

R	P	-	Reading Primers International Newsletter	No	3
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## □ Editorial

Dear readers,

Primers are fascinating objects of study, and not least so in the framework of historical and international comparative research. Yet at the same time, primers are also often seen as rather "simple" objects within the relevant academic disciplines, and a certain lack of convincing theoretical groundwork and of sound methodologies may contribute to a comparatively low esteem of studies on primers in research communities. *Reading Primers International* therefore feels encouraged to include in its reports and considerations the state of the art of research on primers in individual countries. Furthermore, our new section "discussion" is an attempt to stimulate – within the limits of a newsletter – the debate about general questions linked with the study of tools for beginning reading instruction.

This issue of *Reading Primers International* is released one year after the virtual launch of the Reading Primers Special Interest Group and during the run-up to its meeting in Ichenhausen/Bavaria on September 30, 2010. We look forward to an inspiring debate about the future work of our SIG – and about the future design of RPI.

Our thanks go to the contributors to this third issue: Eva Balz, Juris Cibuļs, Wolfgang Fickert, Lyudmila Moshkova and Eduard Stolz.

September 18, 2010

Vitaly Bezrogov & Wendelin Sroka

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- **RP-SIG News**
- **Developments and plans**

This section focuses on three topics: the status of the *International Bibliography of Studies on Reading Primers and Elementary Readers*, the forthcoming meeting of RP-SIG in Ichenhausen/Bavaria (Germany) on September 30, 2010 and an RP-SIG open session in Kazan/Tatarstan (Russia) on November 11, 2010.

#### **International bibliography of studies on reading primers and elementary readers**

RP-SIG plans to publish an "International bibliography of studies on reading primers and elementary readers". A first internal draft of this bibliography was sent to RP-SIG members in March 2010, and many suggestions for additional entries have been sent in. The editors wish to thank all colleagues for their contributions. Also, talks have been commenced with colleagues from the MANES textbook research centre (Madrid, Spain), aimed at identifying appropriate ways of collaboration to prepare and further develop the bibliography. A second internal draft will be sent to RP-SIG members this November, followed by the publication of the first version on the web before end 2010.

#### **RP-SIG meeting in Ichenhausen, Bavaria (Germany)**

The first meeting of our network will take place in Ichenhausen on September 30, 2010, at the occasion of the Annual Conference of our parent organisation, the International Society for Historical and Systematic Research on Schoolbooks. Guests are cordially welcome. Those of our members who will not be able to attend should feel encouraged to share their ideas about the future work of RP-SIG by writing to Vitaly Bezrogov (v\_bezrog@rambler.ru) and/or to Wendelin Sroka (wendelin.sroka@arcor.de).

[www.schulbuch-gesellschaft.de/files/2010\\_ichenhausen\\_programm.pdf](http://www.schulbuch-gesellschaft.de/files/2010_ichenhausen_programm.pdf)

#### **RP-SIG open session in Kazan, Tatarstan (Russia)**

Thanks to efforts of our colleagues in Russia, RP-SIG will have an open session on November 11, 2010 in Kazan, Tatarstan (Russia) in the framework of the international roundtable "Childhood in scientific, educational and artistic texts: efforts of comprehension and interpretation". The roundtable will bring together scholars from numerous regions of the Russian Federation as well as from other countries, including Germany, Ukraine, United Kingdom and USA. The session will provide a unique opportunity to discuss issues of research on the history of primers and present RP-SIG's ideas and activities. The roundtable is organised by Kazan Federal University, the Russian State Humanistic University, the International Scientific Seminar "Culture of Childhood: Norms, Values and Practices", the Kazan branch of the Russian Society for Intellectual History and the Institute of Theory and History of Education of the Russian Academy of Education.

