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The real estate registers had been introduced in 1776 by Frederic the Great, firstly in relation to noblemen's properties. The nobility of Royal Prussia had to document their rights to usufruct the estates in front of civil servants of the king, their new lord. Some of them were eradicated from their properties during those registration processes, in the case where they did not own documents required or could not secure the testimony of neighbors. Up to this day, some families and estates in Kashubia own such documents and mortgage registers from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Farmsteads were not given their entry in mortgage registers until the enfranchisement process. They contain interesting materials concerning everyday life. In addition, the entries recording new owners might also contain sale and purchase contracts, documents of lease and rent, liabilities and mortgage debts, a wedding contract, property inventories, last wills, and sometimes even records of the proceedings. One of the folk proverbs says, "If you want to know the character of the Kashubs, have a look at the records of proceedings". One could say too, that without an analysis of the mortgage and legal documents, the image of history and everyday life of the Kashubs and Pomerania could not be complete. The enfranchisement included firstly the regulation of property relations. In royal and state demesne this followed the 1808 edict, and in private properties the 1811 law, complemented by the 1816 government declaration. In noblemen's properties, the proprietary rights were given originally only to the richest peasants, who owned their own rigs.

The others were granted rights after the Spring of Nations, which was after most of the small holders had been ousted by noblemen and had become simply workers who did not come under the enfranchisement. The regulation of property relations was followed by an abolition of peasants' obligations towards the manor (corvée, rent, tribute in kind) and noblemen's obligations towards the village (construction and repair of peasants' buildings, emergency assistance in case of crop failure). Since the value of peasants' obligations was higher, they had to buy themselves out of them, most often through multi-year repayments of a part of the up to then farmed land. The latter form prevailed in noblemen's properties throughout entire Pomerania, which caused a growth of their areas. Labor and other obligations of peasants and manors for the commune and rural institutions, such as, for example schools, were not eliminated, but applied until the Second World War.

Separate laws and agreements at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century regulated the buyout of peasants' and estates' obligations towards the Church, that is towards priests and organists, the so-called tithes or "Mass-donations". According to the law, tithes were due on Saint Martin's day (November 11<sup>th</sup>), but actually they were collected during the priest's Christmas call. Whereas the inhabitants of larger villages settlements were required to submit a definite amount of rye or oat grain, sometimes also eggs, those who lived in remote settlements or single farmsteads far away from the church had more diversified tithes. For instance, in the parish of Brusy, the villagers of Gieldon, beside rye and eggs for the priest and just rye for the organist, submitted yearly 60 silver grosz in cash and dinner during the Christmas call, as well as 8 units of oats for the priest's horse and 4 units for that of the organist. The agent during the buyout of those obligations was the Retenbank (Pension Bank) of Königsberg, which provided parishes with securities, from which the priest and organist collected annual interests. Despite that, the remnants of tithes still functioned for a long time in some parishes in Kashubia and Pomerania, even into the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The third important issue, which formed a part of the enfranchisement process, was elimination of servitudes (i.e. the peasants' rights to use the estates' properties of nobility and royal ones, mainly pastures, woods and lakes, and inversely, the rights of nobility to hunt on the peasants' land) as well as the partition of communal properties. The most important servitudes in Kashubia and Pomerania were the right to fish for one's own needs in the royal lakes and rivers, or sometimes in private ones. Fish, mushrooms and other of nature's bounty constituted for the inhabitants of Pomerania a very important component of everyday food and maintenance. For a long time, the Kashubs defended themselves against liquidation of those privileges, but nevertheless this was done ultimately in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They have not accepted this even now, and see this as harm suffered from the Prussians, and maintained by the Polish state. Therefore, according to numerous opinions, a common phenomenon was poaching, often not considered by the local community to be theft.

