Holendry and holender; the influence of Dutch immigrants on Polish

The presence of the Dutch settlers in Poland has inspired historians for a long time. However there is no thorough study on the settlement activity of Dutchmen in Poland, though the problem remains interesting for the Polish researchers. A few years ago in Toruń there was a conference on "The Olęders and their heritage in Poland. History, maintenance, protection". The conference participants discussed the development of Dutch settlement in several regions of Poland, material (architecture, fruit- growing) and spiritual culture related to the settlement. The names of settles in Wielkopolska were also discussed. The conference materials are being prepared for publication.

There are several historical studies, like the most important: I. Baranowski "Dutch villages in Poland" and W. Ruciński "Settles of the so called Olęders in the former Poznań province". According to the mentioned studies, the Dutchmen appeared in Poland in the 16th century. Their settlement is known as Dutch or Olęder settlement. The colonization had its roots in the earlier Flemish – Dutch settlement, which had been developed in Germany as far back as the Middle Ages, and in the 16th century in Prusy Książęce (Ducal Prussia) and Prusy Królewskie (Royal Prussia). The 16th century colonization had both religious and economic reasons.

In the reformation era, Luther and other reformers gained many followers in the Netherlands. The sects of neophytes and Mennonites came into existence. Catholic rulers of the Netherlands, Charles V and Phillip II of Spain decided to eradicate heresy. Therefore the Dutch Mennonites (and a part of remaining population) were forced to find refuge abroad. Ducal Prussia and Royal Prussia were wide open. After secularization of Prussia, Albrecht Hohenzollern was happy to see his coreligionists, persecuted elsewhere. He also considered economic factors. It was necessary to cultivate riverside- grounds, often flooded. In the Middle Ages the Dutchmen proved to be excellent specialists, so in the 16th century Hohenzollern wanted to use that excellence. The first Dutch settlement in Ducal Prussia was established in 1527 in the neighborhood of today's Pasłęk (Preussisch Holland), and shortly after that many others were founded. (see map 1)

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¹ I. Baranowski, Wsie holenderskie na ziemiach polskich, Przegląd Historyczny XIX, 1915, s. 64-82.

² W. Rusiński, Osady tzw. Olędrów w dawnym województwie poznańskim, Kraków 1947.

A little later Dutch colonies started to spring up in Royal Prussia. The activity began in Gdańsk. Since the half of the 16th century the city had been the owner of Żuławy, depression areas in the Vistula delta. In the middle of the 16th century the settlement of Dutchmen in Żuławy was initiated by Ferber, the mayor of Gdańsk. The Settlers sailed directly from Holland or from Ducal Prussia, where economic conditions were worse. The first Dutch settlers in Poland were settled on low-lying grounds, often flooded. The Dutch settlements were ruled by their own law, which was a variation of the former Chełmno law. It was similar to the legal bases on which the Dutch colonizers were settled in Germany in the Middle Ages. These were the main rules of the law:

- 1. The Dutchmen settled according to a contract, which a master singed with a whole community or with a deputy, acting on behalf of community.
- 2. Contract obligations were carried out collectively by the whole community; the unanimity was declared in the location document.
- 3. All community members had equal rights in internal communal relations; and they had a right to choose the administrator of the settlement.
- 4. Court obligations of the Dutchmen were limited to financial rents.
- 5. The Dutchmen's right to land was generally based on leases from a dozen or so to dozens of years.
- 6. The settlers were personally free.
- 7. The assignment of the settlers was the land improvement through the drainage and maintenance of the system of dikes and channels and also the cultivation of meadows and stock-raising.

The first Dutch settlements were established, as I mentioned before, in Ducal Prussia, a little later in Royal Prussia. In 1562 the Dutch settlement Tygienhof was established in the Vistula delta and similar settlements in Puck district. Simultaneously began the march of Dutch settlement up along the Vistula (see map 3). In the valley between Nowe and Sartowice, Dutch settlements were founded, and the settlers were, according to Ludkiewicz³, Dutch Mennonites. Dutch settlements were situated on the left bank of Vistula, in the vicinity of Fordon, Bydgoszcz, Toruń, and on the right bank of Vistula in the vicinity of Solec and Dobrzyń. On the right of the river there are Dutch settlement in Bobrownicki district, and on the left of the river, in Gostyń and Sochaczew districts in Kujawy region.

