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Adaptations of German place names in the Polish language

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The subject of the study are adaptations of German place names on the Polish territory. These names appeared as one of the consequences of German settlement. The German settlement in Poland was connected with various periods in the country's history and had various reasons and significance. The earliest and most important was colonization in Middle Ages. Two stages can be distinguished here:
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1.   in the 10th to 11th century individual people (clergymen, knights and merchants) came to Poland, which was connected with marriages entered into by Polish princes with German princesses and with the establishment of monasteries (which maintained close contacts with their parent orders also in Germany).

2.   Starting from the 12th century, a mass influx of bourgeoisie and peasants took place. The reasons for this mass movement were both economic and political. It was caused to a large extent by Polish rulers, who could not always develop vacant or border areas on their own. So-called residents were occupied with intensive colonization of rural areas. German peasants came to Poland seeking better living conditions ensured by German rights granted to them voluntarily. This was in the interest of the Polish rulers who, like rulers in other countries, strove to eliminate cultural and economic differences between their country and the rest of Europe as quickly as possible.

German colonists came to Poland by four routes:

1.   from Erfurt via Dresden and Wrocław to Silesia, and on to the regions of Małopolska in the south, Wielkopolska in the north-west and Warmia and Mazury in the north-east of Poland;
2.   from Bamberg via Eger to Silesia and on to Małopolska;
3.   from Magdeburg via Berlin and Frankfurt to Wielkopolska, Eastern Pomerania, Warmia and Mazury;
4.   from Western Pomerania to Eastern Pomerania, Warmia and Mazury.

The Germans who settled in Poland congregated mainly in the cities, and German colonists' villages were not very numerous (in Eastern Pomerania – to the west of the town of Chojnice, in the Vistula river delta; in Upper Silesia in the Bielsko region, in the southern, Podhale region – on the Dunajec river; in the south-east of Poland – in the area of the town of Łańcut; there were also several villages in the region of the town of Sanok and groups of rural population in Lower Silesia on the left bank of the Oder river from Kwisa to Nysa rivers).

In modern times, i.e. in the 16th-18th centuries, a second wave of German colonization took place, which was a continuation of the medieval colonization. It focused mainly on north-western regions of Poland and covered both rural and urban areas. At that time there were two reasons for emigration from Germany: religious persecution of Protestants and economic persecution of rural people, mainly in Brandenburg and Prussia.

Towards the end of the 18th century, following loss of Poland's independence due to partitions, third German colonization took place. Its initiators were settlers from German areas, specially brought in for this purpose. Such an action was carried out by Prussia and Austria and is known as the Friedrich colonization and the Josephian colonization. German colonies were established as a result of planned colonization, also resulting from the operations of the Colonization Committee in Bismarck's time. German colonization of Polish territory was ended by Poland's regaining independence after World War I.

My analysis covers nearly 1,200 local place names, in those areas of Poland in which Polish settlement preceded German settlement, and which were originally inhabited by a population using Polish dialects, thus I have omitted the north-western region of Poland.

I have recognised as German those names that from the beginning have exhibited a German word formation and have been created from German lexemes. Thus I did not take into account names derived from earlier borrowed German personal names or appellatives through Polish suffixes. I made an exception in three cases: 1. for those names that were germanised and then underwent secondary polonisation; 2. for hybrid names that contain both a Polish and German component; 3. for pairs of names that are mutual translation, occurring simultaneously since the first source documentation. These names are the testimony of ages-long coexistence of the two nations, cooperating in the settlement and development of the country. I have also excluded from my research names that were officially polonised after World War II.

The theoretical basis for the research was provided by U. Weinreich's linguistic interference theory, E. Eichler's onimic integration theory, and the division of types of substitutions of German names in the Polish language, proposed by H. Górnowicz. This allowed me to distinguish three main groups of integrates: phonetic, flexional, word forming and semantic. Within those I have distinguished detailed sub-categories. First I have subjected the structure of German names to analysis, and determined basic word-forming types in individual regions of Poland, and then the types of substitutions into the Polish language.

Basing on historical studies and German dialectological studies (mainly Jungandreas, Mitzka, Schwarz, Putschke and Frings as well as Lasch), I have adopted a simplified phonetic system of the Eastern Middle German dialect for the names under research, and for names from Eastern Pomerania, Warmia and Mazury regions – a simplified phonetic system of the Middle Lower German dialect. The effect of analysis of names for each region of Poland is a collective image of system integration of names that I will attempt to present to you.

