

A stylized black and white graphic of a globe, showing the continents of Europe and Africa. The globe is partially obscured by the text 'STUDIA GEOHISTORICA'.

STUDIA
GEOHISTORICA

NR 05|2017 ROCZNIK HISTORYCZNO-GEOGRAFICZNY

STUDIA GEOHISTORICA. Rocznik historyczno-geograficzny

Redakcja

Bogumił Szady (redaktor naczelny), Beata Konopska,
Tomasz Panecki, Mateusz Zawadzki, Tomasz Związek (sekretarz redakcji)

Redakcja działu Atlas Fontium

Arkadiusz Borek, Marek Stoń

Redakcja językowa i korekta

Konrad Byzdra

Tłumaczenia

Hanna Grygielska-Michalak, Julia Szotysek, Paweł Kucypera, Karolina Frank, autorzy

Rada Naukowa

Zdzisław Budzyński (Rzeszów), Andrzej Janeczek (Warszawa), Tomasz Jurek (Poznań),
Keith Lilley (Belfast/Wielka Brytania), Andrew Pernal (Brandon/Kanada), Tadeusz Siwek (Ostrawa/Czechy),
Rostysław Sossa (Kijów/Ukraina), Grzegorz Strauchold (Wrocław), Robert Šimůnek (Praga/Czechy)

Recenzenci tomu 5

Katarzyna Błachowska, Hennadij Boriak, Jarosław Centek, Robert Ištók, Andrzej Janowski, Tomasz Jaszczóft,
Jolanta Korycka-Skorupa, Elżbieta Kowalczyk-Heyman, Jerzy Łojko, Henryk Olszar, Marta Piber-Zbieranowska,
Zbigniew Podgórski, Małgorzata Rutkiewicz-Hanczewska, Marek Sobczyński, Izabela Sołjan, Michał Targowski,
Michał Zwierzykowski

Redakcja map

Tomasz Panecki, autorzy

Adres Redakcji

Zakład Atlasu Historycznego
Instytut Historii im. Tadeusza Manteuffla Polskiej Akademii Nauk
Rynek Starego Miasta 29/31
00-272 Warszawa

Strona internetowa

studiageohistorica.pl

Wersja drukowana (papierowa) jest wersją pierwotną rocznika *Studia Geohistorica*

Współwydawcy rocznika

Polskie Towarzystwo Historyczne, Instytut Historii Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II

Rocznik wydawany pod patronatem Komisji Geografii Historycznej przy Polskim Towarzystwie Historycznym

Projekt okładki: Jacek Młodożeniec

Ilustracja na okładce: fragment *Mapy topograficznej wojskowej i statystycznej części Wielkopolski [...]*,
skala: ok. 1:75 000, 1807–1812, Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu (sygn. M.w.36), Biblioteka Raczyńskich
w Poznaniu (sygn. M II 797)

Skład i łamanie: Konrad Byzdra

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ISSN 2300-2875

Nakład 130 egz.

Warszawa 2017

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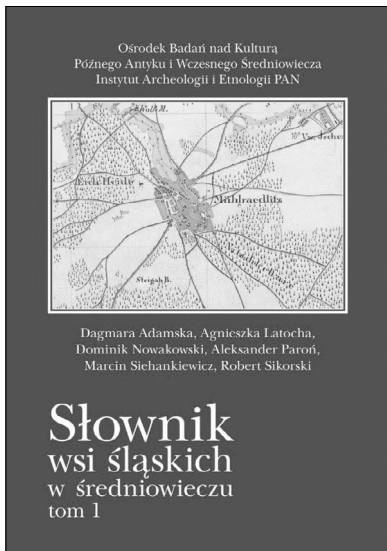
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 Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii PAN, Ośrodek Badań nad Kulturą Późnego Antyku
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Historical geographical dictionaries have a long tradition in Poland, the most famous being the *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego* (*Geographical Dictionary of the Kingdom of Poland*) published from



1880 to 1902. Due to the German occupation of Poland during World War II, which prevented the preparation of a new dictionary, it was only quite late after the war, in 1966, that Karol Buczek assembled a working group at the Polish Academy of Sciences with the aim to publishing historical geographical dictionaries of all historical lands of Poland in their actual borders as a commemoration of the 1000th anniversary of the Baptism of Poland. The project failed, being too ambitious, and the first volumes of the dictionary, covering the historical lands of Chełmno and Wyszogród, appeared only in 1971. The project is still continued and until today mainly volumes covering the historical lands of

Mazowsze (Mazovia), Małopolska (Little Poland) and Wielkopolska (Greater Poland) have been issued, whereas the once so-called Regained Territories rest to a large extent undealt with.¹ The present dictionary, while it undoubtedly fills a gap in Polish historiography, only partly links to the tradition of the historical and geographical dictionaries published by the Polish Academy of Sciences, as it gives a lot of space to archaeological research and includes elements of historical geography's retrogressive method. Different from the tradition of the above mentioned dictionaries is also the geographical area chosen: the actual district of Lubin is not a historical region but a contemporary administration unit.

The publication has already been reviewed several times: one rather neutral review mainly presenting the content and the structure of the dictionary,² two reviews by specialists of medieval archaeology of Silesia pointing out some mistakes and omissions,³ and a very critical review by Tomasz Jurek, head of the Academy project, who – besides pointing out some mistakes – criticised the structure of the dictionary.⁴ The authors of the dictionary have since written a response to the last review.⁵

¹ For a description of the Academy project see: <http://www.slownik.ihpan.edu.pl/intro.php>, access: August 25, 2017.