<http://childcult.rsuh.ru/announcements.html?id=245702>

- **New RP-SIG member**

**Verena Stürmer**, Würzburg (Germany), born 1977, is a lecturer at the Faculty of Pedagogy, Department of Primary School Education and Teacher Training at the University of Würzburg. Between 2002 and 2007 she worked as a teacher in primary school. Her research focuses on reading primers of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the image of childhood that is transmitted by schoolbooks. Further, she's interested in the influences (of gender f.e.) on the reading interests of children and the special needs of migrant children during the first years of school. She studies and collects German and French primers with a special focus on the years 1945 to 1990. E-Mail: verena.stuermer@uni-wuerzburg.de

## □ Members' news

**Vitaly Bezrogov** and **Galina Makarevich**, both Moscow, and **Alla Salnikova**, Kazan, have taken over responsibility as members of the organizing committee of the international roundtable "Childhood in scientific, educational and artistic texts: efforts of comprehension and interpretation". The event will take place in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan (Russia) on November 11-12, 2010. The programme of the roundtable includes a key note by Catriona Kelly, Oxford (UK) on "Russian Children: The Ethnographical Gaze", papers on, amongst others, "The Tatar primer at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century" and "First Graders and Their Social Environment as Depicted in Russian, German und Luxembourg Primers since the 1970s", and an open session of RP-SIG (see page 2 of this newsletter).

The 3rd International Conference on Latgalistics will take place, in conjunction with the 3rd Workshop on „Sociolinguistics in Baltic Studies“, at Ernst Moritz Arndt University Greifswald (Germany), October 21–22, 2010. At this occasion **Juris Cibuljs**, Riga (Latvia) will present a paper on *Franča Kempa ābeču loma latgaliešu rakstības, lasīt mācīšanas un rakstīt mācīšanas attīstībā* [The role of Francis Kemp's primers in the development of Latgalian orthography and of reading and writing instruction].

A new book, recently published in St. Petersburg, comprises an article written by **Alla Salnikova**, Kazan, on "The Tatar primer 'Alifba' as a room of the construction of a new 'ideal reality' (end of the 1980s to 2000s)". The study is part of the joint research project "Analysis of the picture of the family and the child in educational texts for the primary school: 1987-2006". A summary of the findings of this study will be provided in the next issue of RPI.

Сальникова А.А.: Татарский букварь «Алифба» как пространство конструирования новой «идеальной реальности» (конец 1980-х – 2000е гг.) // Новейшая история России: время, события, люди (к 75-летию почетного профессора СпбГУ Г.Л. Соболева). – СПб.: Фор-а-принт, 2010. – С. 425-435.

**Wendelin Sroka**, Bonn (Germany) has submitted an article entitled "Primers and Research on Primers in Europe – a Rapprochement" to the magazine *Bildung und Erziehung*. The author wishes to thank his colleagues, many of them members of RP-SIG, who have answered a questionnaire and provided valuable information and judgments about the situation of research on primers in their home countries. Responses related to the situation of research in Russia are reproduced in the research section of this newsletter (p. 5).

## □ Research

### □ Final Thesis

#### **The Implementation of State Ideology through Primers in Stalinism and National Socialism. Methods and Themes**

*RP-SIG member Eva Balz, a student of history at Humboldt University Berlin, describes her final thesis as follows:*

The family played a central role in the context of National Socialist and Stalinist ideology. At the beginning of both Josef Stalin's and Adolf Hitler's respective rules, a traditional model of the family became dominant in propaganda and political action, but shortly after economic and political stabilization had been achieved, both systems began to promote an ideal of youth and thus to threaten the actual solidarity among family members. Furthermore, the notion that only a certain kind of family was to be supported is clearly identifiable in both cases.

One way of implementing ideological ideals into daily life was using school primers in order to suggest value systems and normative realities. The promoted values were easily recognisable and enabled even young children to test their parents' ideological firmness. In Germany, they included a strong love for the *Führer*, the willingness to do all one could do for the *Volksgemein-*

*schaft*, as well as an appreciation of motherhood and the woman's domestic role. Similar elements can be found in the Soviet Union: Primers played their part in glorifying industrial work or, again, praising the mother. In this case though, little poems carried the title "Nasha Mat' Traktorist" – "Our Mother is a Tractor Operator" and featured short stories concerning a mother going off to work in a factory.

