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From the Methodology of Onomastic Research on the Example of Selected Anthroponyms

Z metodologii badań onomastycznych na przykładzie wybranych antroponimów

The question that arises from the title thus formulated is: what proper names do we have in mind? The issue concerns three types of proprial nomination: personal, local and water, with the omission of proper names, which refer to various material and spiritual civilizational manifestations of human life, such as broadly understood chrematonymy, or to the world of animals and plants (Rzetelska-Feleszko, 1998, pp. 15–361). The topic and the choice of names was dictated by my previous onomastic studies, carried out for over a half of century (published and still practised, with the oldest article from 1968), from which I extracted the results of analyses of names known and less known to me from the etymological point of view, with the mention of my and other relevant publications in order to emphasize the desirable methodology of onomastic research, which frequently led to the verification of present and past interpretations of this nomenclature. The discourse so profiled is sometimes presented in summary form in relation to my published texts concerning given issues, as in the case of all anthroponymic analyses and toponymic parts, but it is also often carried out in the form of detailed, extended speculations. Due to the multitude of issues and motifs contained in this presentation, sometimes generating and intertwining with one another, sometimes presented in a digressive form, “kaleidoscopic” in presenting the same names in different research contexts, and the open, arbitrary character of the onymic exemplification referred to herein, the whole lecture is maintained in the poetic form of an “onomastic story” rather than

a rigorous, restrained scientific lecture. Through the main task of this text, which is to present an onomastic research workshop, this article, delivered in a short form at the International Onomastic Conference in Kazimierz Dolny in October 2018, is a response to the wish of its organizers to present such a problem. I humbly ask the Reader to forgive me the personal tone that accompanies the entire proposed and, in addition, long narrative: the self-presentation of results of my scientific adventure with onomastics to-date.

TOWARDS ETHNONYMY AND ANTHROPONYMY OF FORENAME AND SURNAME¹

Our tribal forefather *Lech*, also known as *Lęch* and *Lach*

These are ethnonyms connected with the notion of “lechism” related to the history of Polish tribes, discussed on historical and linguistic grounds. It is commonly assumed that *Lach* is the Ruthenian name denoting every Pole: an augmentative from the tribal name *Lędzanin* / *Lędzianin* / *Lędzic* “inhabitant of *lęda*”, “a non-forested place” from the area of today’s south-eastern Poland (i.e. *Lędzanie* have a similar meaning to the Greater Poland’s *Polanie*). The equivalent should be Polish *Lęch*, whereas the popular form is *Lech*. This figure appears in Polish historiography as a literary work whose source is the latinized form *Lechitae* – *Lechici* “Lechites”, used several times by Wincenty Kadłubek in his *Kronika Polaków* of the 12th and 13th centuries. This form was adopted from this writer by Polish chroniclers, from whom the author of *Kronika wielkopolska* written at the end of the 13th century derived from *Lechici* the forefather *Lech* and settled him in Gniezno. This legend was perpetuated by Jan Długosz, and the sign of its vitality is the *Wzgórze Lecha*, which still exists in this city. *Lech* has also occupied a place in Polish mythology since the 14th century in the vicinity of Slavic brothers of *Czech* and *Rus*. According to Mikołaj Rudnicki, the Polish singular base *Lech* instead of *Lęch*, used by Kadłubek, is a manifestation of its denasalisation, typical of the Lesser Poland’s dialect familiar to the chronicler, who, therefore, heard *Lech* instead of *Lęch*. Indeed, Kadłubek, as the rector of the Sandomierz Collegiate Church in the years 1186–1208, could hear the form of *Lech*, which was not, however, a dialectal transformation of the Polish

¹ In the article, I do not use internal footnotes concerning sources and studies utilised, referring instead the Reader to footnotes placed at the end of particular segments of this study, which indicate the full text already published, referring to the following personal names discussed herein, with detailed source documentation and bibliography. Central footnotes appear when new additions are made to these parts.

