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SLAVONIC LANGUAGES*

I. CZECH STUDIES

LANGUAGE

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INTRODUCTION

That language and language study do not exist in isolation, abutting at some point against countless other disciplines, is a commonplace. Possibly the most striking point of contact to have emerged this year, force of circumstances having lifted a taboo, is an item I would normally include in Section 3 below, namely the 22-page booklet by Lubomír Syrůček et al., Syndrom získaného selhání imunity (AIDS), Prague, Avicenum, in which the authors not only devote a half-page to the origin of the titular acronym and its Romance (SIDA) and Russian (SPID) counterparts, but also append a glossary. This consists of a number of relevant terms already expounded in the text, but including the importantly distinct umrtnost and smrtnost (‘mortality’ and ‘fatality rate’ respectively), some very ordinary loan-words in common use, such as trend, and — my main reason for mentioning it at all — a number of expressions concerning sundry sexual practices simply unrecorded, to my knowledge, in any mainstream Czech lexicographical work. Truly a document of the age we live in.

I. BIBLIOGRAPHIES


*The British system of Cyrillic transliteration (British Standard 2979:1958) is used for Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Russian, and Ukrainian, omitting diacritics and using -ь to express -й, -ий, -ий and -ый at the end of proper names. Byelorussian ě is rendered as yo.

2. History of the Language

Gisela Niggeman, Untersuchungen zur Nominalkomposition im Tschechischen vom Alttschechischen bis zum 17. Jahrhundert (Studia Slavica et Baltica, 3), Münster, Aschendorff, 375 pp., covers the history of the subject then gives a formal and semantic analysis of the components in compounds and discusses the relations between them. An annotated glossary takes up pp. 153–350. An excellent analysis of the status of various Old Czech constructions with the past participle in the predicate is by F. Štícha, Slavia, 55: 384–90. Z. Smetanová, SlPr, 25 (AUCP — Philologica, 4–5, 1982 [1985]): 239–45, studies the evidence, in private correspondence and public records at the turn of the 16th c., of the critical changes of j > ej and ě > ě, whose rejection and retention are major features of the modern standard language and Common Czech respectively. V. Petráčková, Prace slawistyczne, 47: 191–97, in a special volume devoted to types of grammatical description, compares early types of Czech grammar as they evolve from guides to good Czech usage, rooted in Latin, to the more systematic presentation of Czech grammar itself. J. Porák, ib., 185–89, details the steps by which the shackles of Latin grammar were eventually shed. 29 sources from 1360–1614 are combed by J. Vintr, WSJ, 31, 1985: 151–85, to produce an impressive Czech–Latin and Latin–Czech glossary of grammatical terms. An illustrated history of Czech syllabaries, more related to the history of printing, book production, and mother-tongue teaching, but with some reference to the development of the orthography and the involvement of