My final thesis in Modern and Contemporary History will analyse such primers, focussing on the image of the family being used. In order to reconstruct these images' emergence, different methods of governmental influence on the compilation and distribution need to be regarded. The examination will thus include an analysis of institutional interconnections and the use of bureaucratic structures for the sake of control and power. Still, the emphasis will lie on the methods of linguistic and illustrative implementation of different ideological elements and persuasive techniques in respect to language and illustrations. Which semantic and iconographic methods have been used to transmit the normative content? Do the employed techniques differ according to content, and do they change over time? What major differences, if any, exist between the Stalinist and the National Socialist method, and do these variations result from unequal ideologies or from a difference in technique or persuasive ability? By describing and comparing these elements, the analysis shall thus serve to elaborate general functional and methodological similarities and differences between National Socialist and Stalinist rule.

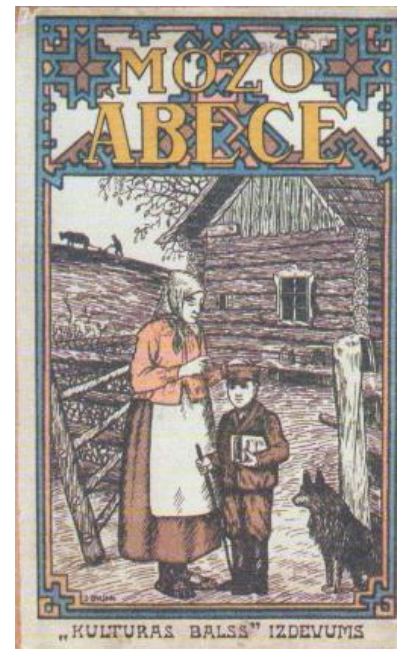
For my analysis I am using primers from the Georg-Eckert-Institute in Brunswick, Germany, the Ushinskij Library in Moscow, Russia, and the private collection of Juris Cibuļs in Riga, Latvia. Without the help of Mr. Juris Cibuļs, Ms. Galina Makarevich, and the staff of the GEI, the realization of this project would not be possible.

#### □ Course Paper

#### ***Dzīvesziņa* [Knowledge of Life] in Latgalian primers**

(jc) In 2010 a course paper has been written devoted to "The Latgalian Knowledge of Life" [*dzīvesziņa*] in the Latgalian Primers in the 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> Centuries". It has been done by Silvija Dzalbe, a student at the Department of Pedagogy, Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology and Art, University of Latvia. The aim of the course paper is to study the reflection of Latgalian knowledge of life in the Latgalian ABC-books. The first chapter deals with the conception "knowledge of life" (in German: *Lebenskunde*), its essence and manifestation in the culture of Latgale. In the second chapter the history of Latgale has been studied, the main milestones in the formation and development of the history of Latgale have been mentioned. In the third chapter the Latgalian ABC-books have been analysed looking for the guiding motifs of the Latgalian knowledge of life. These motifs include nature, (Latgalian) language, traditions, religion (in some primers a Catholic is a Latgalian and vice versa), countryside, peasantry, being honest and respecting one's parents.

Some seventy different primers have been published in the Latgalian language and for Latgalians. The methods of this study were both the analysis of sources and literature and a free interview with Juris Cibuļs.



Simanis Sverne. MOZO ABECE, Riga, 1923



## □ Interview

**Research on Primers in Russia**

In the course of the preparation of an article on primers and research on primers in Europe (see p. 3 of this newsletter) I have employed a questionnaire, aimed at collecting information in individual European countries. With kind permission of the respondents RPI presents here a selection of responses related to the situation in Russia. The responses were jointly provided by Vitaly Bezrogov and Lyudmila Moshkova, researchers at the Institute of Theory and History of Education of the Russian Academy of Education, Moscow.  
Wendelin Sroka

*How would you in brief describe the general situation of research on primers in your country?*

There is research work on individual editions and on groups of primers (primarily in a regional scope), but we do not have comprehensive research on the history of primers of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The number of individual titles of this period is uncertain, as in many instances primers are not extant, but only known on the basis of references in sources. More studies have been made on primers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. pre-Soviet, Soviet and – to a lesser extent – post-Soviet primers.

