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# THE CASE OF GDAŃSK

## ABSTRACT

The author deals with the etymology of Gdańsk, a Polish town. He describes the various approaches to the solution to this problem: the possible Scandinavian, Baltic and Slavic origins. Having checked all the possible solutions, the author returns to the once developed idea that the word is of Slavic origin and connects the word's root with the toponyms in the Czech territory. The author also claims that also the first record of Gdańsk is an Old Low German entry that reflects the presence of living Late Common Slavic yers. Finally, the author compares the recording of Gyddanycz with the possible recordings of yers in the Chronicle of Thietmar of Merseburg.

## KEYWORDS

St. Adalbert; Gdańsk; Slavic; Slavic yers; Pomeranian; etymology; toponym; Prussian

Granic pewnych między etymologią a pseudologią nie ma.  
Aleksander Brückner

## 1 Introduction

„Ipse uero adiit primo urbem **Gyddanyzc**, quam ducis latissima regna dirimentem maris confinia tagunt. Ibi, diuina misericordia aduentum eius prosperante, baptizabantur hominum multe caterue.“ (Sanci Adalberti episcopi pragensis et martyris Vita prior. A. Redactio imperialis vel ottoniana, XXVII, 13–15.)<sup>1</sup>

The introductory sentences come from the *Vita prior*, so-called redaction A, a legend written at about 999 AD, two years after the death of Adalbert, bishop of Prague, who lost his life during his mission in Prussia in 997. The memories of the deeds and brutal death of the martyr had still to be vivid. Adalbert's companions, who were

<sup>1</sup> “First came (Adalbert) to the city **Gdańsk** which borders the sea and the vast land of the duke (Bolesław the Brave). Because the God's mercy blessed his arrival, he baptized huge hordes of people here.” (translation mine; Latin text quoted from KARWASIŃSKA 1962).

with the Czech bishop on his mission, had remembered essential moments of this journey. The final parts of the *Vita prior* are not happy. Having baptised the citizens of Gdańsk, Adalbert sailed on the ship, provided by the Polish duke Bolesław the Brave, further to the east. After several days the ship embarked on the shore, Adalbert together with the presbyter Benedictus and Adalbert's brother Gaudentius continued the journey on foot, trying to convert pagans in the surrounding villages. In the meantime, a monk named Ioannes Canaparius in the Aventine monastery, which was an important place for Adalbert's spiritual development had a dream on Adalbert's coming death. Also, Gaudentius obtained a similar message during his sleep. The following day, the missionaries continued their journey. While having a rest, they were attacked by pagans and tied. Their chieftain Sikko speared Adalbert's body. The rest of the pagans dismembered the corpse, put the head on a pole and joyfully returned to their homes. Only two true believers were witnesses of Adalbert's death. All this happened on the 23rd April, 997, during the reign of the emperor Otto III.

Two questions, which scholars have been trying to solve for decades, are: Why is Gdańsk written as *Gyddanyzc* and what is the origin of this name? And, who could have heard it in such a form and inform the author of the *Vita prior*? The answer to the first question is traditionally in the domain of etymology. The second question has been dealt with philology, literary history and history proper. Let's try to mix everything, add some archaeological flavour, and see what happens. And welcome to one of the most puzzling problems of toponomastics.

## 2 Boys from the North

As stated by various authors (ROSPOND 1984, 87, GÓRNOWICZ 1978), the attempts to explain the origin of the name Gdańsk go back to the 16th century. The chroniclers Marcin Kromer, Bernard Wapowski and Stanisław Sarnicki thought that the name means "a place facing Denmark".

The attempts to explain the etymology of Gdańsk on some serious basis come from the late 19th century. Some of them are quite curious and belong more or less to folk etymology. For example, Lohmeyer (1882) summarized some of those early opinions and proposed that Gdańsk meant "a road, bridge to Danes". The *pons danensis*, which he found in some 13th century document, should be a misspelt Polish *dańniczy most* "Zollbrücke". Or, that the prefix \*g-d would mean "habilitas, pulchritudo" (he took this information from MIKLOSICH 1860) and together with the suffix *-isko*, the form \*\**Godanisko* > *Gdańsko* would appear.

Lorentz (1920), discussing the possibility of the Danish influence, adduces the reconstruction \**Кѡ-dan-ьскѡ* "place facing the land of Danes" but refutes it as false.

Nevertheless, the idea of Scandinavian influence on Pomeranian toponyms appears also in Richard Ekblom's *Ortnamns vittnesbörd om svenskarnas tidiga förbind-*

*elser med slaver och balter*, Språkvetenskapliga Sällskapet i Uppsala Förhandlingar 1940–1942, 149–178 (see the review of Vasmer, M. in *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 20 (2), 1950, 458–459). Ekblom connected the root \*g<sub>ʷ</sub>d- not only with Gdańsk, but also with Gdów, Russian place named Gdov, the name of the Lithuanian village Gudoiniai, and thought that the names were created by the inhabitants of Gotland from Viking era. The \*g<sub>ʷ</sub>d- should be related to Swedish *gute* “Gotlander” and Old Norse *gutar* “Gotlanders”. But as Vasmer remarks, the problem is the sound “d” in Slavic toponyms. So he suggests that \*g<sub>ʷ</sub>d- should more likely be connected with the Goths or other East Germanic tribe and *das Verhältnis zwischen diesem “d” und dem germanischen t- in got. guta “Gote” durch einen phonetischen Unterschied zwischen altslavischem “t” und dial. altgerm. bzw. dialektisch ostgerm. “t” erklären*. As far as I know, Vasmer’s proposal has not been accepted by anybody.