form **Lęch* into *Lech*, but the Ruthenian form of *Lach*, known in the area not far from Sandomierz of the then 12th and 13th centuries' Halych-Volodymyr Ruthenia in its western part, where, according to the dialectal tendency to exchange 'a with 'e after the soft consonant, *Ljach* was pronounced *Ljech*, which is exemplified by similar transformations, such as, for example, *Lężeńsko* > *Lażeńsko* to *Leżajsk* under the influence of Ruthenian **Ljažen'sko* > **Lježen'sko*, and in Rzeszów District, in Ruthenian **Ljad'ska* > **Lacka* to *Lecka* (i.e. "Polish" in Ruthenian, neighbouring to **Ruska Wieś*). This anlaut *Le-* instead of *La-* is in the oriental name of Poland, *Lechistan*, as opposed to **Lachistan*. Therefore, the solution to the mystery of our progenitor, *Lech*, is provided by historical data: who, when and where noted this dialectally conditioned Ruthenian form (Makarski, 1993, pp. 43–51).

Our first historical princess – *Dąbrówka*, not *Dobrawa*

The distant beginnings of Poland are referred to in connection with a certain Czech lady – the first wife of our prince *Miecisław* (misread by historians as *Mieczysław*), hypocoristically called *Mieszko* – the lady traditionally known as *Dąbrówka*, but recently commonly known in connection with the 1050th anniversary of the baptism of Poland as *Dobrawa*. There was a lively dispute about the proper nomination of this princess even before World War II, in which the most eminent linguists of the time took part, including Tadeusz Lehr-Splawiński, Witold Taszycki, Tadeusz Milewski, Stanisław Urbańczyk, Jan Otrębski and historians, among them Gerard Labuda and Karol Buczek – all using various arguments, which I will not present here – ended with an authoritative summary by Taszycki in the 1945 issue of "Język Polski": "It's *Dąbrówka* after all". I am also in favour of this form, proposing a different argumentation than in the previous literature on this subject.

And how it really was? Originally this name was noted in the 11th-century German source, authored by Thietmar, as *Dobrawa*, whose fidelity to the original (because of its thematic *Dobr-* as a secondary to *Dubr-*) was questioned, because in the native Czech source from the beginning of the 12th century by Cosmas of Prague, she was named *Dubravka*. This form is a hypocoristic derivative with *-ka* from **Dubrava*, or it is a personalized form of this name from the adjective *dubrava* by means of the same suffix. In the light of the oldest available Polish records from the 12th–13th century, *Dubrowka* was the first written record, followed by *Dubrovka* in the 14th century, then changed to the form of *Dąbrówka*, which is treated as a manifestation of phonetic (Polish *q* < Czech *u*) and morphological polonization (Polish *-ówka* in place of Czech *-avka*, since the old adjective *dubrava* hidden in the Czech name *Dubravka* in the meaning of "oak" (adj.) corresponds to the

semantically equivalent Polish *dąbrowa*, cf. similar suffixal adjectival equivalent of *tarnowa* and *tarnawa*). The resulting *Dąbrówka* was associated with the noun *dąbrówka* (“small oak forest”), which Aleksander Brückner rightly assesses as a nonsensical association, although this does not mean that such a nomination with a different genesis was impossible, despite the fact that the researcher categorically stated: “The wife of Mieszko never had such a name; her name was *Dobrawa*; the nonsense with *Dąbrówka* emerged later”.

Lack of native Czech and then Polish records for the name of the discussed person in the form of **Dobrava*, derived from a foreign German source, treated by historians as a secondary form to the Czech **Dubrava*, transformed as a result of contamination into *dobry*, is an argument for the primacy of the form with the Old Slavic **Dǫbr-* (Czech *Dubr-*, Polish *Dąbr-*).