With respect to structure, the German names under research are direct compounds (295) (so-called Echte Zusammensetzungen) and indirect compounds (503) (so-called Unechte Zusammensetzungen), formal names equal to appellatives (167) and formal names equal to personal names (50), and so-called genetive names (36). However, there are no names with old German elements –inga, -aha, -apa. The most frequently occurring second elements are: -dorf (e.g. Frauendorf = Fondorf), -au (e.g. Halzenau = Hałcnów); -walde (e.g. Kriewald = Krywałd); -berg (e.g. Schönberg = Szombierki); -felde (e.g. Barkenfelde = Barkeld); -stein (e.g. Schornstein = Czorsztyn), -burg (e.g. Kreuzburg = Kluczbork), -hain//-hagen (e.g. Rozenhain = Roźnań). These are characteristic for names confirmed earlier. In younger names they can perform only a structural function.

The occurrence of certain second elements of German names is territorially restricted, e.g. the element –ofen (Omulefofen = Omulewski Piecek) occurs only in the Warmia and Mazury region, and the element –hauland (Weisshauland = Białe Olędry) only in the Wielkopolska region, and the element –hau (Helwigshau = Albigowa) only in the Małopolska region. Other elements, depending on the region, would adopt a Lower German (in Eastern Pomerania, Warmia and Mazury, and in Wielkopolska) or a High German form (in Kujawy, Silesia, and Małopolska): e.g. –born//brunn - spring or –hus//haus - house. Also the elements –beke, -bach, fliess//fluss – river, show regional differentiation. In Eastern Pomerania and in Wielkopolska - -beke; -bach in Małopolska and in Silesia, Warmia and Mazury, and fliess//fluss in Warmia and Mazury and Eastern Pomerania.

In time, German names were adjusted to the Polish language. The effects can be observed in historical sources in various periods. The polonized forms appear earliest – in the 14th and 15th

centuries – in Silesia and Małopolska. The 16th century brings numerous polonizations in Eastern Pomerania and in the remaining regions. They appear in the greatest numbers at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Adopting place names from one language to another takes place according to specific rules. This occurs within the process of onimic integration, which is a part of a dynamic process of language integration. This process occurs in conditions of social contact between peoples and languages. Characteristic features of this contact are always of a historical nature and are related to political and social phenomena and cultural life. Three aspects need to be taken into consideration when studying onimic integration:

1.   the aspect of language and its various levels
2.   the sociolinguistic aspect
3.   the area aspect.

In the process of language communication, pairs of names arise from the juxtaposition of Polish and German names, that can be interrelated in various ways:

1.   related in sound but not semantically
2.   related in sound and morphemically transformed
3.   related in sound and semantically
4.   semantically related, but free with respect to sound
5.   semantically related, and morphemically transformed
6.   not related (outside analysis).

Most of the names under investigation belong to pairs related in sound (367) and morphemically transformed (341). These prevail in the Małopolska, Warmia and Mazury, Eastern Pomerania, Kujawy regions, in the Sieradz-Łęczyca region, and in Mazowsze (central Poland) and Podlasie (eastern Poland).

The ways of polonization can be distinguished as three main groups:

1.   phonetic substitutions (substituting German sounds by with the nearest Polish ones)
2.   morphemic substitutions (with the aid of Polish suffixes and flexion endings)
3.   lexical substitutions (substitution of German forms of personal names with Polish equivalents; translation of the whole or part of the local name)
4.   these ways can intersect with one another, thus numerous sub-groups can be distinguished.

The most common are the following:

1.   phonetic substitutions of the entire name (372), e.g. German Schornstein is Polish *Czorsztyn*; German *Mixstadt* is Polish *Miksztat*.
2.   phonetic substitution of the first element of the German name + Polish suffix in place of the second element (250), e.g. *Falkenau* – in Polish: *Falknowo*;
3.   translation of the entire name (213), e.g. *Weisshoff* – in Polish: *Biały Dwór (White Mansion)*
4.   substitution of the German form of a personal name with a Polish form + Polish suffix in place of the second element of the German name (122), e.g *Helwigesau* – in Polish: *Albigowa*
5.   translation of a part of the name + Polish suffix (90), e.g. *Rothfliess* – in Polish: *Czerwonka*.

Phonetic and phonologic level

German vowels were being replaced with Polish ones closest to them. From the point of view of the Polish language, the length of the vowels was a relevant feature, and thus had no effect on the quality of substitution. We can present the following simplified abstract German vowel system (the vowels can be of various origins) and an abstract system of their Polish equivalents:

German [*a*] ~ Polish *a; sometimes o; a//o* before N; e.g. *Rosberg* ~ *Rozbark*; *Hartha* ~ *Harta*; *Freiwalde* ~ *Frywałd//Frywołd*.

German [*e*] ~ *e*, rarely *y* (also *e//y*); e.g. *Käsemark* ~ Polish *Kieżmark*; *Trinneck* ~ Polish *Trynek*; *Wollstein* ~ Polish *Fulsztyn*; *Schönwiese* ~ Polish *Szenweza//Szynweza*.