Rudnicki (1921, 179–181) also raised the question of whether Gdańsk should not have been derived from a proper Slavic name. Masculines like \*Poznan, \*Kochan, Soban, Doman derived from verbs that have a suffix -an-. There are also other Slavic male names with the same suffix. So there might have also been a personal name \*G<sub>ʷ</sub>dan<sub>ʷ</sub> which gave name to the city. Or, there could also be a \*G<sub>ʷ</sub>d<sub>ʷ</sub>k<sub>ʷ</sub>/G<sub>ʷ</sub>d<sub>ʷ</sub>č<sub>ʷ</sub> giving the name of Gdecz (p. 183). Further morpheme analysis is a problem for Rudnicki. If \*Živan<sub>ʷ</sub> is composed of \*živ<sub>ʷ</sub> + an<sub>ʷ</sub> and similarly \*G<sub>ʷ</sub>d<sub>ʷ</sub>+an<sub>ʷ</sub>, what is the meaning of \*g<sub>ʷ</sub>d<sub>ʷ</sub>? The question is answered in Rudnicki (1922, 237–239). Proto-Lechitic \*G<sub>ʷ</sub>d<sub>ʷ</sub> is connected with the root in the names of the Swedish tribe Gautas and later East Germanic Goths. The Old Poles borrowed the Proto-Germanic \*Ghud(az) from Scandinavians before the development of Proto-Slavic yers and before Grimm’s law. It does not bother Rudnicki that this fact pushes the existence of Slavic tribes in Pomerania to the end of the first millennium BC.<sup>2</sup> For him, even Gdynia can be derived from this \*G<sub>ʷ</sub>d<sub>ʷ</sub>. It’s original meaning was: “miejsce, obozowisko, osada narodu \*G<sub>ʷ</sub>d-ów”. And Rudnicki’s \*\*G<sub>ʷ</sub>d-ovie can be seen among Baltic tribes. Prussians<sup>3</sup> and Lithuanians also met the Germanic \*Ghudaz. How surprising, they also adopted the names for themselves! Otherwise, nobody could explain so many words connected with Gud- in Baltic. Mighty was the Scandinavian influence.<sup>4</sup>

Hermann (1941) returned to the problem of “d” in the Baltic name *Gudde* (Goths) or *gudai* in contrast to Gothic *gutōs*. One possibility would be that the Goths came into contact with the Balts before the change \*d > t. But this is improbable.

2 Łęgowski (1926) came to a similar result. Having combined the archaeological works and the detailed analysis of the ancient historians, he is persuaded that the Lechitic Slavs were present around the Baltic sea since 500 BC.

3 The names Prussian, Prussians mean a Baltic language and ethnos. I use those short forms instead of Old Prussian for reasons of brevity.

4 I recommend this forgotten gem of Slavic etymology to any serious scholar. Rudnicki reconstructed even the social life of his mysterious tribe. So, if you want to know about the life and customs of \*G<sub>ʷ</sub>d-/Gud-, how they were considered butter-fingers or how they bred swine – go ahead: RUDNICKI 1922, 243–245. Believe it or not.

Hermann has no other explanation than the Gothic form was “*umgeändert*” in Baltic (p. 38). How and why he did not tell. As for *Gdańsk*, Hermann explains the original form from *\*in Gutiskandja* “an der Gotenküste”. The name should not have come initially from the Goths but their successors, the Gepids. The Prussians or even Slavs adopted the name and distorted it to *\*Gudaniškas*, *\*Gьdanьskъ* and this is why we find the Slavic suffix *-ьskъ* combined with the putative non-Slavic stem (p. 44). Hermann makes an interesting note: he refuses to accept that *urbs Gyddanycz* means “the town *Gdańsk*”. He claims that he Gepids called the landing-place a “Gothic shore” and *urbs Gyddanycz* means “the castle with the broader settlement around” (p. 45). It is an exciting idea which reappears in the 21st century.

Hermann’s Goths should also have possessed the town *Gdynia*. The original possessive form *\*gutōnja* had to be adopted by the Prussians as *\*Gudune* and by the Slavs as *Gdynia*. The settlement should originally mean “eine zu den Goten gehörige Örtlichkeit”. And it even seems that the Goths founded many other places around (p. 46).

### 3 Row your boat in the bay

Lorentz (1920) suggested that the original form of *Gdańsk* is *\*Gьdanьskъ* or *\*Kьdanьskъ*, both of them compounds created from the Common Slavic *\*gьdan-/kьdan-* with the suffix *-ьskъ*. The root *\*gьd-* and *\*kьd-* can be separated from the suffix *-an-*. But as Lorentz notices, the root *\*gьd-* is uncommon in Slavic and he considers the suffix *-an-* pretty rare in Polish and Kashubian. So he is more inclined to connect the etymology of *Gdańsk* to the Latin geographical term *sinus Codānus* “the bay of *Gdańsk*”. The Italians should have heard the original word from West Germans. Thus, the Slavic compound should contain the original Slavic stem *\*gьdan* or *\*kьdan*, although Lorentz seems unclear to prefer the form *\*kьdan*. Rudnicki (1921, 170) provides a more straightforward explanation: Lorentz was inclined to connect *\*kьdan* with the similar form *Codanus*. It means that there if Lorentz wants to connect *\*kьdan* with *Codānus*, his preference is problematic. The hard yer in *\*kьdan* could not reflect the Latin “o”. Therefore, the original name of *Gdańsk* had to be *\*Kodanьskъ*. It is unclear how the *\*Kod-* would become *\*Gd-* apart from the fact that the form contains a final suffix *-ьskъ*.