In general, research on primers as a source of historical studies is a marginal theme, and it has a want of appreciation. Recognition is lacking among historians, among experts in the study of culture ('culturologists'), but also among specialists in the history of education. On the other hand, historians of didactics and experts of book history usually apply very specific points of view. Some interesting studies on social stereotypes and on implicit ideas in primers have been delivered by sociologists. However, we do not have a "history of the textbook in Russia". Also, there is no study on the history of educational publishing houses, and book history does not have a history of the textbook either.

Research on primers in a historical-cultural perspective as well as in the perspective of educational history is only about to start. There are individual studies in this area, but usually these studies have been published in remote places and/or these studies are isolated phenomena, without any continuation, and they did not really have an impact to create a field of studies recognized by professional historians or educational history experts.



*First page of a bukvar' ("Gotha bukvar") printed 1578/1580 by Ivan Fyodorov, the first Russian printer.*

*Which, according to your estimation, are the three academic disciplines that contribute the most to research on primers in your country?*

1. Book Studies
2. History and Theory of Primary Education
3. Sociology / Cultural Studies ('culturology')

*Which are thematic areas favoured by research on primers in your country?*

The focus is on facts related to editions, print runs and overall numbers of copies – this is regarded as proof of the spread of instruction and of the state of education. Not all researchers are interested in the study of the content of primers. Yet recently research has begun aimed at analyzing social stereotypes as reflected in primers, but also hierarchies of concepts and values.



Portrayal of a father in a contemporary Russian primer. From Ol'ga Valentinovna Džeželej: *Azbuka 1 klass. V dvuh častjah. Čast' 2* [Abc-book for grade 1. In two parts. Part 2], Moscow: Drofa, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 2008, p. 27.

18<sup>th</sup> century, aimed at demonstrating the spread of instruction and, in the end, of the state of education in the country. Up until now, many experts of educational history are deeply convinced that the history of the primer is a "non-pedagogical" theme.

## □ Discussion

### Learning to read beyond the realms of the school

*"But all this while, altho' now about Thirteen Years Old, I could not read; then thinking of the vast usefulness of reading, I bought me a Primer, and got now one, then another, to teach me to Spell, and so learn'd to Read imperfectly, my Teachers themselves not being ready Readers: But in a little time, having learn'd to Read competently well, I was desirous to learn to Write, but was at a great loss for a Master, none of my fellow Shepherds being able to teach me".<sup>1</sup>*

(ws) This quote is from the memoirs of Thomas Tryon, a man who grew up in England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as a shepherd and later became a merchant in London. Conditions at that time were such that no compulsory education, no school, no parents were available who would have taught little Thomas to read. Yet when the boy is 13-years old, earning his living as a shepherd, he gets convinced – for reasons not explained further in his memoirs – "of the vast usefulness of reading". And at this point he starts what we nowadays call "self-directed learning": Buys himself a primer, gets "now one, then another" of his fellow shepherds to teach him to spell, and later becomes "desirous to learn to write".

What can Thomas Tryon's report tell those who deal with the study of primers? It draws our attention to the context and to specific practices of learning to read, it teaches us to be careful with generalisations of the environment of such learning processes, and it sheds some light on the multifaceted "nature" of the primer. In particular, what we may learn is that the primer cannot be generally classified as a schoolbook – at least not in a truly historical and international perspective. There is no doubt that the primer has usually made its career as an instructional tool under conditions of formal schooling, and in those cases the study of the "first schoolbook" can certainly contribute to school history as well as to schoolbook history. Yet the history of teaching and learning to read holds ready a variety of arrangements, ranging from "out-of-school-instruction" through domestic instruction without or with a private tutor to school-based instruction. We are well advised to consider these specific arrangements, which often vary between countries and regions as well as over time, when we use primers as sources to draw more general conclusions on the history of reading, education or childhood.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Tryon, *Some Memoirs of the Life of Tho. Tryon, Late of London, Merchant* (London, 1705), p. 13-14. <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/recorddetails2.php?id=20755> (accessed: 06 September 2010)

*Any other comments on primer research in your country?*

The majority of scholars perceive the primer – regardless of the time when it was published – as a "simple", "elementary" book, with rather primitive content and not really worth the efforts of in-depth studies. The general assumption is that every literate person understands the content. It is from this background that so far research is concentrated on the quantitative study of editions, including the number and the print runs of re-editions, especially from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the

