrid morphological and lexical forms.

An additional objective is to document surnames from that area. We plan to accomplish the objective by creating a dictionary of anthroponyms from the system (e.g. Czyżewski 2013) and a description of hybrid differences on a scale from foreign to Polish/Czech. The data base will include Polish, Czech and German anthroponyms collected during the project (it will remain the property of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures to be used for further comparative studies). The anthroponyms will be also compiled into a dictionary to be made available to everyone on the AMUR Repository website of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.

2. Research material

The research material will include a set of names and surnames collected from tombstone inscriptions from cemeteries in the border area: Racibórz district (10 villages) – Krzyżanowice (Bieńkowice, Bolesław, Chałupki, Krzyżanowice, Nowa Wioska, Owsiszczce, Roszków, Rudyszwałd, Tworków, Zabełków), and Wodzisław district (12 villages) – Gorzyce (Bełsznica, Bluszczów, Czyżowice, Gorzyce, Gorzyczki, Kolonia Fryderyka, Odra, Olza, Osiny, Rogów, Turza Śląska, Uchylsko). In Czechia the material for comparative studies will be collected from cemeteries in the following municipalities: Karvina District – Bohumín (Starý Bohumín, Nový Bohumín) and Opava district – Šilheřovice and Hať. According to our preliminary evaluation both Polish and Czech material would total over 10,000 tokens of names and surnames of the inhabitants of the area.

The use of the collected material, i.e. anthroponyms found on tombstones in cemeteries in the area (we estimate that the set of at least 3,000 surnames and 1,500 names will be selected from about 20,000 inscriptions with names and surnames) will comply with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to

the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), as well as the Personal Data Protection Act of 1 May 2018 and the Act of 21 February 2019 and the Czech law Act 101/2000 of 25 May 2018 and Act 110/2019 (Zákon č. 101/2000 Sb., o ochraně osobních údajů po jeho nowele ze dne 25. května 2018 and Zákon č. 110/2019 Sb. o zpracování osobních údajů).

3. Significance of the project

The anthroponymy of the Polish-Czech border has not been investigated yet. The only studies which covered anthroponyms on a both sides in the border areas were conducted in the Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian border and the Polish-Belarusia-Ukrainian border area around Białystok and Włodawa (see Daczewicz, 2012; Dudej-Szumigaj, 2015; *Onomastyka na pograniczach...*, 2017; Czyżewski, 2013; Sajewicz, 2018; Мельничук, 2013; Ananiewa, 2012). There have been some studies on the anthroponymy from a historical perspective: Cieszyn Silesia (Milerski, 1996; Łuc, 2016) and Jabłonków (Lipowski, 2002), as well and the dialect of Krzanowice (Szymańska, 2009), but the border area around the Moravian Gate has not been investigated so far.

Since antiquity the Moravian Gate was a major route between the South (Rome, Greece, Czechia, Croatia, Serbia) and the North (Poland, Russia, Ukraine, etc.), bringing together the main trade routes, such as the Amber Road or the transcontinental route of Radanites, running from the south of Europe to the Baltic Sea, as well as the trade route from Poland to Czechia. Historically, this was a place where multiple cultures met (either temporarily – in the case of more remote cultures, or more permanently – in the case of closer cultures, such as Lechitic, Polish and Czech-Slovak). Given the above, the planned research is novel, interdisciplinary and intercultural, but its main focus is linguistic analysis.

We believe that the project will contribute to the research field and discipline both in terms of theory and practice. In terms of theory the project will help to develop methodology for investigating linguistic phenomena in the area of onomastics in the border area (on the both sides of the border) between two or three nations and cultures with respect to such fundamental issues as for example the role of the surname in border areas as an element of national identity and a determinant of membership in the local communicative community as well as the impact of psychological or cultural practices, political, national and linguistic situation (tradition, self-determination, social identity etc.) on onyms in the Polish-Czech border. The practical dimension of the project, apart from providing a description, classification and motivation of anthroponyms in the Polish-Czech border, will be its contribution to the field of onomastics by analyzing the processes involved in shaping deterministic anthroponymic components in linguistic communication across the border. This is because the artificial division of the transitional border area (where the ethnic groups use related languages), which turned it into the linear border area (where the ethnic groups use non-related languages) – first with the Austro-German, then the Polish-Czech border – divided local communicative communities and gave rise to different anthroponymic processes on both sides of the Polish-Czech border (e.g. using names and surnames from the two systems: Antonina Herzog, Elisabeth Klemens, Ernestyne Horny etc.), which were influenced by the Polish or Czech language (and also by German at the turn of the 19th century). In that way the project will significantly change our knowledge of the reception and adaptation of anthroponyms in the Polish-Czech border area, and will help to revise the widespread belief (popular especially among officials) that there is a single system of onyms on each side of the border, based on superficial linguistic and sociolinguistics analysis, and often purely administrative decisions.

Thus, the project will further our understanding of the mechanisms of adaptations of names and surnames in border areas, dependent on the social and political situation or the self-awareness of an individual.