A similar idea can already be found in Kossinna (1897, 285–288) who discusses not only the possibility of assimilation *\*Kьdan- > \*Kdan- > \*Gdan-* (if the base is Slavic) but also another curious proposal. The original *\*Codaniska* (!) gives by “Vertauschung” the form “*\*Codiskana*, und daraus wieder durch Angleichung an die vorhergehenden Namen “*Gothi*” und “*Scandza*” das Ungeheuer “*Gothiscandza*” (p. 287)”.

Kossinna thinks that *Codanus* is a Germanic name because *Gdańsk* is not called *Kodańsk*.

Anyway, the \**Codanisk* was initially a Gothic “Seehandelsort”, as Kossinna supposes.<sup>5</sup>

Where does the Latin form come from, and what does it mean? The name *Codanus* is first mentioned by Pomponius Mela in two paragraphs of his *De Chorographia* written at about 43 AD. In Book III: 31, we read:

*Super Albim Codanus ingens sinus magnis parvisque insulis refertus est. Hac re mare quod gremio litorum accipitur nusquam late patet nec usquam mari simile, uerum aquis passim interfluentibus ac saepe transgressis uagum atque diffusum facie amnium spargitur; qua litora adtingit, ripis contentum insularum non longe distantibus et ubique paene tantundem, it angustum et par fretu, curuansque se subinde longo supercilio inflexum ext.*<sup>6</sup>

Book III: 54: *Triginta sunt Orcades angustis inter se diuctae spatiis; septem Haemodae contra Germaniam uectae, in illo siun quem **Codanum** diximus; ex iis Scandinauia, quam adhuc Teutoni tenent [et] ut fecunditate alias, ita magnitudine antestat.*<sup>7</sup>

If *Albis* is the Elbe, *Orcades* are the Orkneys, and *Haemodae* means Denmark territories, *Codanus* is not the Bay of Gdańsk. However, Romer (1998, 111) thinks that it is the Baltic Sea (without closer specification) and Silberman (1988, 267) discusses various opinions on the parts of the North Sea and Baltic Sea.<sup>8</sup> But it was Łęgowski (1920, 39) who pointed out that Mela mentions *multae insulae* in *Codanus*, and there is nothing like that in the Gdańsk bay. The description corresponds more to the Kattegat. *Codanus* has nothing in common with Gdańsk; see also later Lorentz (1966, 247). It seems that it even does not reflect any Slavic or Baltic word.

But Rudnicki (1928) had a different opinion. He thought that Mela's *Codanus* means the whole Baltic sea. Being persuaded that at the time of Mela's Roman informant, the Lechitic Slavs had to be present there together with the Balts, Rudnicki claimed that the name must reflect the Baltic-Slavic use of it. So he

5 Matuszewska (1948, 79) admits the existence of the Goths in Pomeranian but not beyond the 4th century. According to her, any connection between Goths and Gdańsk should be excluded.

6 “On the other side of the *Albis*, the huge **Codanus** bay is filled with big and small islands. For this reason, where the sea is received within the fold of the bay, it never lies wide open and never really looks like a sea but is sprinkled around, rambling and scattered like rivers, with water flowing in every direction and crossing many times. Where the sea comes into contact with the mainland, the sea is contained by the banks of islands, banks that are not far offshore and that are virtually equidistant everywhere. There the sea runs a narrow course like a strait, then, curving, it promptly adapts to a long brow of land...” (Latin text quoted from SILBERMAN 1988, English translation by ROMER 1998).

7 “The thirty *Orcades* are separated by narrow spaces between them; the seven *Haemodae* extend opposite Germany and what we have called **Codanus** Bay, on the islands there, Scandinavia, which the *Teutoni* still hold, stands out as much for its size as for its fertility besides.” (Latin text quoted from SILBERMAN 1988, English translation by ROMER 1998).

8 It might be interesting to note that on the map of Prussia made by Caspar Henneberger in the late 16th century, the *Codanus* is the bay of Puck: the water territory from *Gdynia-Puck* and the Hel peninsula (see the map in OKULICZ-KOZARYN 2000, 29.)

reconstructs the Baltic (Prussian) \**Kadānas* and Slavic (Lechitic) \**Kodānos*. The suffix *-ān-* is, therefore, both Slavic and Baltic. Rudnicki finds the root \**kod-* in various Slavic and Baltic toponyms and connects it with the root in the verb \**kaditi*. So what the Old Lechitians meant by \**Kodānos/Kodanъ* is quite clear: “załew śmierdzący = kałny” (RUDNICKI 1928, 377). Why would somebody decide to build a settlement on the stinky shore remains a mystery. Moreover, the connection \**Kodānos* with *Gdańsk* does not fit, as we saw in the previous paragraph.

## 4 Das Wort muss menschlich aussehen!

*Gyddanyzc* puzzled learned laymen and scholars who tried to find out the easiest way to explain the strange vowels “y”. Might they be just epenthetic vowels not reflecting anything original? And, what about the German form *Danzig*? How did it evolve?

Voigt (1901, 376–377), when adducing other records from other manuscripts of the 12th–14th centuries like *Gyddanyze*, *Guddanizc*, *Gidanic* or *Gydanic*, supposed that the informants could hear *G'danizk* and the “y” is just the record of some schwa sound.

