

only in English but also in critical bibliography in general, and will serve as a valuable source for students and specialists in Ukrainian, Slavic, or comparative literature.

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DAS MITTELNIEDERDEUTSCHE ZWIEGESPRÄCH ZWISCHEN DEM LEBEN UND DEM TODE UND SEINE ALTRUSSISCHE ÜBERSETZUNG: EINE KONTRASTIVE STUDIE. By *Theodor Lewandowski*. *Slavistische Forschungen*, no. 12. Cologne: Böhlau-Verlag, 1972. vii, 199 pp. DM 42.

This is a careful comparative study of a Russian translation of a Middle Low German dialogue between Life and Death which was made in the last decade of the fifteenth century by a Russian, Dmitrii Gerasimov by name, born around 1465 and educated somewhere in a German school of Livonia where he acquired a good, though not altogether perfect, knowledge of Middle Low German, the business language of the Hanseatic League. For about two centuries there was a lively contact between the Russian and the Middle Low German languages. However, the German contribution to the total of the Old Russian translation literature is rather minimal and the Hanseatic relations show up clearly.

The translation of our dialogue was made in Novgorod and was not an accidental event, but planned by the office of the diocese. Most probably the work was ordered by Archbishop Gennadii. In the late fifteenth century Novgorod was an open gateway for Western cultural influence. It was at that time that the end of the world was widely expected to occur. The catastrophe was predicted for the year 7000 of the Orthodox calendar (which corresponded to 1492 in the West).

The topic of the Middle Low German dialogue is that of a penitential sermon—variously treated in *Dance of Death* woodcuts, for example, by Hans Holbein, the Younger (1497–1543)—in which Death, represented as a skeleton, leads people or skeletons to the grave to suggest the ever-present danger of death. (Cf. L. P. Kurtz, “The Dance of Death and the Macabre Spirit in European Literature,” Columbia University dissertation, 1934.) In the second half of the fifteenth century it became a practice to publish single-sheet prints with an illustration surrounded by a text in prose or verse.

Our Middle Low German dialogue is printed on such single sheets. The German original is in verse form; the Russian translation, however, is in prose. In addition to the actual Russian translation, there are several revisions intended to render the translation more intelligible. There are four groups of text—more than three dozen manuscript copies of the third redaction. The earliest three items are put together under the title *Dvoeslovie*.

Lewandowski's book describes in detail the Middle Low German *Dialog* and the Russian *Dvoeslovie* with a discussion of their relation to the general circumstances of the times (pp. 1–57). On pages 58–80 a transliteration of the texts is given: (1) the Middle Low German form, (2) a modern German translation, (3) the Old Russian translation, (4) the first revision, (5) the second revision, and (6) a modern Russian translation. A linguistic analysis of the Old Russian translation in comparison with its Middle Low German original follows on pages 81–156, in turn followed by a discussion of the literary development of the *Dvoeslovie* (pp. 157–67) and a bibliography (pp. 169–80). In conclusion, there are photographic

reproductions of Middle Low German and Slavic texts (pp. 185–96), as well as of three single-sheet prints (pp. 197–99).

On the occasion of two visits to Soviet Russia, Lewandowski acquainted himself with the research contributions of Soviet scholars, whose views he now either accepts (with due expression of indebtedness) or disputes.

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SLAVOTEUTONICA: LEXIKALISCHE UNTERSUCHUNGEN ZUM SLAVISCH-DEUTSCHEN SPRACHKONTAKT IM OSTMITTELDEUTSCHEN. By *Günter Bellmann*. *Studia Linguistica Germanica*, no. 4. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1971. xii, 356 pp. DM 84.

The work consists of two parts: part 2 is the author's 1967 *Habilitationsschrift* and treats ninety-four words of Slavic origin in a German dialect spoken before 1945 in Silesia. Part 1 contains a sociological and historical discussion of the part played by the German language in the colonized Polish regions in the Middle Ages, and a sociolinguistical interpretation of the data in part 2.

The entry for each of the ninety-four words contains, in most cases, (1) the word's present meaning, (2) the form and meaning of its Slavic original, and (3) an attempt at establishing a derivatory relation between the contemporary German word and its Slavic original. However, since this information is not presented very systematically, the reader has to read the whole entry carefully to find the item he wants, which can be very frustrating if, as frequently happens, the item is missing. In the entry for *Druschma* (p. 242), for example, only forms from contemporary Slavic languages are given, which of course have no direct relation to the words discussed. This omission will not confuse the Slavic specialist, but the nonspecialist will lose time and energy. The entry for *Kretscham* (p. 248) gives *Dorfgasthaus* "country inn" as the (German? Slavic? both?) meaning. Some inaccuracies occur: we find for the Slavic original of *Kadel* "soot" both Old Sorbian \**kadolb'* (p. 195), actually an Upper Sorbian form (see Zdzisław Stieber, *Zarys dialektologii języków zachodniostowiańskich*, Warsaw, 1956, p. 45), and \**kadlub'* (p. 196), the Polish and Lower Sorbian form, while the index lists \**kadolb*, without palatalization of the final *b*. A more systematic and uniform arrangement of the entries would certainly have alerted the author to such deficiencies.

Somewhat more serious is the treatment of some words as of Slavic origin though an original Slavic form is lacking—namely, *Skonner* "sparrow" (p. 109) and *Schwerke* "downpour" (p. 204). One would indeed be inclined to seek a connection between Polish *skowronek* "skylark" and *skorzec* "sparrow" (dialectal) on the one hand and *Skonner* on the other, but such a vague and intuitive notion is certainly out of place in a scientific work. However, *Schwerke* is of Germanic origin (see Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, Leipzig, 1899, entry *Schwark*). The entry *Pistole* also belongs in this category; the word may ultimately be of Slavic origin, but it entered German from the Romance languages and as such tells us little about Slavic-German linguistic contacts.

The value of Bellmann's work, though his book is clearly the result of long and hard work by a writer of considerable erudition, is somewhat diminished by the inclusion of several words which are not specific for the Silesian area and thus do not bear on the linguistic contacts there. To this group belong words like *Jauche*,