The semantic and formal interpretation of the name proposed so far, i.e. Czech **Dubrava* (secondary *Dubravka*), Polish **Dąbrowa* (then *Dąbrówka*) as a form with suffixal adjectival *-av-*, Polish *-ow-* from the noun base, found yet another explanation. According to some researchers, it could also be a form derived from the simple Old Slavic adjective **dǫbrъ* (“dark”) denoting a “person with dark hair colour or dark skin”, which, however, in the light of the rules of word-formation analysis should be questioned, because it is possible to create a qualitative adjective with *-ow-* or with the same function using *-aw-* (in both languages) from another adjective. At most, the absolute (adjective) suffix *-awa* could be used. Then, the Czech derivative *Dubrava* would mean a darkish person, formed according to the pattern as in Polish *biaława* (“whitish”), *głupawa* (“sillyish”). The problem here is the record of this form of degree on the level of both languages, later, as compared to the times described herein. Note that this suffix added to the base *dobra*, assuming that our heroine should be called *Dobrava*, would suggest that she would not be a very good person, which would not be fitting to the expected high values of the princess. Naming derivatives of Czech **Dubrava* > *Dubravka*, Polish **Dąbrowa* > *Dąbrówka* can be meaningfully explained with the assumption that the noun base was Old Slavic **dǫbrъ*, which due to its suffixal *-r-* is assigned an emotional augmentative value, cf. Old Polish *ząbr* “with large teeth” (later under the influence of the Ruthenian transformed into *źubr*), a big *jęzor* “big tongue”, a predatory *pazur* “claw”, a dangerous *chmura* (not a serene *obłok*) – both meaning “cloud”. This noun was used to create a name from the suffix *-ava* in Czech or *-owa* in Polish, with a simple (noun-derived) adjective form in a metaphorical sense to denoting a person similar to *dąbr* – “mighty oak” – with a strong character, because it could not be about the Czech *Dubravka*, the Polish *Dąbrówka* literally as some kind of a monster. Danuta Borawska, who in 1972 resumed this long-discussed issue of *Dąbrowka* in her article entitled *O imię Dąbrówka*, stated, referring to the research

of Old Bohemian anthroponymy by Jan Svoboda, that the Czech name *Dubravka* (Polish *Dąbrowka* > *Dąbrówka*) could have originated, from the very beginning, from a child name referring to the world of plants, when names of this kind, such as Czech *Květ*, *Jahoda*, *Kalina* could perform protective functions by confusing evil spirits and demons. According to the researcher, this kind of nomination was supposed to give the child the power of young oaks. While assuming the optative character of this name, one should question its motivation with the strength of *mlode dęby* (“young oaks”), because the theme visible in it in the form of augmentative noun *dąbr* makes it possible to adopt a slightly different interpretation that it is about the power of *starsze dęby* (“older oaks”). In both cases, the name has a metaphorical meaning. However, we do not know at what stage of the protagonist’s life it appeared, whether at first as a wish for a small girl or later as a statement of the strength of the adult *Dobravka*, Polish *Dąbrówka* (Makarski, 2008, pp. 73–97).

Two prominent names of Kresy – *Mickiewicz* and *Słowacki*

Both of our most outstanding Romantic poets, associated with each other on the literary and acquaintance level, can be compared also on the onomastic level. They carry names that can be interpreted in different ways: *Mickiewicz* as a patronymic with a Russian formant *-kiewicz* from Belarusian *Mic’ka(-o) : Dz’mic’er < D(i)mitrij* or from Polish *Micek : Mikołaj, Michał*, or from Polish *Micek < Miczek*, and *Słowacki* as a type of native, popular for a long time, originally noble surname with *-ski* from the Polish ethnic base *Słowak* (“Slavic person” or “arrival from Slovakia”) or in connection with an appellative *slowo*. In the light of family documents from the second half of the 17th century concerning both specific persons – our national poets – the names of their ancestors can be explained differently: in both cases as forms derived from place names – *Mickiewicz* from the toponym *Mickowce* < Belarusian *Mickovci*, meaning the original home estate of the poet’s ancestors who came there from Mazovia. This toponym gave rise to a personal name with *-icz* (cf. ethnonim *moskwicz : Moskwa*, names from Białystok region such as *Bankowicz : Bańki, Bodakowicz : Bodaki*), which, by designating every inhabitant of this settlement, is rooted in the name only in respect of their owners. In the case of *Mickiewicz*, there was a disintegration of the *Mickow-ce* base, from which the form **Mickowicz* could have come into being, but a local variant of this formant, namely *-kiewicz* was used and hence *Mickiewicz*. The anthroponymic form of the derivative **Mickowczyez* would be difficult to accept for phonetic reasons if the entire toponymic basis was retained.