Rudnicki (1921) claimed that later German records which, on the one hand, simplified the initial cluster *gd* > *d*-, on the other hand, it sometimes records the forms with the final consonantal cluster: *Danzk* (1209), *Danczk* (1279), *Dantz* (1290), but there are also records with no initial cluster like: *Gedanensis* (1235), *Gedanck* (1268), forms without the final “k”: *Gdantz* (1198), *Gadanz* (1299), *Danz* (1303) or forms without the final cluster: *Danze* (1224), *Danzeke* (1285), *Danzig* (1292); see RUDNICKI (1921, 171–172).<sup>9</sup> Rudnicki thinks that the forms with the *-sk-* clusters containing vowels (with *e* and *i*) are italicised or germanized. Forms without the final *-k* reflect only careless writing of *-sk*.

The assimilation *gd* > *d* might be of Lechitic origin (Polish dial. *dy* < *gdy*). Rudnicki thinks that it is Kashubian which considers the clusters “gd” and “nsk”, which appear between the 10th–11th centuries, as *niezwykłe* (RUDNICKI 1921, 173).

The broken consonantal cluster *gd-* are reduced in Kashubian: *gdze/dzeż* (RAMULIT 2007) versus Polish *gdzie*.

Similarly, the *ńsk-* cluster is simplified to *jsk-* e.g., \**Leżańskъ* > \**Leżańsk* > *Leżajsk* (RUDNICKI 1921, 179). The forms with the partially reduced final consonantal cluster e.g. *Danzesk*, were created by the contamination of *Dansk* and *Dancek* (RUDNICKI 1921, 174).

9 See Müller (1925, 73–74) for the representative list of records.

Brückner (1923) claims that German *Danzig* was created from Polish *Gdańsko*<sup>10</sup> which, together with all neuters, eliminated the final “o” and changed in the 16th century to masculines. Brückner has no regard for his predecessors: “*Ältere Versuche der Namendeutung von allerlei Dilletanten übergehe ich; aber auch Linguisten fassen ihr etymologisches Messer am verkehrten Ende an und rennen es sich in die Hand.*” Who holds the etymological knife is clear. It is Lorentz whose comparison *Gdańsko* (sic!) = *Codanus* is swept away as “Fabel” (BRÜCKNER 1923, 45). Another blunderbuss, who holds the knife at the wrong side (ibid.), is Rudnicki. Brückner refuses Rudnicki’s conclusion as completely wrong.<sup>11</sup> A Slav would not have written *dd* or *y* instead of weak yers because Slavic distinguished *y* from *i* at that time. Brückner is clear about the *Gyddanizc*: it is the original *Gdańsko* written by a foreigner (maybe Canaparius) who made the barbaric clusters *gd-* and *-nsk* “menschlich”. But why should somebody like that write *dd* and omit the final *o*, hangs in the air.

To note that also for Lorentz (1920), the oldest recorded form *Gyddanyzc* means just the form the Italians made to easily pronounce consonantal clusters (as well as later Germans who created the form *Danzig*).

Anyway, the idea that “y” in *Gyddanizc* is just a mechanism breaking the consonantal clusters appears even in later scholarly works. Sulish (1976, 100) thinks that there were speakers of German who removed the complex consonantal groups. And that the *dd* and *zc* are substitution graphemes which Canaparius used when he listened to the report of Adalbert’s journey from an eyewitness.

## 5 Beware the mire with wood!

For Brückner (1923), the original form must naturally be \**Gьdanьsko* with the root \**gьd-* appearing also in the toponyms *Gdynia*, *Gdów*, *Gdek*, *Gdyczyn*, *Gdeszyce*, *Gdaszów* and the anthroponyms *Gdeczyk*, *Gdziuk* (BRÜCKNER 1923, 47). Brückner sees the root \**gьd-* in the Proto-Slavic adjective \**gьdъ* broadened with the additional \**-kъ* suffix, putatively recorded in the Mecklenburg toponym *Guthkepolle* (1174). Here *guthke* should have come from \**gьdъkoje* (BRÜCKNER 1923, 48). But what is the meaning of \**gьdъ-/-kъ*? Brückner connects its meaning with \**gyd-/gyzd-* seen in Polish *ohydny*, Czech *ohyzdný*, also inclines to join the \**gьd-* with the meaning “dicht, massig” Prussian *gu(d)de* “forest” or the Polish archaic dialectal *gut* “old, unused wood” with a possible *t/d* interchange in auslaut. It leads him to the conclusion that the word *Gdańsko* is a Common Slavic word.

10 The original form *Gdańsko* is already defended by Łęgowski (1920, 71).

11 “His polemics were known for their vehemence... In his works there are many passages often written in coarse terms. Frequently he does not mention his opponents by name; but for people who knew the subject sufficiently well to take a hint, these allusions added a special piquancy to his work.” (W. Weintraub: “Aleksander Brückner, 1856–1938”. *The Slavonic and East European Review* 25 (64), 1946, 124).

