

Use of 19th century cartographic source materials to study spatial changes of villages in Wielkopolska (Poland)

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Abstract: Wielkopolska as a geographical and historical land covers the area of the central and western part of Poland. Its territorial boundaries have changed over the centuries. In 1793, as a result of the second partition of Poland, Wielkopolska was incorporated into Prussia. From 1815 - after the re-occupation of Polish lands by Prussia - the Grand Principality of Poznań was established based on the decisions of the Vienna Congress. In its territory, the Prussian power gradually began to implement rural relations in the Prussian style. In 1823, the Prussian power started an agricultural land reform on the territory of the Grand Principality of Poznań. The reform involved the separation of peasant land from grange land and determined what peasant farms may be enfranchised and on what terms. The course of the reform was richly documented cartographically and descriptively. Cartographic material (plans, maps) as well as descriptive - enfranchisement recessions, to a large extent preserved to the present times and are stored in the State Archives in Poland. The paper presented the genesis and the method of these materials - how they were created, what they were about and what they contained. Spatial changes taking place in rural areas were significant. The layout of rural lands and the manner of land management underwent reconstruction. Buildings of peasants were often transferred to other places. New roads were created or their course changed. The agricultural reform initiated in 1823 had a huge impact on today's appearance of the Wielkopolska countryside.

Keywords: enfranchisement in the 19th century, Wielkopolska, maps, registers

1. Introduction

Spatial changes have always been present in human life. Spatial data give a full idea of the terrain. They are used by various types of institutions. The reality that surrounds us is changing. Spatial changes sometimes they occur spontaneously and are sometimes caused by the implementation of reforms or ordinances. Knowledge of processes and changes facilitates reliable monitoring of occurring phenomena, comprehensive planning and rational management and management of areas. In Wielkopolska, the first reform, which included all rural areas, was the enfranchisement. The abolition of serfdom in Wielkopolska dates to 1823 - when regulatory law was announced for the Grand Duchy of Poznań. The announcement of the Act was a consequence of previous events. At the end of the 18th century, in the settlement areas of states such as Prussia, Russia or Austria, it was believed that the state power depends on the population of a given country. This meant that a given state had more inhabitants, then it was stronger in economic and military terms. (Burszta, 1958). The turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was a transitional period for all of Europe. At that time, the feudal economy system collapsed and the capitalist system in the social and economic life of Europe awakens. In economic life, one can observe the intensification of all production areas, which in reference to the agricultural economy, entailed reforms of peasants' land ownership in the countryside.

An outcome of the defeat of Prussia in the war with France in 1806 was the introduction of broadly understood economic and social reforms. These reforms concerned cities, education, military and rural areas. Reforms in the countryside were aimed at weakening the antagonisms between peasants and nobles. They were also aimed at reducing the exploitation of the peasants because the economic destruction of the peasants and their removal from the land caused a decrease in income to the state treasury (Jakóbczyk, 1951).

By carrying out abolition of serfdom, the government wanted to create a tax base for the state. In 1807, a law was issued that abolished the inheritance of the serfdom for the peasants. This act enabled the peasant's freedom of movement and disposition of land. This law did not eliminate feudal burden. In 1811, an enfranchisement edict concerning peasants in private property was issued. It was a regulatory edict. It eliminated serfdom and gave land to the peasants. It was to be implemented on the basis of voluntary agreements or ex officio. The feudal received compensation in the form of land. The peasant had to pay off the feudal, paying him a pension each year. This document was the basis of the reform. Under the edict, larger and stronger peasant farms could be enfranchised. Smaller farms were liquidated. In 1821, the government made it possible for peasants to purchase peasant land. The buyout was twenty-five times the value of the annuity. This procedure made it possible to transform peasant ownership into full ownership while simultaneously abolishing the superior property of the feudal lands. In the

same year, the issue of the division of common land was taken. On this basis, the separation and consolidation of peasant and court lands could be carried out. The farms were to be separated in such a way that they had convenient access to public roads, pasture cattle, access to water, sand, quarries (Ludkiewicz, 1932). No farm could be increased at the expense of another farm. The size of the given farm depended on the amount of land that the peasants managed before the appropriation. Individual plots were not considered, but the overall value was set so that the value of the farm before and after the adjustment was identical. If it was not possible to grant the land of the same class in its entirety, then the peasants would have to accept additional land of another class. The condition was that it had to be a whole entity with the rest of the farm.