A noble anthroponymic origin similar to *Mickiewicz* is also attributable to the name of our second national poet, as *Słowacki* also derives from a toponym – the

village of *Słowatycze* in Volhynia, at the end of the 17th century a possible estate of the poet's ancestors – originally realized in Ukrainian form *Slavjatyči* (Polish **Sławięcice*). The surname of our poet also includes a disintegration of the base, hence *Słowacki*, not **Słowatycki*. As regards the suffixes of both names, i.e. *-icz* and *-ski*, it is their localizing function which indicated the place of residence, and in the case of our heroes also the state of ownership of these two villages at the end of the 17th century by the nobility-class arrivals from Poland – the distant ancestors of both poets. The Polishness of their families is manifested through the Polish family tradition of namesake and heraldry, and is confirmed by the arch-Polish literary work of their outstanding descendants – creators of the rank of national poet – in the form and message. Both names derived from Ruthenian toponymic bases have Ruthenian features, although in the case of *Słowacki*, they are completely hidden. Both are classified in the borderland Polish-Ruthenian anthroponymy. In the analysis of the genesis of the names of these poets, the most important, as in the case of *Lech*, is again the extra-linguistic argument: here, the genealogical recognition of the founders of their families (Makarski, 2011, pp. 57–74).

The common *Palikot* as a linguistic problem

The problem is the high degree of ambiguity of the surname. At least 10 of its etymologies can be quoted. *Palikot* is somebody: 1) who *palil* “destroyed living cats (*koty*) with fire”; 2) who *palil* “made something burn”, “set fire” to cats (*koty*) wrapped in rags or packets; 3) who *palil* “fired projectiles at” cats; 4) who *palil* “fire” on cats instead of hare; 5) who *palil* “burned” *koty* “hay residues left on the field after ploughing”; 6) who *palil się* “burned hot with passion to” *kot* “female bosom”; 7) in whose hut/cottage *kot* “cat” set itself on fire from a fireplace; 8) who was mentally unstable like a *podpalony* “burnt”, *opalony* “ardent” *kot* “cat”, and even suspected of contact with dark forces; 9) who *palil się* “burned with lust” like a *kot* “cat”; 10) who, due to his/her explosiveness, was similar to **palikot* “a cannon”. This ambiguity is primarily the result of two ways of treating the compound *Palikot* – as an exocentric structure with a superior verb-derived root *Pali-* and a subordinate nominal one *-kot* or as an endocentric structure with an opposite type of relationship between these components. Moreover, this homonym is caused by the ambiguity of both roots of the tested assembly, in which the *palic* (*się*) and *kot* can be used both in its basic and secondary, metaphorical, meaning. Due to the degree of formal compatibility between the surface and deep structure of a given anthroponym, the first two interpretations are most likely, and due to the common practice of setting cats on fire “for fun” by juvenile delinquents, the previous argument takes precedence over the undoubtedly less frequent cruel burning of the

creatures. The example of *Palikot* shows how capacious some word-forming models can be in the Polish language, which allow for a rich homonymy still in line with the law of language economy, contrary to the opposite principle of polarization, guarding the communicativeness of language, which in its own nomenclature, fulfilling the basic function of marking with the use of only formal means, states that the etymological meaning of a name in the social practice of communication is irrelevant (Makarski, 2016, pp. 81–102).

Slavic and folk pope – *Wojtyła*

The name *Wojtyła*, widely recognized all over the world, appears as a homonymous form, in structural, genetic and linguistic terms. It can be derived from different bases: Old Polish appellative *wojt* > Middle Polish and present-day *wójt* or anthroponymic *Wojciech* with thematic *Wojt-* and the formant *-yła*. I consider Sławomir Gala's proposal to treat the surname *Wojtyła* as a form with a double suffix *-t-yła*, a derivative from the name of *Woj-bor*, *Borzy-woj* type, as unlikely. Among the other two etymological proposals, I give priority to the interpretation of *Wojtyła* as a derivative from the name *Wojciech* – a form composed of the root *Wojt-*, which is a result of the mutilation and dispalatalization of the base *Wojciech* and of the formant *-yła*, which is expressed by an optional inflectional ending *-a* and the suffix *-y-l-*, based on historical participles with *-y-l-*, cf. *była* from *być* (with the native *y-*), but above all on participles with *-i-l-* (with the suffixal verbal *-i-*), in relation to which the anthroponymic suffix *-y-l-* can be described as a variant with a hard *y* motivated by a hard final position of the stem, hence the form of *Wojtyła*, and not **Wojcila*. Today, this name is a secondary formation to a nickname derived from a forename that is emotionally saturated with three determinants: disintegration of the base, suffixal *-l-* and the feminine ending *-a*. The above information suggests that it is a plebeian name, which agrees with Słowacki's vision of the Pope as a folk brother. Such a structural and semantic image of this name is a reflection of the historical truth. In today's perception, the name *Wojtyła* is a form with an already blurred historical emotional value, largely lexicalized, not always associated with the base *Wojciech*.