Moreover, Brückner adduces toponyms from the Warsaw area *Guty*, *Gutki*, *Gutkovo*, *Gucin* and Mecklenburg *Gutow* and connects the variant \**gut*- even with Czech *hutný*. The word *hutný* is generally associated with *hustý*, being in Czech and Slovak and derived from the Proto-Slavic root \**gŏt*-. Checking some etymological dictionaries, Rejzek (2015, 242) is sceptical about the relation of the two words, Králik (2015, 214–215) accepts the mutual root and connects *hutný* with the Russian *гѹмъ* “thicket” (really recorded by SRNG 7, 250 from Pskov area). Brückner explains the \**gut* < \**gŏt*- (denasalization). The same Silesian toponym *Guty* has Polish parallels. Téma (1967, 21–22) does not mention Brückner but connects it with the archaic Polish dialectal *gut*. Checking if this word is recorded, we really find it in the old *Słownik języka polskiego* (ed. KARŁOWICZ, J. et al.), Tom I, 1900, p. 943 with the meaning “drzewo krzywe, sękowate, niezdatne do niczego” which the authors connect the alleged Moravian parallel *gŭtný*. And this adjective with the meaning “old, decrepit (tree)” also records Bartoš in (1906, 86). Surprisingly, Hosák – Šrámek (I, 234) do not even mention this connection and consider the Czech Silesian *Guty* as etymologically obscure. But from the previous paragraph, we can see that the etymology is quite transparent.

However, *Gdańsko* cannot be Proto-Slavic, as Müller (1925, 74) remarks because it is not reflected in the 12th and 13th century records. The suffix *-ke* (*Danzeke*), which appears since the mid 13th century, comes from Lower German rather than Slavic. So Müller claims that the form *Gdańsko* is instead a German word adapted in Polish (sic!)

Nevertheless, the idea of \**gŏd*- > *Gdańsk* fell on fertile ground. Rudnicki (1927, 353–363) adds to this etymology also the Serbian *Gacko polje* from the putative \**gŏdŏkoje polje* (more correctly \**gŏdŏskoje*) which should correspond to *Guthkepole*, *Gdok* < \**gŏdakŏ*, *Gdeszyn* < \**gŏdŏchŏ*- and many other toponyms which cannot be discussed here. But \**gŏd*- is not considered only Slavic (or, more precisely, Lechitic root). Because Rudnicki also claims that the root being borrowed from Germanic, at least in some names. And this probably can be *Gdańsk*. The swamps and marshes around the rivers *Radunia* and *Motława* would be called \**Gdana*, \**Gdania* < \**gŏd-an-a*, \**gŏd-an-:a*. It means that the toponym \**gŏd-an-ŏskŏ* is precisely the form *Gyddanyzc* which is reflected in the *Vita prior* (RUDNICKI 1927, 367).

Urbańczyk (1965, 24–26) supposed that the suffix *-sko* is associated with the toponyms, whose took their names either from a nearby river or a mountain, like *Bielsko* from *Biała*, *Górsko* from *góra*, *Dolsko* from *w dole*. Thus \**Gdańsko* (as a default form!) must be connected with something like \**gdan*-. Indeed, Urbańczyk finds this word in the adduced putative names of the meadows in the vicinity of *Gdańsk*: *gdanie*. The word does not occur anywhere else, and Urbańczyk is not even sure about its origin. He takes the Prussian *gudas* “wood, bush” as a cognate. So both *Gdańsk* would initially be a place surrounded by *gdanie* “meadows”. But it does not take the nearby *Gdynia*, which would be a name for a lake or a wooden place. Then, it would

give its name to a settlement. Although both hypotheses are slightly over the top, Urbańczyk ultimately adopts Brückner's idea about the original form *Gdańsko*. Any other forms (even *Gyddanyzc*) are taken as misspelt recordings by foreigners. Rospond (1984, 87) adds to Polish toponyms the Croatian word *gdinjica* "a small forest", *Gdinj*, Serbian *Gacko* (see RUDNICKI 1927), all coming from the Proto-Slavic \**gъdanje* "rozlewisko wodne, zarośnięte". The same root should appear in *Gdynia* < \**gъd-ynja* "wet, overgrown place" (ROSPOND 1984, 89).

The Proto-Slavic root \**gъd-* as a base for *Gdańsk* is also accepted by Rymut (1987, 72), which he connects with the Prussian *gud(d)e* "wood". The forms \**gъd-an-ъskъ* is therefore fully Slavic apart from the suffix \**-an-* the meaning of which he cannot explain because it is used for creating personal names.

## 6 Yers – a blemished idea

Let's come back to Rudnicki (1921). He refused the reconstructed form \**Къdanьскъ* as a reflection of the Latin *Codanus*. Instead, he pointed out that Canaparius put "y" at the place of the original Proto-Slavic yers. This "y" probably reflects both yers' original pronunciation in the Late Proto-Slavic on the Lechitic ground. The Italian or German influence fail to explain the form *Gyddannyzc*. Rudnicki thinks that it probably reflects the Kashubian (or more likely Pomeranian) weak yers, which had still to exist at the end of the 10th century, especially in the positions where the groups of consonants can be pronounced with difficulty (RUDNICKI 1921, 176). Canaparius' informers heard this pronunciation which a scribe wrote with the grapheme "y" as well as the geminate "dd" (which probably reflects the more extended occlusion in the coda. The final yer had to be lost earlier and is not recorded).

Rudnicki's idea was adopted by Meillet (1965<sup>2</sup>, 108), who also considers the "y" in *Gyddannyzc* as reflection and pronunciation of the weak yers.

Also, Górniewicz (1978, 15) had no doubt that the *Gyddannyzc* can be reconstructed as \**Гъdanьскъ* and what the author of *Vita prior* heard is a form with the changed Late Proto-Slavic yers. The *Gyddannyzc* form shows the loss of final yer; the "y" in *Gydd-* is another weak yer with "weakened articulation", which was just about to disappear. It is not quite clear what Górniewicz means by "weakened articulation" of the weak yer. Maybe a reduction to schwa? It would be unclear why an author of *Vita prior* and his informant would hear (?) or write the Greek *upsilon*.