2. Agricultural reform in the Grand Duchy of Poznań.

Before the Partitions in Wielkopolska region, agrarian and social reforms were sporadic. With the seizure of Polish lands by Prussia in 1793, efforts began to make the occupied Polish lands similar to the Prussian lands. Actions aimed at land classification for fiscal purposes were carried out. The Prussian authorities also sought to conduct German colonisation. In this way, they wanted to strengthen their power in a relatively small area of the Grand Duchy of Poznań (Groniowski, 1976). After 1815 – following the re-occupation of Polish lands by Prussia – the Grand Principality of Poznań was established based on the decisions of the Vienna Congress. In its territory, the Prussian power gradually began to implement rural relations in the Prussian style. The law announced in 1823 had a wider range than in other provinces of Prussia. The act covered peasants who owned farms over 25 acres and which existed since 1772. (Only after the People's Spring – in 1850, the Prussian authorities extended the regulations to smaller farms). The Act of 1823 assumed the appropriation of peasants and the separation of peasant and court lands (§65). In addition to the liquidation of the chessboard, the Act provided for the land consolidation and the liquidation of the three-field system. A new division of fields was also carried out. Newly defined fields were to be, if possible, in one piece and have a good communication connection with peasant buildings (§ 66). The act made it possible to create new peasant farms or to expand existing ones. The act also made it possible to transfer fields and farm buildings to the territory of the same village or to the territory of the neighboring village (belonging to the same owner) if it was to contribute to better land management. (§71) According to the Act, the reconstruction of the village could only take place at the request of the squire and it was he who incurred the cost of such reconstruction as well as he was obliged to reward the peasant (§71). If in the village there were limestones, marl, peat, clay and they belonged to the owner of the land, they were left with him after regulation. Before regulating, the peasants could have the right to use these minerals together. After the regulation, they could retain this right or if they could not use it anymore, then they were paid for it. The act also assumed the liquidation of the servitudes –

meadows, pastures and forests. The peasants were obliged to pay the landowner for the land they were given to own. They could also give away some of their land instead of paying. According to paragraph 16, Dziedzic could not take more than half of the land owned by the peasant. The act also assumed the liquidation of the servitudes – meadows, pastures and forests. The peasants were obliged to pay the landowner for the land they were given to own. They could also give away some of their land instead of paying. According to paragraph 16, it was impossible to take more than half of the land owned by the peasant. The peasant farm had to have so much arable land and meadows that the peasant could maintain himself. According to the act, the peasants obtained the forest when it was in the fields which they used (§40).

3. Source materials and spatial changes on maps.

The maps created after 1824 were regulatory plans. Additionally, maps were also made for private persons in order to show the range of land not used so far (for example wetlands, swampy areas) and which were now included in the crop. Other types of maps were border dispute maps or border regulation maps. All sorts of border disputes and uncertainties regarding the course of borders had to be resolved before the regulatory (expropriation) process. Field work was carried by "Special Commissions" (Górska-Gołaska, 1965). The chairman was the Special Commissioner. He had the right to make decisions. He was assisted by auxiliary staff – a measurer, janitor and recorder. However, they did not have the right to vote. The commissions often cooperated with people who performed the land classification (land classifier). Initially, the measurer was only employed for single measurements. Over the years, the General Committee limited the number of measurers. The commission chose only those who met its requirements. The role of measurers was very large. The maps that were created during the regulatory process were one of the basic documents proving changes that took place in a given village.

These changes concerned ownership relations (land grabbing) as well as spatial relations (presentation of a new village layout). The performance of measurements and bonification was the most expensive (in the financial sense) stage of the regulation. Prior to their implementation, all participants were determined, and the possibility of regulation was assessed.

In addition, the Special Commissioner decided whether the measurement is needed. He decided whether to use the old maps depicting the area. The measurement was necessary when:

- the owner, as part of the compensation, collected part of the land cultivated by the peasants,
- when the regulation related to the separation of court and peasant land
- when one of the parties made such a request

In the situation when old maps were used, their credibility was checked in the field. When the map met the requirements, the current map was prepared on its basis.

took place when from the very beginning the folwark was located next to the village and when the farm land was not mixed up with peasant land and occupied a compact area. An example is the village of Pyszczyń. There are two maps for this village - one presents the land system before enfranchisement (Fig.4) and the second one after enfranchisement (Fig.5). The lands of the farmstead are already before the enfranchisement and are located next to the village .



Figure 4. Fragment of maps of the village Pyszczyń before enfranchisement from 1816. (State Archives in Poznań, signature number L.Gn.69)

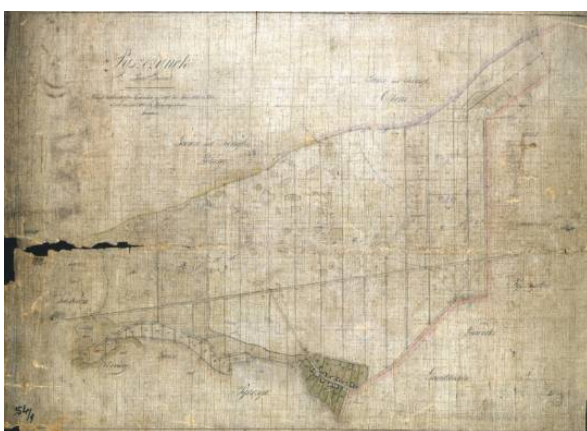


Figure 5. Fragment of maps of the village Pyszczyń after enfranchisement from 1841. (State Archives in Poznań, signature number L.Gn.70)