[*i*] ~ *y*; sometimes (*e//y*), e.g. *Bischofstein* ~ Polish *Bisztynek*; *Liebstadt* ~ Polish *Libsztad*; *Ritter* ~ Polish *Rytro*; *Ziegenfuss* ~ Polish *Cygwusy*; **Krîmpach* ~ Polish *Krempachy/Krympachy*.

[*o*] ~ *o*; rarely – *u*; e.g. *Christburg* ~ Polish *Kiszpork*; *Jommendorf* ~ Polish *Jądorf*; *Frauenburg* (= **Frömbork*) ~ Polish *Frombork*; *Dorposch* ~ Polish *Dorpusz*; *Schönberg* ~ Polish *Szumbark*.

[*u*] ~ *u*; rarely *u//o*; e.g. *Durstin* ~ Polish *Dursztyn*; *Grünwalde* ~ Polish *Grunwald*; *Grunau* ~ Polish *Grunowo/Gronowo*.

German diphthongs (New High German or ones resulting from dialect diphthongisation) were – as foreign to the Polish language – taken over as combinations of a vowel with *i* or *u*.
German [*ai*] ~ Polish *aj*, sometimes *ej*; e.g. *Zeissen* ~ Polish *Sajzy*; Freyhain ~ Polish *Frejno*.

[*ai//au*]; New High German [*oi*] ~ Polish *aj//ej*; e.g. *Heubuden* ~ Polish *Hejbudy/Hajbudy*

[*au//ou*] ~ Polish *aj//ej*, sometimes *au*; e.g. *Lautensee* ~ Polish *Lajtensy/Lejtensy*.
I did not find substitutions typical to individual regions of Poland. The fluctuations are slight and could originate from German and Polish dialectical twofold forms or be an effect of lining up to various appellatives.

German consonants were adopted into Polish less regularly than vowels. We observe the most fluctuations in adoption of the German consonants [*s*], [*z*], [*š*]. However, in general there is only one Polish consonant equivalent for individual German consonants, e.g. German [*b*] ~ Polish *b*, e.g. *Kombornia*, *Bajerze*.

German [*f, v*] ~ Polish *f, w*; e.g. *Falkenwalde* ~ Polish *Fafałdy*; *Tiefensee* ~ Polish *Tywęzy*; sometimes *w/f*, e.g. *Wollstein* ~ Polish *Wolszyn/Fulsztyn*; dialectic *x*, e.g. *Tieffenau* ~ Polish *Tychnowy*; -*ś* (in final sound), e.g. *Jommendorf* ~ Polish dialectic *jondorś*.

German [*t*] ~ Polish –*t* (but graphically –*d*); e.g. *Bärenwalde* ~ Polish *Barwałd*; -*ć* in Eastern Pomerania; e.g. *Baumgarten* (*/Bömgart)* ~ Polish *Bugarć*.

Soft vowel variants occur before *i* (sometimes also before *e*). Departures from main equivalents have their origins in German dialectic twofold forms, Polish language rules and in bringing in line with Polish appellatives, personal names and place names.

Polonised forms of place names in Eastern Pomerania, Warmia and Mazury, Wielkopolska and Kujawy regions bear testimony to the fact that the German names could have arisen on the basis of Lower German dialects. Very frequently historical sources give the names in a petrified

High German form, and their polonised form shows that the name was adopted from a dialectic Lower German form.

Certain results of the adaptation process are the consequence of the following:

1. simplification of consonant groups (e.g. *ldb > lb//b: Kaldeborn ~ Kalborno/Kaborno*)
2. assimilation e.g. *a..el > a..al: Harmelsdor (< Hermsdorf) ~ Harmale*
3. dissimilation e.g. *l..l > r..ł: Rehwalde (< Liebenwalde) ~ Liwałd/Rywałd; r..r > l..r;* e.g. *Marienburg > Malbork*
4. metathesis e.g. *ir>ry: Thiergarten ~ Tyrgort//Trygort.*

Among the adopted names we can also observe characteristic – and uniform for the entire area – adoption of certain components of German names (mainly second elements). The bases for this regularity are purely phonetic and are due to convergent development in the Eastern Middle German and Middle Low German dialects. Sometimes they are supported by analogous phonetic processes in Polish dialects. However, this regularity is striking enough to regard these polonised forms of these elements as quasi-suffixes. They, however, did not become productive in the Polish name system. These elements include

-berg, adopted as *-bark,* e.g. *Bergfriede ~* Polish *Barkweda*: *Hirschberg* – Polish *Idzbark, Schiltberg* – Polish *Szyltbark,*