Concerning the double *-dd-*, Górniewicz thinks that it is a representation of a consonant that shows the brevity of the preceding "y". It is quite unclear why somebody would write it like that. To make things complicated, Górniewicz thinks that "y" in *-nyzc* reflects the strong yer, which is about to change into a full vowel. So both yers, the one just about to disappear and another just about to change into full vowel sound the same!

After the loss of *yers*, *Gyddanyzc* developed to *\*Gdaniesk*, in indirect cases *Gdańska*, *Gdańsku*. The vowel-zero alternation was eliminated by analogy in favour of indirect cases, which gave the nominative form *Gdańsk*. Górniewicz testifies this form by the 1148 AD record *Kdanzc* and 1188 AD form *Gdanzc*. The German forms developed by the assimilation of the initial cluster *gd* > *d* and by the appearance of an epenthetic vowel in the final cluster *-sk* > *sig* (GÓRNICZ 1978, 16).

## 7 Rivers lost in time

Other scholars tried to attack the etymology of *Gdańsk* from a different direction. Kętrzyński (1903) noticed that toponyms ending in a *-sk* suffix *Brańsk*, *Czersk*, *Lipsk* etc. all derive their names from the rivers which flow through them: *Branka*, *Czeronica*, *Lipa* etc. So *Gdańsk* should have obtained its name from the river *\*Gdania*. And as the cluster *gd*- sound strange for foreigners, they broke it either by “o” (*Codanus*) or “y” (*Gyddanyzc*). Simple, isn’t it?

Czapłewski (1919) raised the objection, that rivers around *Gdańsk* have their names from the earliest recorded times: *Motława*, *Vistula*, *Radunia*, *Gęś*, *Kłodawa*, *Stryża*. None of them was ever called *\*Gdania*. The idea that there was a brook which the early Slavs knew and named their settlement after it, is improbable. Czapłewski comes with his own original solution: *Gdańsk* comes from *woda*. The short vowel should reduce to zero with the form *wda* with subsequent hardening *gda* > *Gdańsk*. How easy.

Müller takes a step further. The original name should have been *\*Wdania* with the Kashubian sound change having caused the weakened pretonic syllable: *\*wodá* > *wdá* > *gdá* (MÜLLER 1925, 87). Why not?

We might laugh at the results of half-dilettantes who devoted their times more to national history than to science (see the Czech wordplay *vlastivěda/věda*). But – what seemed to be an etymological pun or fun reappeared again in later 20th century scholarly literature as a serious hypothesis or even a fact. Because the mysterious river *\*Gdania* flew into the etymological dictionary of Rospond (1984). We already know that Rospond based his etymology of *Gdańsk* on Proto-Slavic *\*gъd* – “wet, overgrown terrain”. So, here in Pomerania the countryside is wet. And, there also existed a place called *Gdanie* 1504 “podmokła łąka na Czeszewie” *A może dzisiaj Motława nazywała się Gdania (...) i od niej nazwano gród Gdańsk? Gdańsk: Gdania = Bielsk: Biała, Puck: Puta itp.* (ROSPOND 1984, 87). But why did the Poles have to re-name *Gdania* to *Motława*? Any reasonable answers?<sup>12</sup>

12 Paradoxically, Rudnicki (1928), having his idea of the Slavic settlement at the Baltic sea area at the time already in the 1st century AD, thought that *Motława* is a Slavic (Lechitic) name.

Rudnicki's idea of the Proto-Slavic toponym base \**gъd-* was adopted by Górniewicz (1978) who combined with the suffix *-an-*. How? The starting point is toponymy and our mysterious river, of course. Names of Slavic settlements often take their names from rivers, as we read above. So *Gdańsk* also had to take its name from \**Gdania*. Moreover, this suffix *-n-* appears in the names of rivers in the *Gdańsk* area: *Radunia* < \*-*unъja*, *Orania* < \*-*anъja*, *Swelinia* < \*-*ynъja* and: the \**Gdania*. But where was this river? What Rospond (1984) considered as an alternative explanation took Górniewicz a few years earlier as a fact. \**Gdania* must have been today's *Motława* because *Motława* is not a Slavic but a Prussian name! Although there is no Prussian word connected with it, Górniewicz supposes that Lithuanian *mūtulas* "water bubble" and Latvian *mutulis* "water wave" could be related. The earliest recording of *Motława* comes from 1280 AD. So before Prussians came there<sup>13</sup> *Motława musiała mieć - rzecz jasna - nazwę polską i na podstawie nazwy Gdańsk możemy jej nazwę zrekonstruować jako \*Gdania z formantem \*-anъja od bazy \*gъd- "wilgotna, mokra"* (GÓRNOVICZ 1978, 18).

Have you followed the history of this "methodology"? First, a hypothetical river is postulated, then, separately, a base \**gъd-* is discussed and finally, an (il)logical idea comes up to connect both streams and create a river with the meaning "wet". A wet river that dried up during the early history of Poland. *Rzecz jasna*.