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³ Z. Ludkiewicz, Osady holenderskie na nizinie sartawicko-nowskiej, Toruń 1934.

In the twenties of the 17th century the Dutch colonizers reached Warsaw and settled in Saska Kępa. In the course of time the ethnical structure of Dutch settlements changed. Apart from Dutchmen, there were also German and Polish who took part in the settlement.

One can claim that since the 17th century the type of settlements has been developed, and has had specific characteristics. Such settlements could be found in many different Polish regions, for example in Wołyń or in the area of today's Zamość. Until the Partitions of Poland, they were in great number.

Particularly numerous were the Dutch settlements in Wielkopolska. Their presence there, is a further stage of Dutch colonization in the area of Royal Prussia and Ducal Prussia. The oldest preserved location privilege refers to *Ujskie Olędry*, established in 1597. On the turn of the 16th century there was a group of settlements established in Wieleń, Międzyrzecze, and Krobielewo districts. These settlements were situated in marshy meadows in the river valleys of Noteć and Warta, and they were undoubtedly connected with Dutch settlement in Royal Prussia. Setting up *Olędry Ujskie*, *Olędry Murzynowskie*, *Olędry Róża*, *Olędry Nowe Dwory*, *Marianowa Olędrów* was followed by a pause in Duch colonization in Wielkopolska. In the end of the 17th century the activity was reborn and it continued unabated until the Partitions of Poland. Large groups of settlements were established in the Noteć valley between Czarnków and Wieleń, in the Warta valley near Międzychód and to the east of the Obra line. Two other settlements were situated in the Warta valley between Śrem and Pyzdry and on the line Czerniejowo- Murowana Goślina – Rogoźno – Chodzież. There were no Dutch settlements in wałecki district and in Wschowa area.

Genuine Dutchmen were settled in the settlements established in the 16th century and on the turn of the 16th century. It is confirmed by many sources. All of the settlements (Olędry Ujskie, Folsztyn, Herbardowo, Marianowo-Olędry, Olędry Nowe Dwory) were located on a wet lowland in the Noteć valley, and the Dutchmen were settled to drain the grounds. The settlers received the land under perpetual lease. Names and surnames of the settlers mentioned in the privileges sound Flemish- Dutch. For example in Olędry Ujskie: Jan Borth, Marcin Schuenke, Michał Boleman, Krystian Paul, Joachim Schmiket, Jan Werner, Andrzej Dumken, Jan Elwig. In the location privileges the settlers are called the Olenders, in the sense of their nationality, to distinguish them from the Germans.

However it seems certain that the settlements located in the end of the 17th century in Wielkopolska were colonized by the Dutch and Polish settlers. The names of settlers prove it. The law and economy type are everything the newcomers from Holland and those settlements have in common. It is the same in the case of new settlements in the Vistula valley.

Those settlements were called *Holendry*, *Olendry*, and in German sources *Holländer* and *Hauländer*. The word *Hauländer* is a variation of the original word *Holländer*. In spite of the same name, in Wielkopolska, according to Baranowski, the word *Olędry* has a different meaning: "The term *Holendry* in Poland has a different meaning, it no longer describes the nationality of the colonists and economic assignments of the colony, but it applies to a certain social organization of the colonists, which is modeled on the forms shaped in the Dutch colonies. In the 18th century Poland the name *Holendry* is a legal term rather than an ethnical term"⁴.

The problem of Dutch colonization may seem uninteresting from the linguistic point of view. However that type of settlement resulted in many interesting place – names and toponyms. The Dutch settlements inherited their names after the existing settlements or received new names. The names of those settlements were analyzed in several papers written by Polish linguists: K. Handke⁵, Z. Zierhofferowa⁶, M. Rutkiewicz⁷.

Many of those settlements were called and are still called *Holendry*, *Olędry*, *Olendry*. It seems easy to explain them as derived from the name of nationality *Holender* in plural, similar to other ethnical names like *Czechy*, *Niemcy*. But if we consider: 1. the history of Dutch colonization, 2.the great number of the settlements called *Holendry*, which occur in groups and are generally situated in waterlogged areas, 3. and the meaning of the word *Holender*, *holendry*, it proves that onomastic analysis of such names is not that easy.

