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National standardization:
(c) Treatment of names in multilateral
areas

THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC FOR CITIZENS OF SORB NATIONALITY IN THE
BILINGUAL REGION, AND THE SPELLING OF GEOGRAPHICAL
NAMES*

Paper presented by the German Democratic Republic

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The Sorbs in the German Democratic Republic represent the only national minority in this country. Most of them are domiciled in Lusatia, a region in the counties of Dresden and Cottbus. In the Dresden county this region covers the districts of Bautzen, Kamenz and Niesky, and in the Cottbus county the districts of Cottbus (City), Cottbus (rural area), Hoyerswerda, Weisswasser, Spremberg, Guven, Forst, Calau, Lübben. These areas inhabited by the Sorbs are bilingual.

The Constitution of the German Democratic Republic (article 40) guarantees to people in the German Democratic Republic of the Sorb nationality the cultivation of their mother language and culture. The article states:

"Citizens of the German Democratic Republic of the Sorb nationality are entitled to cultivate their mother language and culture. The execution of this right is promoted by the state."

The constitutional guarantee of this right corresponds to the respect for, and guarantee of, the rights of national minorities, which is inherent in a socialist society.

In addition, the national equality of the Sorbs has been ensured by the Act on the Safeguarding of the Rights of the Sorb People, of 23 March 1948.

There exist quite a number of institutions which safeguard the rights of the Sorbs: working groups attached to the state bodies of the Republic and of the counties; the Institute of Sorb Folkloristic Research attached to the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic (Bautzen); the Sorbastic Institute of Karl Marx University (Leipzig); a Sorb teachers' training college; the nationally-owned Domowina publishing house (Bautzen); the Nowa Doba printing office (Bautzen); a Sorb production department of Radio GDR; a Sorb cultural centre; a museum of the Sorbs' history and culture; a State Ensemble of Sorb Folklore; a German-Sorb popular theatre.

The Sorbs' socialist national organization is the Domowina. The building of a socialist State and social order entailed the development of socialist relations between people of Sorb and German nationality, which are characterized by mutual respect, friendship and comradely co-operation. The developed socialist society ensures the full socio-political, intellectual and cultural equality of the Sorbs, and offers them good prospects for the future. This is the reason why they actively participate in building this future. More than 2,000 Sorbs are, for instance, members of the community, district and county assemblies of this area with inhabitants of two nationalities, and of the People's Chamber. Since the end of the war more than 30,000 children have been taught the Sorb language, and more than 1,000 of them have graduated so far from the Sorb extended secondary school.

On the basis of these facts the second edition of the Allgemeine Richtlinien für die Schreibweise geographischer Namen der DDR (General Guidelines for the Spelling of Geographical Names in the German Democratic Republic, published in Berlin in 1970, lays down that:

Geographical names on maps and plans of regions inhabited also by citizens

of the German Democratic Republic of Sorb nationality must be rendered in two languages. This bilingual lettering must be applied:

- on maps and plans of scales of up to 1:50,000,
- on administrative and other special maps of smaller scales, provided there is no lack of space.

Sorb names must be written in letters of the Sorb alphabet. They must be entered either below or beside the German names.

This is the Sorb (Upper Sorb) alphabet:

a, b, c, c, d, d, dź, e, e, f, g, h, ch, i, j, k, l, ł, m, n, n, o, ó, p, r, r, s, s, t, ć, u, w, y, z, z.

The Lower Sorb alphabet includes in addition the following letters:

dz, ź, ś.

The Sorbisch-deutsches und deutsch-sorbisches Ortsnamenverzeichnis der zweisprachigen Kreise der Bezirke Dresden und Cottbus 1/ (Sorb-German and German-Sorb list of place names of the bilingual districts in the countries of Dresden and Cottbus), edited by Bjarnat Rachel and Herbert Noack, is based on the latest level regarding the ascertainment and determination of Sorb place names. Part I of this list is a revised reprint of the list of Upper Sorb and German place names of the bilingual districts in the Dresden county which had been compiled by Bjarnat Rachel and published in 1959. The revision was done on the basis of the more recent official lists of communities in the individual districts. Part II contains for the first time the Lower and Upper Sorb place names in the Cottbus county. Altogether, 1,148 Sorb place names have been entered.

Sorb names are entered not only on cartographic products but also in many other reference books and particularly also in literature intended for tourists.

The names of places in the Sorb language are contained in the above list. The most important of all other geographical names in German and Sorb are listed below:

(a) Waters

<u>German</u>	<u>Sorb</u>
Oder	Wódra
Neisse	Nysa
Spree	Sprjewja
Schwarze Elster	Corny Halstrow
Schöps	Sepc
Malxe	Małksa
Knappensee	Hórnikecanski jezor
Schwielochsee	Gojac

1/ Bautzen, Domowina-Verlag, 1969.

(b) Mountainous districts/mountains

Lausitzer Bergland	Żuziske hory
Czornoboh	Cornobóh
Bieleboh	BeŻebóh
Löbauer Berg	Lubijska hora
Lausche	Luśa
Thromberg	Lubin
Mönchswalder Berg	Mniśonc
Picho	Pichow
Hutberg	Pastwina hora
Hahnenberg	Kaponica
Hromadnik	Hromadnik

(c) Landscapes

Spreewald	BŻóta
Muskauer Forst	MuŻakowska hola