Practically the same result appeared in the 1978 book *Nazwy miast Pomorza Gdańskiego* and even in its 2nd reworked edition in 1999. Górniewicz made here his theory more precise (p. 75). We learn that the scribe wrote "y" in *Gydd-* because the yer had featureless articulation (what?) But he wrote the second "y" in *-nyzc* because this yer sounded coloured to "e" (!) The mystical river which gave its name to the settlement nearby is reconstructed as \**Gъdanъja*. He also adds another toponym for the support of Prussian origin of today's *Mutława*: lake *Mutulis* in *Lidzbark Warmiński* area<sup>14</sup>. The putative Prussian \**Mutulava* should have been taken by Germans as *Mottlau*. This *Mottlau* was, as Górniewicz thinks, was a base for Polish *Motława*.<sup>15</sup> When Prussians settled in the territory of *Gdańsk* (second half of the 13th century),

13 In Górniewicz' concept, the Prussians should have been pushed there by the Teutonic Order crusades and be in *Gdańsk* area since the second half of the 13th century and rename everything.

14 Looking into the *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i innych krajów słowiańskich*, T. 11, 1890, p. 81, we can read that the lake *Mutulis* was near the village *Soritten*, today *Suryty*. But checking the trace of the relative Lithuanian *Mutulis*, *mūtulas* and Latvian *mutuli* carefully, we easily find out that it **is not Górniewicz's idea**. He even does not quote his predecessors. Originally, the Baltic words appear in Gerullis (1922) who, apart from the lake *Mutulis*, adduces also a lake *Muteling* near *Wartenburg*, today *Barczewo*. In fact, it is Lorentz (1933, 53–54) who mentions the Baltic connection of the name *Motława*. Even the reconstructed Prussian \**Mutulava* appears here. Practically the same results appear in Lorentz (1966, 245) with the better reconstructed Prussian \**Mutulōvō* "Strudelfluß".

15 Just the opposite. The original \**ahwa* > Germanic \**-aha* > Slavic *-ava* which is a typical Slavic hydronym suffix covering the area of the Czech Republic, Poland, the north of Balkan and the east part of Germany (MJMS II, 185). From this *-ava* (and also *-ov*), the German developed *-au*. This suffix is secondary because the final syllable was reduced.

they renamed \*Gdania to \*Mutulava. And now: *finis coronat opus*: “Kancelistom niemieckim nazwa rzeczna \*Gɛdanɛja niewq̄tpliwie nastręczała więcej trudności substitucyjnych niż nazwa prus. Mutulawa i prawdopodobnie dlatego utrwaliła się właśnie nazwa Motława, a nie Gdania.” (p. 79)<sup>16</sup> Do not blame Górniewicz for this explanation. He modestly claimed the credit of it to *Gdański ośrodek onomastyczny* and its method of research.<sup>17</sup>

The obsession of this gang (also known as *Zespół onomastyczny UG*) in search of mysterious rivers which existed, transferred their names to nearby settlements, and then disappeared from landscape and history without any traces, was criticised by the historian Śliwiński (2006). One of the examples of the weird methodology of the *Nazwy miast Pomorza Gdańskiego* concerns the Cistercian monastery Oliwa. The *Gdańsk* onomasticians thought that *Oliwa* has its name from the putative river \**Olawa*. But Śliwiński proves that it has nothing to do with the river but with the parallel Spanish *Monasterio dela Oliva*, which was also founded in the 12th century. A reader is advised to read Śliwiński’s long and detailed historical arguments (which are omitted here), which lead to the clear conclusion: what the *Gdańsk* group of onomastics claim is nonsense. Instead of proofs, they simply have a belief that their analysis is correct. As Śliwiński adduces, till the beginning of the 14th century, the area around *Pruszcz Gdański*, which is near *Motława*, was in the possession of Pomeranian nobility. There were some Prussian settlements there but it is not clear what power they could have had to change the name of *Motława* so that it would be officially recorded.

Moreover, through *Pruszcz* flows *Radunia* (a tributary to *Motława*), and nobody ever dared to rename it.

The counterreaction of Treder (2007), one of the editors of the 2nd edition *Nazwy miast Pomorza Gdańskiego* aimed to defend Górniewicz and others. According to Treder, it is not up to the linguists to investigate if their postulated river existed or not. It is up to archaeologists to confirm it. A historian has nothing to say about the process of linguistic reconstruction. If the name for *Gdańsk* was written only in the 10th century, it does not mean that the name could not exist before being recorded. Treder’s defence of the belief of the whole team is very weak. In his paper, full of

16 None of those wild theories appeared in Górniewicz (1985), which is a volume of the *Hydronymia Europaea* project from Germany. In the etymology of *Motława* there is no mention of its putative former Slavic name. Even the direction of the adoption of the suffix *-awa* is correct: Prussian *-āwā* > Polish *-awa* > Germ. *-au* (GÓRNICWICZ 1985, 20). More or less the same explanation of the *Motława* etymology accepted Bugalska (1985, 150). But also here, no mention about the purported \**Gdania* can be found.