## □ Country Notes

### □ Brazil

#### International Seminar on the History of Teaching Reading and Writing

(ws) *A constituição do campo da história da alfabetização no Brasil* [The constitution of the field of the history of teaching reading and writing in Brazil] was the theme of an international seminar in Brazil. The event, initiated by the Research Group on the History of Teaching Language and Literature in Brazil and coordinated by Maria do Rosário Longo Mortatti and Rosane Michelli de Castro, took place from September 8 to 10, 2010, on the campus of Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP) in Marília, Brazil's "food capital", located in the state of São Paulo.

The seminar encompassed ten thematic areas, with many of them of immediate relevance for the study of primers in Brazil and beyond. This certainly applies to the theme "textbooks and school notebooks", but also to "literacy and teaching mother tongue", "children's literature and teaching reading" and "objects of study, documental sources, theoretical lines and methodological approaches in the historiography of teaching reading and writing". The initiators of the seminar wish to encourage the exchange of Brazilian and foreign research groups involved in the respective areas of study by establishing systematic actions of articulation and collaboration. To this purpose, the website of the seminar provides information in Portuguese, English, French and Spanish.

<http://www.fundepe.com/sihele/>

### □ Germany

#### Exhibitions of primers in Duisburg and Erlangen

(es) Duisburg's regional chapter of the German Red Cross organises an exhibition "**Primers from all over the world – learning to read and write in various countries**". The exhibition makes use of the private collection of Eduard Stolz, encompassing primers from around 140 countries. The event is staged as part of the City of Duisburg's Intercultural Weeks 2010, and it includes join-in actions for primary school pupils aimed at demonstrating everyday school life of young children in other countries. The exhibition is on display from September 14 to 22, 2010 at the *Volkshochschule* (adult education centre), Königstr. 47, 47051 Duisburg. It is open to the public Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

<http://www.sophia24.com/detail.do?id=796857#courseDetails>

(wf) „**This is how the world learns to read**” is the title of an exhibition of primers presented by Erlangen-Nuremberg's University Library, Main Library, Schuhstraße 1a, 91054 Erlangen, from September 17 to October 8, 2010. On display are approximately 130 primers from five continents. The exhibition draws from the holdings of a private collector. Its focus is on the variety of scripts used in basic reading literacy materials and on primers in minority (vernacular and migrant) languages. Special sections of the exhibition present primers for linguistic minorities in Germany and German primers published in other countries. As the library states, primers are usually seen as a consumer good and (in Germany) only rarely kept in public libraries. The exhibition is open Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

[www.ub.uni-erlangen.de/aktuelle-meldungen/aktuelle-meldung.php?aktuell=530](http://www.ub.uni-erlangen.de/aktuelle-meldungen/aktuelle-meldung.php?aktuell=530)

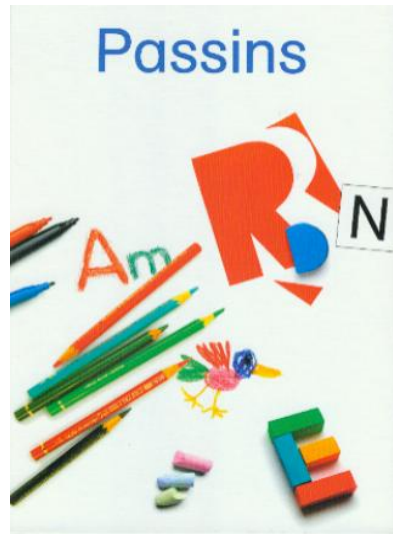


*My dear primer. Bochum: Kamp Publishers 1980 – Turkish adaption of "Meine liebe Fibel", approved for use in schools in North Rhine-Westphalia.*

□ Switzerland

**First primer in *Rumantsch Grischun***

Giancarlo Conrad, Giusep Caduff, Telgia Juon, Giuliana Mall-Clavuot: *Passins [Little Steps]*. Illustraziuns: Annalis Vieli-Gritti. [Caira]: Amt für Volksschule und Sport 2007, 128p., ISBN-13: 978-3-9523067-8-9



This textbook for beginning reading and writing instruction was developed and introduced in schools in the canton of Graubünden though the language itself was created only a few years before and is still on the way to acceptance for general use. This is also a case study on a project aimed at protecting an endangered language with the help of a primer and other educational material.