Interim results will be presented during international onomastic conferences and successively published in high ranking journals in Polish, Czech and English. We are also planning to compile a dictionary of names and surnames used in the border area (for structure of the dictionary and dictionary entry, see Czyżewski 2013) and a monograph presenting the results.

In the future the project results may be compared with anthroponymies of other linguistic and cultural borders, which will make the project useful for practical research activities.

4. Research concept and plan

We are planning the following work as part of the project:

1. collecting the onomastic material (writing down the anthroponyms and other facts from tombstone inscriptions) – the specific objective is to create a database with anthroponyms;
2. analysis and categorization of the collected proper names (based on such criteria as: structure, motivation) – the specific objective is to describe the research material in line with the predefined criteria,
3. description of structural models of surnames from the Polish-Czech border area – the specific objective is to identify onomastic models of the anthroponyms, typical of a given native language, and of a given area (i.e. those which violate models typical of a given language system),
4. comparative analysis of the collected Polish and Czech material – the specific objective is to identify differences in anthroponymies on both sides of the state border,
5. a description of the naming system as an element of a given language and given culture – the specific objective is to identify the changes in naming patterns over the 20th century, and to analyze the multicultural nature of the naming process,

6. a description of hybrid forms and their motivations – the specific objective is to analysis and documentation of hybrid forms were created.

Consequently, the outcomes of the achievement of specific objectives will include: a catalogue of anthroponyms from the Polish-Czech border around the Moravian Gate (names and surnames separately and together), description of anthroponymic categories, types and models on the basis of pre-defined criteria, both in an individual and comparative perspective, a diachronic description of the naming system, a list of hybrid forms and their motivation.

The preliminary analysis of the material from some of the villages indicates that the only risk may be that it will not be possible to identify a clear onomastic motivation for all forms of anthroponyms (this concerns mainly anthroponyms with the word formation roots common to the West Slavic languages).

5. Research methodology

The project will include linguistic studies grounded in the methodology of onomastics and well as sociolinguistics and cognitive linguistics: traditional methods (modified semantic differential method of Charles Osgood, see Mayntz, Holm, Hübner 1985) and more recent ones (e.g. cognitive linguistics, semantic matrices of words motivating the anthroponyms, see Skowronek 1997, Kaleta, 1998; Reszegi, 2012; Raszewska-Klimasz 2019). The project will also require the use of the historical method, i.e. the explanatory approach (Pomorski, 1991) and methods of historical onomastics (see for example Złotkowski, 2017; Sarnowska-Giefing, 2010, 2011, 2014; Kresa, 2013; Czyżewski, 2013; Trzeciak, 2016; Łuc, 2013; Kojder, 2014; Sieradzki 2013), i.e. the development of the linguistic situation and the scale of complex social and linguistic relations in the Polish-Czech border area will have to be taken into account. For that the reason the linguistic part of the project will cover three language systems: Polish, Czech and German. The results of the analysis will be presented against the

historical background, showing among others the changeability of anthroponyms of Poles and Czechs in the 20th century under the influence of different extralinguistic factors.

We will also undertake dialectology analysis to verify the impact of the dialect system on anthroponyms in the Polish-Czech border. The current linguistic and communicative situation in the area has historical roots in the variant of the Polish language from the south of Silesia and the variant of the Czech language from the northern upper Ostrava region, which throughout centuries co-existed and intermingled in communicative practices of both local communities. At the same time, in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century they were in opposition to the official language, German, perceived by the native population as foreign. This led to the development of a specific supraregional variety which included different elements: Polonisms, Czechisms and Germanisms as well as regionalisms and dialectal anachronisms (see alternative spellings *Glombik*, *Ternka – Trnka*, *Wyrki*, *Stuchly – Stuchly*, *Mrkwa*, *Trojanska*, *Gawellek*, *Krajczy*, *Wielsch – Wielsch*, *Philiph – Filip* etc.). This is a perfect illustration of linguistic relations in the determinative location in the region (Polish-Czech, Czech-German and Polish-German), which is of special importance in diachronic language analysis (for example in terms of lexis). Importantly, the colonization of the area by Germans also left a significant mark on anthroponyms in the Polish-Czech border.

Our starting definition for the purposes of the analysis will be the definition of the term proposed in the following sources: *Encyclopedia of Polish proper names* (1998, entry: anthroponymy) or *Rodné jméno v jazyce a společnosti* (Knappová, 1989, pp. 13–14) or *Vývoj vlastních jmen osobních v českých zemích v letech 1000–2010* (Pleskalová, 2011, p. 195). The definition is in line with the definition of onym developed by Sarah Leroy, who distinguishes the following criteria for a proper name: formal (spelling – capital letter, untranslatability and absence from dictionaries), morphosyntactic (no determiner) and semantic and pragmatic (no meaning, individual reference). We will use the definition as a basis for classifying anthroponymic ele-

ments from tombstone inscriptions into specific categories. Importantly, under this definition the anthroponyms do not have counterexamples (Leroy, 2004, pp. 7–24).

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