-burg, adopted as *-bork,* e.g. *Freiburg* – Polish *Frybork, Kreuzburg* – Polish *Kluczbork, Marienburg* – Polish *Malbork,*

-walde, adopted as *-feld, -welt,* sometimes as *wit,* e.g. *Barkenfelde ~* Polish *Barkfeld*; *Blumfelde ~* Polish *Blumwelt*; *Blankfeld ~* Polish *Blękwit,*

-hüs//haus, adopted as *–us, -usz,* e.g. Kaldus (**Koldenhüs*) ~ Polish *Kaldus*; *Heytus* (**Heithüs*) ~ Polish *Hejtus*; *Münchhausen ~*Polish *Mnichus.*

-stein, adopted as *–sztyn,* e.g. *Schornstein ~* Polish *Czorsztyn*; *Kortstein ~*Polish *Korsztyn*; *Allenstein ~* Polish *Olsztyn*; *Steinborn ~* Polish *Sztynborn.*

Morphemic level

Here we are dealing not only with mechanical fitting of a phonetically foreign form to the phonetic system present in our own language, but with the transfer and fitting of a foreign structure to certain productive indigenous structures. Morphological substitutions in their pure form occur very rarely. They are usually connected with phonetic substitutions. Also analogous equalizations of individual elements of the German names to earlier borrowed lexemes or to indigenous, similarly sounding appellatives and personal names, have to be taken into consideration.

Place names are being incorporated into the Polish flexion system in a substitution process. A distinguishing feature of this integration is including a foreign name in one of the productive Polish paradigms (with all the consequences, such as flexion endings and morphological alternations), e.g. the German *Blankenfeld* ~ Polish *Blękwit*; German *Ritter* ~ Polish *Rytro*; German *Bergfriede* ~ Polish *Barkweda*. The mechanism of such adaptation must be subordinated to the structure of the language taking over the names.

Polish suffixes also take part in the adaptation process. Usually they replace the second element of the German name. The suffix *–ów, -owo* performs usually this polonising function throughout Poland; it can replace German endings such as *–au, -berg, -bruch, -burg, -dorf, -hof, -thal*.

A very important difference is the change of structure of the name. Very often German names are replaced with two-element structures, i.e. by a composite. However, more frequently a single word is created from a German composite name, using various suffixes, as composite words are not a common word forming structure in the Polish language. Thus differences in the structure of German names and their Polish equivalents lie in the difference of word forming structures of both languages. It is worth emphasising that none of the second elements of German names has been integrated deeply enough to act as suffix.

Semantic level

Adaptation at this level involves translation. Translations of German names, involving replacement of a foreign signifier with an indigenous one (usually without taking over the content) occur throughout Poland. It is, however, characteristic that the translations are a part of later adaptations, originating mainly from the 18th and 19th century. More translations are encountered in the north of Poland. The translations are a consequence of bilingualism and on the one hand can be a proof of age-long symbiosis of two ethnic groups, but on the other hand they testify to official interference when fitting foreign names. Both single-element names (formally equal to appellatives), and double-element ones are translated. Double-element names, derived from personal names, sometimes undergo secondary transformation according to the Poles' understanding. Re-semantising of names can then occur, e.g. *Burstinow* (< *Vurstenove*) ~ *Bursztynowo* (appellative: *bursztyn)*; *Kunzewald* ~ *Koniecwałd* (personal name: *Kunz* ~ appellative in dialect *kuńc*; literary *koniec*).

Most often the entire name, one element after another, is translated, e.g. *Hirschberg* ~ *Jelenia Góra*; *Krummknie* ~ *Krzywe Kolano*. Sometimes only one part of the name is translated, and the other is replaced with a Polish suffix, e.g. *Seekathe* ~ *Jeziornik*; *Bischofswerder* ~ *Biskupice*. One element of the name may be omitted in the translation process, e.g. *Carlsruhe* ~ *Pokój* (*Peace*). Also semantic associations may occur in this process, e.g. Vorsicht ~ *Opatrzność* (*Providence*).

If we take a close look at the chronology of adaptation of German names into the Polish language, we must state that phonetic and morphological adaptations appeared earliest, whereas semantic adaptations are later. This tallies with the geographic distribution of the substituted names. In southern Poland German names were adopted into the language earlier, thus phonetic and morphologic substitutions are the most numerous there. The further we move towards the north, the later the adaptations are and the more translations are among them.

Adaptations of German names to the Polish language and onimic systems can be a model for the adoption of names from other languages and for contemporary adoption of names. Through the ages, during a spontaneous, long-lasting process of substitution and integration, models were developed that can be successfully used and copied today. Investigation of the ways of adaptation of a foreign name layer in the past allows us to realize the complexity and importance of the issue of coexistence of names of various origins in a country, and permits drawing universal conclusions.