The word *holender* has been mentioned in Polish dictionaries since the 19th century. For the first time it was marked down in S. B. Linde's Dictionary, and defined as follows: "from Holland. The cattle - breeding settlers from Holland are called in our country: Hollanders, Hollenders, Olanders, Oleders, Olenders". Linde also mentions the word *holendernia*, "a Dutch settlement, a farm settled by Hollender, where the main occupation is milking of cows and dairy produce".

⁴ I. Baranowski, op. cit., s. 70.

⁵ K. Handke, Nazwy miejscowe typu *Holendry*, Rozprawy Komisji Językowej Łódzkiego Towarzystwa Naukowego X, s. 57-68.

⁶ Z. Zierhofferowa, Nazwy typu *Osiek Mały, Koźminek* i inne derywowane od nazw miejscowych (na przykładzie materiału z dawnego województwa kaliskiego), Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1989, s. 41-6, 120-6; Nazwy osad olęderskich w Wielkopolsce, Materiały z Konferencji "Olędrzy i ich dziedzictwo w Polsce" (w druku)

⁷ M. Rutkiewicz, Sposoby tworzenia wielkopolskich nazw osad olęderskich, Toponimia i oronimia, Kraków 2001, s. 155-169; Mechanizmy adaptacyjne wielkopolskich nazw osad olęderskich, Onomastica XLVI (w druku).

⁸ S.B. Linde, Słownik języka polskiego, t. II, s. 184-5.

⁹ S.B. Linde, op. cit., s. 184-5.

The so called willeński¹⁰ Polish Dictionary does not mention the word *holender* in the sense of the name of nationality, but only in its technical meanings: a part of a machine and a windmill. The term *holendernia* is defined identically as it is defined in S. B. Linde's Dictionary.

The Dictionary of Polish by Karłowicz, Kryński, Niedźwiecki, the so called Warsaw dictionary¹¹, mentions the following terms:

Holender, Holander, Olander, Olender, Oleder: 1. a settler from Holland; 2. in plural a settlement, a colony of Dutchmen;

Holenderka: 1. a settler from Holland; 2. a Dutch Belted cow.

Holendernia, Olendernia: 1. a Dutch settlement, a farm settled by a Duchman or the Dutchmen, who deal with dairy produce; 2. a cow – shed, in particular courtly.

According to The Dictionary of Polish by W. Doroszewski¹² the word *holender* means: 1. a man of Dutch nationality; 2. one of the figures in figure skating, an arc made on one leg; 3. colloquially a word used euphemistically as a curse (instead of cholera); 4. a Dutch Belted bull; 5. a Dutch windmill; 6. A device used for defibring and milling of fibrous materials (celluloses, rags), in paper and chemical industry.

There's also a collocation mentioned *latający Holender* 1. a legendary ship sailing constantly and unable to reach the shore; 2. an active man unable to stay in one place.

holenderka 1. Holenderka "a woman of Dutch nationality"; 2. a Dutch Belted cow; 3. usually plural "a kind of skates"; 4. a clay tile shaped in S; a Dutch tile;

holenderski: concerning Holland, the Dutchmen, for example the Dutch language, the Dutch painting; the Dutch cheeses, Dutch breed of cattle "low lying cattle bred for meat and milk, from the Western Friesland; black and white, with harmonious habit of body and good musculature".

po holendersku "like the Dutchmen, in Dutch"

holendrować 1. To make a long, curving arc while skating, 2. about a plane: a bank with simultaneous deviation, a result of side instability, 3. to sew the brochures together, pulling the threads in two points of the insert, in all sheets.

¹⁰ Słownik języka polskiego (willeński), t. I, s. 405.

¹¹ Słownik języka polskiego (warszawski), Warszawa, t. II, s. 48.

¹² Słownik języka polskiego, pod red. W. Doroszewskiego, Warszawa, t.

Karłowicz's Dictionary of Polish dialects¹³ defines *olendry* as "a German colony", *uolendry* as "a colony once created and remaining under rent laws"; *olędernia* as "a shed for the Dutch cattle".

