

Heinz Dieter Pohl. *Kärnten – deutsche und slowenische Namen. Koroška – slovenska in nemška imena. Aus Anlass der 80. Wiederkehr der Kärntner Volksabstimmung vom 10. Oktober 1920. Kommentiertes zweisprachiges Verzeichnis der Siedlungs-Berg- und Gewässernamen.* [= *Studia Carinthiaca, Band XIX; Österreichische Namenforschung* 29 (2000) 2-3]. Vienna: Edition Praesens, Klagenfurt/Celovec: Hermagoras/Mohorjeva, 2000. 150 pp., maps, photographs. ISBN: 385013802X.

The topic of place-names in the “bilingual zone” of Carinthia is, like anything to do with language in that province, something that is difficult to divorce from politics: witness the “Ortstafelsturm” of 1972, when many federally-sanctioned Slovene place-name signs were torn down without hindrance from officers of the law, actions echoing one of the first edicts of the Yugoslav troops that occupied part of Carinthia in 1918—namely, that German place-name signs should be destroyed.¹ Hence the long-standing controversy about the spelling of specific place-names (see my penultimate paragraph) is unlikely to be decided by factual argumentation.² The outstanding specialist on Carinthian onomastics, Heinz Dieter Pohl, is someone that tries to be maximally objective under these circumstances, and in my opinion he generally succeeds. Note that he has been invited to publish on linguistic subjects by adherents of German-nationalist right-wing policies and by those that tend to the opposite end of the spectrum.³

¹ Lojze Ude, *Boj za severno slovensko mejo: 1918–1919* (Maribor: Obzorja 1977), 166.

² Cf. also Alfred Ogris, “Kärnten 1918–1920: Bilanz der wissenschaftlichen Diskussion zwischen zwei Jubiläen 1970-1980” (Helmut Rumpler, ed., *Kärntens Volksabstimmung 1920. Wissenschaftliche Kontroversen und historisch-politische Diskussionen anlässlich des internationalen Symposiums 1980*. Klagenfurt: Kärntner Druck- und Verlagsgesellschaft, 1981, 382–408), who inserts over six pages of onomastic arguments and maps into a historical discussion of the events of 1918–1920!

³ See, e.g., “Einige Bemerkungen zu zwei slowenischen Kartenwerken” (*Kärntner Landsmannschaft* 7, 1993, 9–11) and Pohl “Linguistische Aspekte der Zweisprachigkeit in Kärnten” (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Volksgruppenfrage, eds. *Kein einzig Volk von Brüdern. Studien zum Mehrheiten-/Minderheitenproblem am Beispiel Kärntens*. Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1982, 35–53) respectively. For an explicit attempt to place his views in a maximally objective position between the two extremes,

His book is a collection of several disparate parts, the character of many of which is predetermined by the politicization of all things linguistic in Carinthia (and as the book's first subtitle clearly hints; a more explicit title would have been preferable). The "Einleitung" (5–27) is followed by a brief Slovene "Uvod" (28–30). Chapter 3, "Grundsätzliche Bemerkungen," (31–36) lays out some fundamentals for onomastic research and data publication. There follows a long chapter 4 (37–88) consisting of lists of names in various categories and sub-categories and an index thereto, chapter 5 (89–106). Chapter 6, "Zum zweisprachigen Namengut Kärntens" (107–15) is a reworking of two previous publications; chapter 7, "Sprachen als kulturelle Erbe der Region" (117–30) is new. This is followed by chapter 8, a brief sociolinguistic survey of the Carinthian situation, which is also a slightly abbreviated previous publication, and two useful bibliographies—one of works discussing individual place-names, the second more extensive and serving the entire book, and including nearly 50 of Pohl's own publications. Four of the five maps—"Place-names of Slovene origin in Carinthia" (31), "Slavic place-names in Austria" (36), "Ethnic structure of Carinthia and Carniola in 1914" (82), and "The retreat of Slovene ca. 1200—ca. 1900" (130)—are easy to read, but "The mixed-language area of Carinthia" (6) is almost illegible. Five of the six photographs are of bilingual signs.