The Polish ancestry of the surname in question, visible in the light of linguistic (lexical, phonetic and morphological) analysis does not exclude its qualification as a form borrowed from Slavic languages: Old Ruthenian, Slovak or Czech, which in the latter two cases is clearly indicated by the high frequency of this name in the Bielsko-Biała region on the Polish-Slovak and Polish-Czech borders, where *Wojtyła* could have been the name of Slovak and Czech *Vojt(-y)la* assimilated by Poles. The determination of the linguistic-ethnic origin of the surname of a specific *Wojtyła*

family (Polish or foreign), including the most famous family of Pope John Paul II's ancestors, depends only on the family genealogical source data. Regardless of the original linguistic affiliation of the derivative *Wojtyła*, its base is genetically common, as predicted by the aforementioned *Słowacki* – Slavic (all-Slavic) – rooted still in tribal times, then sanctioned on Czech and Polish soil by św. Wojciech (St. Adalbert), later Christian patron of the Czech Republic and Poland (Makarski, 2014, pp. 7–29).

The above analysis of personal names within the range of data motivated by the value of their universal social resonance – as in the case of the interpretation of every other personal name – is inscribed in a wide panorama of multiple studies taking into account: a) different types of nominations (historical ethnonyms, former and later forenames, nicknames, surnames), b) one-component, two-component and multi-component method of naming persons, c) gender (sex of the bearer, male and female in the Polish onym still separate, as masculine and feminine), d) family status (patronymic and matronymic names), f) indigenous and foreign anthroponyms – all with their stratigraphy and regional differentiation, expressed in an appropriate word-formation structure, with its frequent homonymy caused by the ambiguity of bases and/or formants. As regards any task of determining the origin of the personal name of a given person (here the names of known historical and contemporary figures), in the case of their homonymity and/or potential different linguistic origins, the decisive factor may be the source historical data (*Dąbrówka*) and genealogical data (*Mickiewicz*, *Słowacki*, not fully established in relation to *Wojtyła*), or even detailed information related to determining the creator of a given name (Kadłubek as the author of Polish-Latin neologism *Lechita*).

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the article, which examines issues related to the methodology of anthroponymic research, is the linguistic analysis of personal names of well-known historical and contemporary figures: the ethnonym *Lech*, the name *Dąbrowka*, the surnames *Mickiewicz*, *Słowacki*, *Palikot* and *Wojtyła*. This analysis is intended to verify the existing naming etymologies. In determining the genesis of each analysed personal name, with word-formation homonymy and potential different linguistic origins, the decisive factor may be the source historical data (*Dąbrowka*) and genealogical data (*Mickiewicz*, *Słowacki*, not fully established in relation to *Wojtyła*), or even detailed information related to determining the creator of a given name (Kadłubek as the author of Polish-Latin neologism *Lechita*, and its derivative *Lech*).

Keywords: methodology of anthroponymic studies, word-formation etymology, word-formation homonymy

ABSTRAKT

Celem artykułu, który rozpatruje zagadnienia związane z metodologią badań antroponimicznych, jest analiza językowa nazw osobowych powszechnie znanych postaci historycznych i współczesnych: etnonim *Lech*, imię *Dąbrowka*, nazwiska *Mickiewicz*, *Słowacki*, *Palikot* oraz *Wojtyła*. Analiza ta ma służyć weryfikacji dotychczasowych etymologii nazwownych. W ustaleniu genezy każdej badanej nazwy osobowej przy homonimiczności nazwownej i potencjalnej różnej genezie językowej czynnikiem rozstrzygającym mogą być źródłowe dane historyczne (*Dąbrowka*) i genealogiczne (*Mickiewicz* i *Słowacki*, nie do końca ustalone w odniesieniu do *Wojtyły*), czy nawet szczegółowa informacja związana z ustaleniem twórcy danego miana (Wincenty Kadłubek jako autor neologizmu pol.-łac. *Lechita*, skąd *Lech*).

Słowa kluczowe: metodologia badań antroponimicznych, etymologia nazwowna, homonimiczność nazwowna

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