The meanings of the word *holender*, mentioned in the dictionaries, can be found in dialects as well:

Holender//olender 1. a German colonist (in central Poland); 2. a Dutch settler (on the area of Żuławy); 3. a device in a windmill (in the south of Poland); 4. a pigeon (in the south of Poland); 5. a curse (in central Poland, in north- eastern Poland and in the south of Poland) (see Map 3).

Holendry 1. a lowland situated in the Vistula valley, close to Żuławy; 2. a settlement (in Wielkopolska); 3. a part of a windmill (in the south of Poland) (see map 4).

Holenderka 1. a cow species (in Wielkopolska, in north- eastern Poland, in central Poland); a snuff (on the area of Żuławy); a kind of shoes (in Warmia and Mazuria District); a hen species (in the south of Poland) (see map 5).

Holendernia " a shed" in Wielkopolska, in central Poland, in the north of Małopolska (see map 6).

Specialist dictionaries: The dictionary of Old Polish, The Dictionary of Polish of the 16th century" do not mention the word *holender*. Mączyński doesn't mention the word holender in his dictionary either, though he notes the name of the country and an adjective derived from that name: *Holand, holanderski*¹⁴.

That short review shows that the original meaning of the word *Holender* remained the first and foremost meaning, from the very moment the word appeared in dictionaries. Soon it was followed by the detailed meanings, technical, referring to the Dutch economy. In plural the word *holendry* meant a specific type of settlement, and it became a settlement term. The evolution from ethnonym to toponymic appellative and a "usual" appellative is reflected in the place – names, like *Holendry*.

According to the List of Official Names of Places in Poland¹⁵, there are 54 localities connected with the word *holender*: 21 *Holendry*, 22 *Olendry* i *Olędry*; 1 *Olender*, 1 *Olenderki*, 2 *Holandia*, 2 *Holenderki*, 4 *Holendernia*, 1 *Holendrów*. 18 of them are separate villages, others are parts of villages, hamlets or forester's lodges. Situated in central Poland,

¹³ Karłowicz, Słownik gwar polskich, t. III, s. 437

¹⁴ J. Maczyński, 94d/30, 23d/11, 8.

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¹⁵ List of Official Names of Places in Poland, Wykaz Urzędowych Nazw Miejscowości w Polsce, Warszawa 1981, t. II, s. 580-1, III, s. 622-3.

mostly in the former Sieradz and Konin provinces and Piotrków and Radom provinces. See map 7 for further details.

On the List of Official Names of Places in Poland, there are names with different initial sounds h- and o-. It is related to the problem of initial o- in Polish. Handke 16 thinks that "the initial sound h- in the word Holender in Polish dialects, was surely felt as prosthetic, which means that it was regarded like h in hoko "oko". As the prosthesis of former initial o- in Polish dialects mostly had the form of u-, v-, the word Holendry was pronounced like uolendry. Dialectical uolendry was translated to literary language as Olendry, eliminating the labialization of initial sound o-, similarly as in uogrut "ogród", uostse "ostrze", (so it was the following transformation: $Holendry \rightarrow uolendry \rightarrow Olendry$)". It's worth noticing that in historical records very often there are forms with initial o-.

Among the names there are also: *Holender*, *Holandia*, *Holenderki*, *Holendernia*, *Holendrów*. The most common name is *Holendry*.

Holendry is an individual name or it is a part of two- part names like Holendry Baranowskie. The second part is an adjective derived from the name of the village, in the vicinity of which Holendry was established. Among the names on the List of Official Names of Places in Poland that type of names prevails (12:9). Whereas there are no two- part names with the word Oledry.

In the past there were much more names like *Holendry* in Poland. Handke ¹⁷quotes 77 names, with entries from The Geographical Dictionary, The index of towns in Polish Republic in 1925-11934 and maps of Poland in the scale 1: 100000. If we compare the material with the index quoted by Rusiński, the number of names grows to 156. According to Rusiński ¹⁸, there were 282 Olęderski settlements in Wielkopolska region.

In fact, many names including the element *Holendry* were altered in the course of time. Unfortunately there is no thorough study on the names of olęderski settlements in Poland. However two papers were published that deal with the methods of naming the settles in Wielkopolska and modifications the names went under¹⁹.