² See review by Tomasz Związek in: "Acta Poloniae Historica", 111, 2015, p. 111–181.

³ See reviews by Krzysztof Fokt and Przemysław Nocun in: "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka", 70, 2015, p. 117–123; "Rocznik Muzeum Górnośląski Park Etnograficzny w Chorzowie", 3, 2014, p. 232–238.

⁴ See review by Tomasz Jurek in: "Roczniki Historyczne", 81, 2015, p. 263–267.

⁵ D. Adamska, A. Latocha, D. Nowakowski, *Prototypowy czy pilotażowy? W sprawie dyskusji nad pierwszym tomem „Słownika wsi śląskich w średniowieczu”*, "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka", 71 (1), 2016, p. 181–191.

The structure of the reviewed publication is clear, the dictionary is divided into four main parts: introduction, containing a presentation of the applied methodology, the sources and a brief history of the development of settlements in medieval Silesia; the second part, the description of 104 villages enriched with a lot of additional photographs, plans, and artefact drawings; the third part containing cartographical reconstructions of the villages elaborated upon with historical geography's retrogressive method; and finally the personal and geographical index followed by a German summary.

Each entry is divided into four parts: at the top of each article the settlement's name is given in Polish and German and the commune it presently belongs to, followed by the historical forms of the place name and finally information on the church affiliation, then follows historical information from printed and unprinted sources, then information on the geographical location of the village, and finally information on historical buildings and archaeological findings based on both published and unpublished materials, e.g. *Archeologiczne Zdjęcie Polski* (the Archaeological Survey of Poland). This part also includes a large number of photographs and drawings from churches, cadastral maps or ceramic findings, swords or seals etc.

The 9-page bibliography is carefully prepared, and what is particularly noteworthy is that the German literature is quoted nearly without mistakes, which is not always the standard in Polish publications.

From the reviewer's point of view – i.e. that of a historian interested in the history of settlement – the dictionary's biggest merit is the collection of archaeological findings, which is an enormous help for non-archaeologists trying to work interdisciplinarily. However, that kind of research would also greatly benefit from

even some short information about the etymology of the place names. The task shouldn't have been especially time-consuming, as the biggest part of the Silesian place names has already been published in the *Słownik etymologiczny nazw geograficznych Śląska* (*Etymological Dictionary of Silesian Place names*), which unfortunately rarely can be found as a complete collection in libraries outside Silesia.

Given the great importance of towns in the shaping of settlement structures, the reviewer sees no plausible reason in omitting them from the work. Lubin and Rudna are missing totally, Ścinawa has only a very short entry, whereas Chobienia has its own keyword. Surely the complete description of the towns would increase the volume of the dictionary remarkably, but as Tomasz Jurek suggested, at least information on their pre-location history and archaeology should have been given, as detailed information on their later history can be easily found e.g. in the *Schlesisches Städtebuch*.

The third and last part of the publication consists of 88 tables which attempt to reconstruct the geographical environment of each village. The basis for this reconstruction is made up mostly of maps drawn by Ludwig Wilhelm von Regler during the years 1764–1770, and of the *Urmesstischblätter* (1824 and 1826). These tables are printed in colour on a scale of 1:25.000. The spatial layout of the village centre is plotted into the plans, including roads and tracks, watercourses, vegetation cover and information about the structure of the terrain, as well as symbols for churches, mills and manors etc. As the authors use the retrogression method known as *Dorfkernforschung* in German, they attach special importance to the layout of village centres. However, for the history of settlement the field layouts are no less important and thus, the plotting of field structures would be very useful for further research. In the case of the Lubin district

there seems to be a lack of appropriate sources for such an endeavour, but for other regions, for which more material is available, it might be worth a try.

The reviewer find the addition of field names taken from the maps of Wilhelm von Regler, the *Urmesstischblätter* and the card file compiled by Arthur Zobel conserved in the Herder Institute in Marburg very useful. The localisation of the archaeological findings in the plans wouldn't have been less useful.

The index is a rather weak point in the reviewed book, because the German place names and the historical forms are missing which unnecessarily complicates the use of the dictionary when the user is looking for information concerning villages he/she knows only from sources or from German literature.

The head of the Academy Project Tomasz Jurek harshly criticised the decision to publish the dictionary according to actual districts and not according to historical regions. In theory Jurek's arguments sound convincing, but the fact that only four from initially fifteen planned (I omit that the original conception has changed since) volumes have been published until today or are actually being published, shows that his arguments are a bit stretched. If the Academy project continues at the same pace it would be concluded in around 150 years, which

is why initiatives to publish this kind of dictionaries outside the Academy should be welcomed, even if they can't in all points comply with the high standards of the Academy Project. The question is, whether in times of the Internet long-time projects like dictionaries should still be published first as a print version, and then made accessible as scans (as is the case with the Academy project), or whether it would not be better to present them first online as work-in-progress, which could enable a swift proofreading and revision of any mistakes and omissions before the work went to print. An online presentation of the collected card files of still unpublished volumes would be even more useful, as for example the *Deutsches Rechtswörterbuch* (DRW) which allows the user to find online the quotations collected for still unpublished keywords. If one day all districts of the dictionary are completed, the online version could allow the user to create his/her own dictionary according to their interests, e.g. to organize the material according to historical administration units. That doesn't mean that the printed versions will become redundant, but in the age of Internet the consequences of pragmatic decisions concerning the printed versions of a long-time project could always be altered by a well-thought-out online presentation. ■

Joachim Stephan
(Poznań)