The enfranchisement could have taken place without reconstruction, i.e. without changing the location of rural farms. An example of this is the above-mentioned Pyszczyń (Fig.5). Lendogóra is an example of a village where the transfer of rural homesteads took place (Fig.6)



Figure 6. Fragment of maps of the village Lendogóra from 1831. (State Archives in Poznań, signature number L.Gn.44)

Often the translocation took place outside the border of the old village. All residents or part of them could be transferred. As a result of translocation, new villages were created with new names. This was the case with the village of Sławno, where some of the peasants were transferred to other lands of the same owner, creating a new village – Słomówko (Fig.7).



Figure 7. Map of the village Słomówko from 1841. (State Archives in Poznań, signature number L.Wrz.62)

The translocation was made at the expense of the manor, which additionally burdened the landowner, so they were carried out in the greater estates of noblemen. There were cases where the boundaries of the whole village were changing. This happened if the subject of enfranchisement were the lands of several villages adjacent to each other belonging to one owner. An example may be Gałęzewo (Fig.8), where there has been a change of the village boundaries, at the expense of the land from Graboszew where the peasants from another village also have been translocated (Fig.9).



Figure 8 . Map of the village Gałęzewo before enfranchisement from 1819. (State Archives in Poznań, signature number Rej. Pozn. II/125)

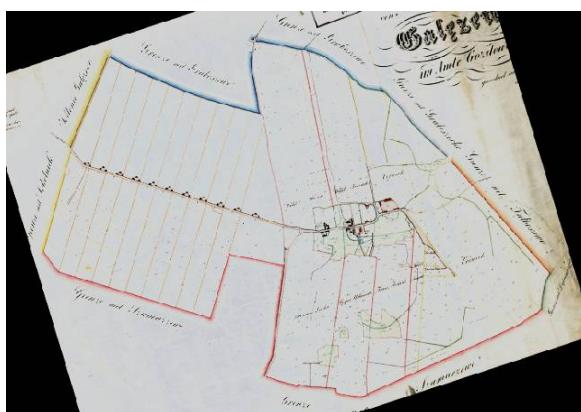


Figure 9 . Map of the village Gałęzewo after enfranchisement from 1834. (State Archives in Poznań, signature number Rej. Pozn. II/126)

Due to the reconstruction of the village, new roads were often designed (Pyszczyń (Fig.5)) or the existing ones (Borzątew (Fig.10)) were modified.



Figure 10. Fragment of maps of the village Borzątew from 1871/72. (State Archives in Poznań, signature number L.Gn.7)

Roads were not categorised - only their breadth indicated whether the road is between towns or is an economic route. The layout of the dirt roads depended on the designed farms. The exit roads were described in detail.

About 30% of maps have place names (Fig.11). They concern objects and topographic details. These names because they were saved by the Prussian measurers may contain errors. However, they are rich source material.

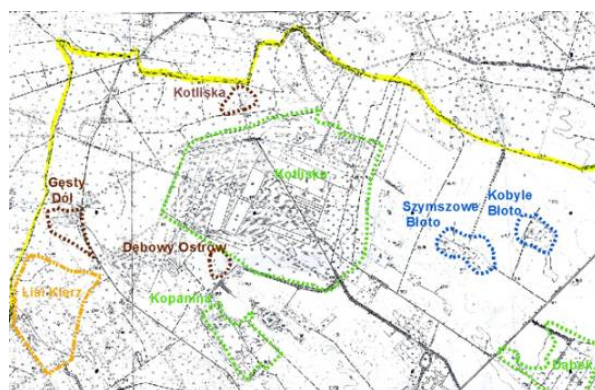


Figure 11. Fragment of the map (topographic map 1977-1979 OPGkart Poznań) with local names transferred from the map of the village of Gnin from 1823-1828.

4. Conclusion

Enfranchisement plans or maps are a valuable source for research into the history of settlement and the history of geodetic measurement, and mapping techniques. The maps carried out on large scales present the spatial situation of the village before and after enfranchisement. These maps should be analysed together with descriptive materials - registers and "reces".

The rebuilding of the Wielkopolska village as a result of enfranchisement was favoured by the fact that these villages were usually small. Newly designed villages have a very regular layout of land. Newly established villages have geometric shapes. The three-field system completely disappeared as a way of managing the land. The appropriation which took place in the 19th century affected the present appearance of the Wielkopolska villages. From the regulatory maps and their descriptive materials, we can find out how this reconstruction was going and what the Wielkopolska village looked like before the peasants were appropriated.

5. References

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