Names of Dutch (olęderski) settlements in Wielkopolska, mostly formed in the 18th century, are two - part names. They take the form of word combination like: *Kopanki Olędry // Olędry Kopanki* or *Troszczyńskie Olędry // Olędry Troszczyńskie*. The sequence of elements is not stabilized, though the element *olędry* more often is second.

¹⁶ K. Handke, op. cit. s. 64.

¹⁷ K. Handke, op. cit

¹⁸ W. Rusiński, op. cit.

¹⁹ M. Rutkiewicz, op. cit.

Z. Zierhofferowa²⁰ points out that in the 18th century the combined names of settlements in Wielkopolska took the form: Olędry + an adjective derived from the name of the nearby village, for example *Holendry Karczewskie*. In the 19th century most of such word combinations changed in form, like for example *Karczewo – Olędry*. Two – parts form of such names is a result of the fact that the settles were established in the vicinity of existing villages, they were situated in a distance and their building complex was scattered. One must acknowledge Z. Zierhofferowa's thesis that in Wielkopolska the names that include *Holendry* are division – names²¹. The researcher's ideas are convincing. In her opinion the element *holendry* is a settlement term, which performs the function of differentiating the names within the local community, enhancing the supply of linguistic means used for creating geographical names²². The word is etymologically derived from ethnonym Holender, which afterwards became an appellative, describing firstly a man working hard to drain the grounds, cultivate meadows, and breed cattle, and secondly a settlement ruled by its own law, settled by people dealing with the grounds drainage, meadow cultivation and stock raising (then *Holender* is a settlement term).

K. Handke, in the paper mentioned above, pointed out that it is impossible to classify place - names like *Holendry* into one of the semantic classes of Polish toponyms. Depending on the meaning, such names can be recognized as: 1. ethnical, derived from ethnonym Holender, describing a village inhabited by the Dutchmen;

- 2. cultural, describing a particular type of a settlement;
- 3. auxiliary, describing a settlement inhabited by people working on particular assignments.

In my opinion, we can claim that a certain name Holendry is an ethnical name, derived from the name of nationality, only if we have historical sources confirming that the Dutchmen really settled in a certain village. It can apply to the names of settlements in the Vistula valley established before the 18th century. Interesting is the fact that the settlements in Żuławy, where the Dutchmen were originally settled, were not called *Holendry*, for example the oldest Dutch settlement in Żuławy, where the Dutchmen lived, was named Tygienhof. The lack of place - names like *Holendry* in the provinces of Gdańsk, Malbork, Elblag and along

Z. Zierhofferowa, Nazwy typu Osiek Mały, Koźminek i inne derywowane od nazw miejscowych (na przykładzie materiału z dawnego województwa kaliskiego), Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1989, s. 41-6, 120-6.
Z. Zierhofferowa, op. cit., s. 44.

 ²² Z. Zierhofferowa, Terminy osadnicze i ich funkcja w toponimii (na podstawie materiału nazewniczego z obszaru dawnego województwa kaliskiego), Zeszytu Naukowe WSP w Opolu, Językoznawstwo XIII, 1991, s. 339-345.

the Vistula up to Toruń, Handke²³ explains by the fact that those territories were mostly colonized by the Dutch, so there was no problem of a foreign factor in Polish environment. While elsewhere, to the south of Toruń, the presence of the Dutch in prevailing Polish environment could become an impulse for using the ethnical name to call a certain place. Probably it happened so in the case of *Holendry Baranowskie* village in Skierniewice province, which has been known as Holendry since 1645.

Most of the names like *Holendry*, which were found in the past and are found nowadays in Poland, have very little in common with the real Dutchmen. Such names refer to a certain type of settlements. Etymologically they should be linked to the name of nationality, but onomastical justification of the origin of the name is the settlement name, which is a part of a place- name. Most of the names take the form of word combinations. Most of them changed their form through univerbalisation. The suffix took over the function of the element *Holendry// Oledry*.