As is made clear on the back cover, in the introduction, and in chapter 7, Pohl's book is directed at establishing and describing the bilingual character of Carinthian onomastics, an inheritance that he ranks higher than "antique excavations, medieval castles or modern artistic monuments" (5, 117). It is clear that he is passionate in his love of place-names, and one can excuse his digressions into names in East Tyrol, Styria, and Slovenia itself (e.g., *Ljubljana, Graz*, 123). Somewhat more out of place are his digressions into sociopolitical questions such as his discussion of the "ethnic" ascription of Austrians (124–25) but, given that these develop from his emphasis on the bilingualism and biculturalism of Carinthia, they too are not unwelcome. It is within this framework that Pohl includes sections on "Slovene as second provincial language of Carinthia" (6), a rewriting of an earlier and very level-

see "Zwanghaft deutsch' - 'Der Kampf geht weiter' - 'Wir sind Kärntner und damit hat sich's...': Kritische Anmerkungen zu wissenschaftlichen Publikationen zur Minderheitenproblematik in Kärnten" (*Grazer linguistische Studien* 7, 1992, 89–99).

headed article on the “Windischen” (7–15), and a lengthy “excursus” refuting publications by some right-wing extremists that deny some or all of the evidence for Slavic place-names in Carinthia (15–27). It also explains why we find a section on the “linguistic structure of the eastern Alpine region” (125–27), which leads to further comments on the linguistic structure of Carinthia (128–30). The final chapter, with discussions of the majority/minority dichotomy, of linguistic rights, of the basic sociolinguistic facts, and of a nine-point program for maintaining Slovene in Carinthia, thus seems to flow naturally from the foregoing. Pohl writes a great deal of good sense here, for instance (131) that linguistics can make a positive contribution by demonstrating to the wider public “that both languages belong inseparably to the province,” that “there is more in common between them than that which is divisive,” and (he is probably correct here too) that the political actions on both sides emphasizing the differences between the two have led to the diminution of the use of the minority language.

The central sections (31–106)—the various onomastic listings—are for the most part very different, in that (with one exception, see below) they avoid controversial matters. These listings do not pretend to replace the standard reference-works by Kattinig & Zerzer⁴ and Zdovc⁵ but provide something of greater interest to the average linguist and probably other interested readers, because the place-names are listed in four categories: those with clear Slavic or Slovene origins, those with clear Germanic origins, those that could have originated in either, and those whose origins are to be sought elsewhere (e.g., in Celtic or Romance). Also included are phonological clues relating to the chronology of borrowing from one to the other language, and some remarks on morphological categories. The exceptional digression (which, rather annoyingly, is found in two places, 33–36 and 107–115) involves the continuing controversy concerning the Slovene spelling of several place-names, for instance the choice between *Dobrla ves* and *Dobrla vas* for Gmn. *Eberndorf*, or between *Tulce* and *Tuce* for Gmn. *Tutzach*. Factually, Pohl cannot be

⁴ Franc Kattinig & Janko Zerzer, compilers, *Dvojezična Koroška. Seznam dvojezičnih krajevnih imen južne Koroške. Zweisprachiges Kärnten. Zweisprachiges Ortsverzeichnis von Südkärnten* (Celovec/Klagenfurt: Mohorjeva/Hermagoras, 1982)

⁵ Pavel Zdovc, *Slovenska krajevna imena na Koroškem. Die slowenischen Ortsnamen in Kärnten* (Celovec: Slovenski znanstveni inštitut, 1993).

faulted: the traditional spellings (*Dobrla ves, Tucə*), which are advocated by the Germanophone “establishment,”⁶ reflect Carinthian phonological developments, and the spellings preferred by minority leaders and scholars are either Standard Slovene variants (*Dobrla vas*) or simple errors (*Tulce*). Pohl does not categorically side with one or the other, but admits that as onomastician he prefers the etymologically correct versions, *Dobrla ves* and *Tulce* (111), to what he calls the “political-linguistically safe” alternatives. He does point out that the use of the standard variants emphasizes the unity of Slovene on both sides of the border. One could add other points to this discussion—that, for example, for a minority leader or scholar to agree with the Germanophone establishment would be politically risky; or that the espousal by this establishment of forms that are closer to dialects could well be perceived by Carinthian Slovenes as a pejorative act, given the low esteem in which all dialects are traditionally held; but, on the other hand, that the use of dialect-based forms would provide a much-needed corrective to these attitudes of inferiority: without a culture in which the native dialects are prized and children learn them with pride, the minority will be all the more quickly assimilated.

In sum: a useful and fascinating book, a volume (as Pohl himself points out, 115) that very well complements Zdovc’s standard 1993 reference work.

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⁶ Thus Ogris, “Kärnten,” 1981.