Romansh (Romansch, Rhaeto-Romanic) has been declared a national language besides of German, French and Italian in Switzerland in 1938. Since 1996 Romansh has the status of an official language for contacts between Swiss federal authorities and the canton Graubünden, as far as cultural affairs of the Romansh community are concerned. Most of

the roughly 35,000 (2000 census) speakers are living in Graubünden. In spite of this – at first sight – favourable state of the language, a report on "Endangered languages in Europe and North Asia" states: "Perhaps little more than half of the official number of 65,000 speakers (1986) use the language actively. Many children learn the language, but most of them become more fluent in German and may not use Romansh actively later in life. Increasingly endangered."<sup>1</sup> An important reason for this is the continuous immigration of German and Italian speakers. Romansh speakers now make up for only 22% of the population. Further serious problems are caused by the language being divided into dialects. Up to now, schools textbooks (including primers) are available using five differing dialects: Sursilvan, Surmiran, Valader (Lower Engadine), Puter (Upper Engadine) and the Dialect of Schons.

In 1919 "*Lia Rumantscha*" was founded as an umbrella organization for the protection and support of Romansh in Switzerland. In the 1970s they commissioned Heinrich Schmid, a non-Romansh linguist to work out a unified standard language for supra regional use with a standardized orthography. This systematic and comprehensive linguistic normalization was to be reached by levelling out the regional variations of the language. In 1982 Schmid presented the resulting *Rumantsch Grischun* ("Grischun" being the Romansh name of Graubünden) to the public. The introduction of this new language was not welcomed unanimously. Still in 1992 3000 citizens called for prohibition, because they regarded this threatening of the local dialects as a violation of their human rights. Meanwhile, the language is in use in a growing number of print products. Though *Rumantsch Grischun* is aimed at furthering a general understanding within the Romansh community it is used in locally severely differing pronunciations. Therefore it still must be seen as an artificial language.

In 2004 the Graubünden authorities passed the general concept for "*Rumantsch Grischun* in the school". On the basis of this concept a team of experts, including authors of school textbooks in individual Romansh dialects, developed "Passins" (meaning "Little Steps") as a reading and writing primer and other educational material – including workbooks, a picture dictionary, a handwriting course and a CD-ROM with master copies – for grade 1. The legal framework in the canton of Graubünden determines that the competence of choosing the school language lies exclusively with the 207 municipalities. By



the end of 2006, 23 of them voted in favour of the introduction of *Rumantsch Grischun* in their schools. August 20, 2007 eleven schools started as pioneers with *Rumantsch Grischun*. Further communities joined in the following two school years. A press release, issued in August 2007 by the Department for Education, Culture and Environment Protection, describes the basic literacy materials in *Rumantsch Grischun* as follows<sup>2</sup>:

„The principal item is the book with four-colour pages throughout; it contains a basic reading literacy course with a focus on the analysis of sounds and letters (82 pages), followed by a chapter with texts picking out miscellaneous factual issues (42 pages). Right from the beginning the children are confronted with complete words and parts of sentences (names, titles etc.). The learners are supposed to memorise the pictures of the words and grasp the meaning with the help of illustrations and of their knowledge of individual letters. Besides of that, the individual sounds are introduced systematically on the basis of the 'initial sound method' (*Anlautmethode*). Here, the starting point is the initial sound of a mnemonic term (e.g. A = *Ananas* [pineapple], G = *Gummi* [rubber]). (...) An important function is assigned to illustrations (...), children's drawings and photographs. The contents of the basic literacy course and of the chapter with texts for reading take on factual issues from the environment of children. Besides of content which can be found in any first reading course, this primer also offers texts which are aimed at raising and supporting children's consciousness of their Rhaeto-Romanic identity".