According to the conception at the time, a commune was composed of a manor with grange and village, most often with common ownership of pastures, sometimes woods, ponds and small lakes. The first to be liquidated were the common pastures (whereas ponds are often still today a communal property of the village), which were partitioned according to the law exclusively among the landowners, proportionately to the areas of their farmsteads. Therefore, the richest, manor and rich peasants, were given the most, the smallholders received less, and the landless did not get anything, although they were the ones for whom those communal properties had been of most importance.

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The course of reforms in the individual villages was different. The entire process in the Vistulan Pomerania was directed by the General Commission in Bydgoszcz (where interesting documents concerning the process have been preserved in the local State Archives) who made the final decisions based on examination and agreements between the interested parties, and prepared by trials, which resulted in decades-long regulation of individual cases; some of them even till the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For the parties involved, of most significance was the once and for all separation and allotment of land belonging to individual owners, noblemen and peasants. The separation of estates' land from peasants' was called the general separation, and that of individual peasants' farmsteads, the special separation. The latter was more important, as the former had often taken place earlier. At that time there was a significant increase in the role of land surveyors and geodesists, who worked hard to mark out the peasants' and noblemen's fields, as well as in villages where minor noble families lived. Everywhere it was difficult to conclude any agreement. Many conflicts and longtime arguments accumulated as a result of the individual separations. Therefore it became a symbol of the entire process of enfranchisement.

Teodor Kossak-Główczewski in his chronicle of history of the village of Kaszuba and family from the vicinities of Brusy, wrote about the grandfather Michał, who also owned the property of Milachowo and fragments of Rolbik:

*In 1856, after the separation of 1850, he built a beautiful building by the lake, a farmyard and a large house for workers and bequeathed all this to his son Mateusz in 1859. (...) Mateusz was born on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 1832 in Wentfie near Kościerzyna. He attended schools first in Kościerzyna and later from Wentfie to Leśno. For several years he went also to the secondary school in Chojnice. Having returned home from schools, he had to plow with oxen. Often he said that when they were driving the oxen, the sun rose over the field. He was taken to the army, served three years in Geifswald, Stralsund and Amsterdam without a single leave. In Greifswald at that time there was no Catholic Church and in the town there was just one Catholic priest, who celebrated Masses in a rented room, so he regularly participated in the services*

This quotation contains a reference to one of the most serious results of the enfranchisement, the separation—the special and architectionic development of the village and region. It is mainly peasants who built new dwellings and at times located them in the middle of their grounds, outside villages. Hence, the multiplication of single settlements characteristic for Kashubia and Pomerania occurred even earlier. Forlorn buildings and plots surrounded the center, the old village, which increased the role of innkeepers and craftsmen, merchants and workers, both villeins and tenants, who lived next to rich and minor peasants, and who often worked additionally for the landlord or the landowner, or looked for better life conditions, at least for their children in the nearby town or in faraway lands.

An essential part of the Prussian program of reforming the state system, in addition to the regulation of property relations in the countryside, was extension of jurisdiction and authority of towns and legal subjectivity of municipal governments. Townships became entities of the public law. Although not all the inhabitants were made equal in their rights, and the township consisted solely of the community of citizens eligible to take part in public life and the purchase of estates, the towns were granted huge opportunities for independent activities and development. Ultimately the separated were also the judiciary authorities of the administration, which resulted in a clear system of judicature in the state. The proclamation of liberty in choosing which profession to pursue resulted in the development of industry and full emancipation of bourgeoisie and Jews. The central state administration was improved through the introduction of regency. The army was reformed in 1815 through introduction of compulsory military service and new criteria and officers' commission, which were based on education, merits and seniority. This reform, however, was hardly a success, since, similar to bureaucracy—also in the army the deciding factor were Junkers' forces and traditions. The circles of Junkers, particularly from Pomerania, were in the majority against the broader reforms and democratization. In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a wide path of change was opened, which was to lead toward capitalism and democracy.