That change, at least in Wielkopolska, was caused by extralinguistic factors, resulting from the trend to eliminate German accretions in the Prussian sector of partitioned Poland. Such accretions are *Holendry*, *Olędry*, according to Kozierowski²⁴,, who was the main author of changes of the names including those elements in Wielkopolska. Elsewhere, the names including those elements remained unchanged. The word combinations with *Holendry* most often were univerbalised with the help of suffixes –*k* and – *ec*, which are very productive in creating the division names and the names of little settlements, like for example: *Blazejewer Hol* 1802-1803, *Blażejewo Olędry* 1880, *Błażejewskie Olędry* 1912, *Błażejewko* 1922; *Ollendry Cmońskie* 1789, *Czmoń Olędry* 1846, *Czmoniec* 1921; *Koźmin Olędry*, *Koźminiec*.

Univerbalising function was also performed by other suffixes, not complying with the original semantic function, for example –ice: *Grzybowo Olędry* 1846, *Grzybowskie Holendry* 1859, *Grzybowice* 1921; the ending in plural form, for example: *Szamocińskie Holendry*, *Szamoty*; suf. –in: *Przysieckie Holendry*, *Przysieczyn*; suffix *pod-*: *Glębokie Olędry*, *Podglębokie*. See map 8 for more types of place- names linked etymologically to the word holender. Names like *Holendry*, *Holendry Baranowskie* and *Holendry-Krzyż* are in great number in Wielkopolska, in central Poland and in the south; names like Holendernia are found in the east of Poland and in Żuławy area, *Holender* in central Poland, while Holenderska Góra in the north of Wielkopolska.

²³ K. Handke, op. cit., s. 65.

²⁴ S. Kozierowski "Rozliczne Olędry i Huby w Poznańskiem nie są wcale ozdobą naszego starodawnego a tak

Among the Polish surnames there are 35 surnames, inspired by the name of nationality Holender and their derivatives, and also by German name of the country Holland: Holender, Holender, Holender, Holenderski, Hollander (: Holender), Holand, Holland, Holenda, Holendo, Holendzki; Olender, Olenderczyk, Olenderek, Olenderkiewicz, Olenderowicz, Olenderski, Olenderzyński; Olendra, Olendrowicz, Olendrowski, Olendrzewski, Olendrzyński, Olendarczyk, Olendor, Olander, Olanderek, Olęder, Olęderczyk, Olęderek, Olędrowicz, Olędrzyński, Olendrzyński.

These names have a different frequency and a different organization, what you can see in the chart. The most popular surname is *Olender*. Nowadays 4452 people living in Poland can say their name is Olender. It is also the oldest form of that surname, noted for the first time in 1616. (see map). The name appears everywhere in Poland, in great number in Warmia and Mazuria District, for example in Ostrołęka there live 310 people named Olender. There are no such people in south- eastern Poland, in the area of Białystok and Łódź and in the south of Małopolska. More then 200 people are called *Holender*, a surname noted for the first time in 1636 (see map).

There are people called *Holender* in the north of Poland (in the surrounding area of Żuławy, where the Ducth settled in the 16^{th} century), in central Poland and in the south of the country. It can be easily noticed that the areas, where the number of people called *Holender* is especially big, that the areas do not overlap. If you are interested in the organization of other names, I will be please to show it. Surnames etymologically linked to the name of nationality Holender, have different phonetic and graphic forms. The forms without initial h- prevail. The initial h- (similarly in toponyms) was surely felt as prosthetic and these names are more frequent. There are also graphic varieties, where -en is spelled like -e (though it is pronounced like -en); it refers only to surnames with initial Ol-.

Summing up, names Holender, Holendry and surnames etymologically linked to the name of nationality are the heritage of the presene of the Dutchmen, who settled in Poland in the 16th century. As a legacy they left a specific type of settlements, ruled by their own law and intended to cultivating meadows and raising stock. The settlements' name was derived from the name of nationality. Those names spread in Poland together with colonization, performed however no longer by the Dutchmen, but settlers from Germany and Poland. The colonized areas are in Wielkopolska and along the Vistula. Sporadically the names appear on the outskirts of Poland, where they have been brought by individual settlers. The name of nationality enriched Polish system of names, becoming firstly an appellative and a settlement term, and then a part of proper names.

Depending on the meaning of the word itself, the considered names can be classified into different semantic types. Ethnical name *Holender* turned also to appellative, describing different technical terms. The Dutch heritage in Poland is not directly the linguistic heritage, but the cultural heritage.

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