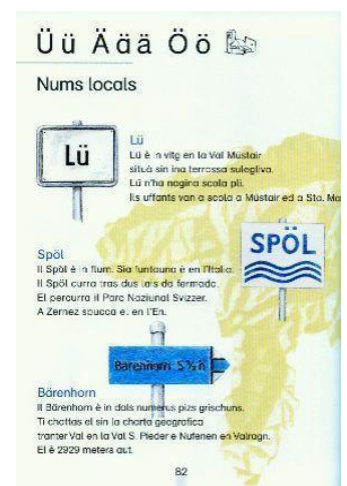
In terms of its content, the primer follows recent international trends in many respects. For example, we encounter

- a variety of different kinds of illustrations (see above),
- a handicapped child among the schoolchildren (pp. 2/3, 109),
- three pages of a popular comic series (*Obelix emprenda da leger* [Obelix learns to read]),
- general problems (breaking a leg when skiing, pp. 44/45),
- understanding for other cultures, e.g. by illustrations by a Chinese artist showing how a little Chinese girl starts writing Chinese signs (pp. 66/67),
- migrants, e.g. a pupil in class (p. 5) and a family from Syria, (pp. 114/115).

The religious content is limited to Christmas, illustrated with old paintings from a church (pp. 90-93).

The alphabet (p. 116) is identical with the one used in recent Italian and German primers, i.e. without the modified vowels ä, ö and ü. On the other hand, these vowels, not applied in the new written *Rumantsch Grischun* but in some dialects, are taught with the help of geographical proper names [p.p. 82/83: *Bärenhorn*, *La Rösa*, *Piz Palü*]. The letters k, w and y are exclusively used in foreign words [pp. 52/53, 80/81: "pledas dad autras linguas" (words from other languages)] and do not belong to the *Rumantsch* alphabet, where they are replaced by c, v and i.<sup>3</sup>

What we do not find in this primer (but this may be treated in other parts of the *Rumantsch Grischun* series of readers) is life at home and in the family, modern technique (no radio, television, computer; exceptions: helicopter, milking machine). Furthermore, no mentioning is made of Switzerland (name, map, capital, national flag), historical events or environmental protection, and no elder people, cars and public transportations are shown.



Wolfgang Fickert

<sup>1</sup> Tapani Salminen: Europe and North Asia. // Christopher Moseley (ed.): Encyclopaedia of the world's endangered languages. London & New York: Routledge, 2007, pp. 211–280.

<sup>2</sup> "Passins": *Neuer Lese- und Schreiblehrgang in Rumantsch Grischun erschienen* [Passins'. New literacy and writing materials in Rumantsch Grischun published]. Press Release, Erziehungs-, Kultur- und Umweltschutzdepartement des Kantons Graubünden, 07.08.2007.

<sup>3</sup> Georges Darms et al.: *Langenscheidts Wörterbuch Rätomanisch*. Zürich 1989, p. 584.

□ Finds

**“Three in one”: A teaching unit in a West German primer of the 1970s, with a story about a family trip by car, about the fascination of speed – and about a specific pattern to finish an intra-marital dispute**

(ws) This two page unit, reproduced here without any further comment, is from a West German primer, first published in 1974. The primer was designed as a particularly modern schoolbook, with the content supposedly reflecting children’s real life situations. An English translation of the text is provided below.



*father accelerates  
the car goes 90 - 100 - 110 ...  
now the car goes 120*

*there is a traffic sign, says mother  
with 70 written on it*

*the car goes 110 - 100 - 90*

*90 is too fast, says mother*

*come off it! father accelerates  
90 is not too fast*

*but the car now goes 100  
and not 70, says mother*

*now father switches the radio on*

Gertraud Becker, Wilhelm Topsch: *Wir lesen alles kurz und klein. [We read everything to bits].* Düsseldorf: Pro Schule Verlag, 6<sup>th</sup> edition 1976, p. 34-35.

□ About RPI

**Reading Primers International (RPI)** is published by the Reading Primers Special Interest Group (RP-SIG) of the International Society for Historical and Systematic Research on Schoolbooks. It is sent by mail to RP-SIG members and also made available online. The next issue will be published in December 2010. Please send your comments to this issue or proposals for future issues of RPI to the editorial office.

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