The Junkerdom nobility, particularly by preserving significant privileges in the bureaucracy and army, strongly identified themselves with the King and later with the Emperor. Its Kashubian component was to be limited to a great extent, especially through Germanization. Only a few families, beside the descendants of the former minor knighthood, had preserved their Kashubian, but most often already German or Polish identity. Many Poles were deprived of their properties as a result of competition with the Germans, since they could not stand the conditions imposed by the government, which was far from affinity for any Kashubian or Polish separateness. The process of Germanization of the nobility was accelerated through privileges in military or administrative careers, or even in education curriculum.

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## Świętobor II

This being the sixth in a series  
about the early Pomeranian princes.

Translation by Renata Stachowicz

Taken from

***Książat Pomorza Gdańskiego***

(List of the Pomeranian Princes of Gdańsk)  
by Lech Badkowski and Wawrzyniec Samp



Nobody actually wrote about the existence of Świętobor II, nor mentioned his name which he inherits from his grandfather. Many researchers, however, relying on a few written records, think he really existed. The strongest argument is that of simple math—too many years elapse between Świętopełk I and the time when Subisław I appears. Secondly, Świętopełk I had two sons, of which the older was surrendered as a hostage to Bolesław III Krzywousty. It is also known that the sister of Żyra, prince (or ruler) of Mazowia and Kujawy married a Gdańsk Pomeranian prince whose name is unknown. He brought into the marriage a sizeable amount of Chelmiński land, most likely including the castellany of Wyszogród which had been lost by Świętopełk I to Bolesław III Krzywousty.

Earlier historians believed that the sister of Żyra was married to Subisław I. Today, however, they think instead it was his father, the missing link in the history of the Gdańsk Pomeranian princes. The marriage supposedly took place around 1140. Thus the sister of Żyra (Miroslawa?) would not be the wife, but rather the mother of Subisław I.

It could be speculated also that the first son of Świętopełk, Świętobor II, who spent many years as a hostage in the Polish court was married to her to make the connection with the Polish country stronger and assure Polish influence in Pomerania. Most likely he also assumed the relationship of vassalage under the sovereign of Krakow. This is probably the reason that Wincenty Kadłubek Sambor, in his chronicles, referred to the grandson of the king, as 'margrave', meaning vice regent. However, in another entry he bestowed on Mściwój, the second grandson of the king, the title of 'dux' or duke.

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Commonly known is the strong Germanizing impingement by the army and garrisons located in Kashubia and Pomerania. In the highly militarized Prussian state, the army and garrisons were also important factors of the economic development of towns and regions. Beside the capital Gdańsk, other Kashubian towns that were to accept garrisons in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were Chojnice and Wejherowo, as well as the by then German dominated Lębork and Słupsk. The compulsory military service, for many Kashubs available also in privileged royal or imperial units, created an opportunity of visiting foreign and far distant towns and lands. The participation in splendid maneuvers or even victorious wars caused strengthening of a sense of devotion to the court and state. The feeling of strangeness became lessened by ways such as schooling, where loyalty and love of the King and state were taught, as well as the dominant German language. It was the Kashubian and Polish language, as well as the Catholic religion that marked the feeling of separateness among the Kashubs in West Prussia, whereas in the province of Pomerania the only factor was the Kashubian language and the native Slavic tradition. Therefore, a great role was played by churches and Prussian schools, which together with the army, encompassed the general public, children and youth, even if only the male part. The souvenirs and skills brought from service in the army, knowledge of military songs, and traditions being taught and fostered in schools served to polarize and strengthen the German spirit among the Slavic people.

Information about *The Kashubs, Pomerania and Gdańsk*, by Jozef Borzyszkowski, ISBN 89-079-35-6 can be obtained from Instytut Kaszubski, Zarząd Główny, ul. Straganarska 20-22; 80-837 Gdańsk, Poland. Unfortunately, it is not too easy to transfer US dollars to Poland. We are exploring ways to facilitate transfers. Please see the bottom of page 11 for information about Dr. Borzyszkowski