17 Górniewicz’s explanation of *Gdynia* origin (also in *Nazwy miast Pomorza Gdańskiego*, p. 97–99) is similar. Originally he thought that the toponym *Gdynia* is composed of \**ɣɛd- + -ynia*. But then he changed his mind. To the south of *Gdynia* there is a brook *Swelinia* containing the formant *-ynia*. So, there had to be a putative river \**Gdynia*, which and this hydronym gave name to the toponym. So the old village *Gdynia* is not primarily motivated, but secondary (!). Moreover, Górniewicz is easily inclined to see toponyms *Prostymia*, *Malkinia*, *Kcynia*, *Krutymia*, *Syrymia*, *Wędrynia* and many others as names motivated according to the hypothetical rivers which had to exist there!

rhetorical questions and exclamations, he mostly repeats Górniewicz's analysis and brings nothing new. His argument that in the region, there are rivers that change names, like *Rogoźnica* > *Czarna Struga* etc., are, in fact, counterarguments. Those changes are recorded in historical materials (!), but nothing like \**Gdania* has ever been recorded anywhere. \**Gdania* was fabricated, and it is believed that it must be a true fabrication.<sup>18</sup>

An attack provokes counterattack requiring shots. So now it is Śliwiński, who *popętnia czasem proste błędy* (TREDER 2007, 49) and *ogólniejszą intencją B. Śliwińskiego jest dyskredytowanie osiągnięć Zespołu Onomastycznego* (p. 50). Of course, every fierce polemic is aimed at discrediting of the oponent's deep-rooted beliefs.

My work here is not to judge the gallant tournament of the two distinguished Polish scholars because there has existed another powerful group of authors who mercilessly swept away the problem of \**Gdania* from the scientific table.<sup>19</sup> They can be called the "Society of Prussian Friends".<sup>20</sup>

## 8 Men who did not plant trees but still reached the Elbe

Fraenkel (1950, 64–65) proposed that the base for *Gdańsk* is actually the adduced Prussian \**gudān* "Waldbewohner". This base should have connected with the Slavic formant \*-*ьskъ*. Those toponyms are also found in East Slavic: *Dvinsk*, *Minsk*, *Kursk*,

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18 An anonymous reviewer of the first draft of this essay commented this paragraph: "it should be clear to you that it is trivial and several times occurring fact that hydronyms only live on in toponyms!" Of course, I agree, provided that first, river beds can be traced archaeologically or geologically, second, that we understand the motivation of changing their names. Nothing like that has happened in the case of *Gdańsk*, which lies at the mouth of *Motława*. And it has always been *Motława* since the time of the first written record. There is neither persuasive motivation for the postulating the original \**Gdania* nor any written record of it. It is just a "belief without any proofs". Moreover, the *Gdańsk* area has been a busy place already in the Roman empire because one branch of the Amber Road which went through it (MADEJSKI 2013, 48). If \**Gdania* is a Slavic name and the Slavs came to Pomerania at about 7th/8th century, what was the original "unrecorded" name of *Motława*? In my opinion, such considerations can only bring discredit to etymology.

19 *Gdańsk* and *Gdynia* also appeared in Babik (2001, 381–383). Babik does not adduce all the relevant authors and important works. He only uncritically compiles different theories like the one about \**Gdania* or about the putative proper name \**Gьdanъ* - without any serious dealing. Babik's own contribution is zero: *Gdańsk* belongs to the Slavic layer of toponyms. Moreover, he refuses the concept of \**гьд-* in Slavic toponyms. But Babik does not know the general conception of *Zespół Onomastyczny UG*, and he does not quote any work of them. In the chapter on the Slavic hydronym suffix *-ava* he even does not discuss the German parallel *-au*, which is important for the problem of *Motława*, as I wrote above. Quite surprising for Babik's monstrous work of almost 800 pages.

20 But not only them. The connection of *Gdańsk* and \**Gdania* was refused by Rymut (1987, 72) for simple reasons: there are no historical records of anything like Brückner's word \**gdani(a)* "mokry łąs" or a river named \**Gdania*. However, the lure of mysterious rivers was greater than common sense. Rymut did not exclude the original river *Gdynia* which gave its name to a village. Then, for unknown reasons, it was renamed *Chyłonka*.

*Omsk, Obsk*. On the other hand, *Gdynia* has the Prussian base *gudde* “Wald”. And again, this Prussian base is connected with a Slavic suffix, here with *-ynja*. According to Fraenkel, the original meaning of *Gdańsk* is “Niederlassung der Waldbewohner” while *Gdynia* should have meant “Waldgegend”.<sup>21</sup>

Vasmer, in his review of Fraenkel’s work<sup>22</sup> objected that the connection of the Prussian *gudde* and *Gdańsk* is improbable because there are no traces of Prussians in the west of *Vistula*. Vasmer also, in this review, stuck to his older opinion that the origin of *Gdańsk* should be connected with the Goths.

The Prussian origin of *Gdańsk* was also supported by Lorentz in his posthumous paper from 1966. The original word should have been *gudde* with its derivate *gudōne* “Waldbach, Waldsee”. And this should be the word base for the Slavic *\*Gudanisk* “Ort am Waldbach”. Also, *Gdynia* should have a Prussian origin: *\*gudūne* “Waldort, Waldland” plus a Slavic suffix *-ynja*. In fact, this idea comes from Lorentz (1933, 53). Therefore, Friedhelm Hinze, the editor of Lorentz (1966) paper, accused Fraenkel of using Lorentz’ idea in his 1950 book without even mentioning his name.

Toporov (ТОПОРОВ 2, 324–327) sees the Baltic root *\*gud-* as a word base for *Gdańsk*. But not only for it. The same root can be observed in *Gžatsk* (west of *Moscow*) < *\*G̃d:at̃sk̃* and tens of East Baltic toponyms/hydronyms with the root *\*gud-* (ТОПОРОВ 2, 326). It also seems to be related to the Lithuanian *gūdas* “Belarus, a foreigner” and Latvian *guds* “a Byelorussian raft maker” reflected in Byelorussian names Гуд, Гудоѡиц etc. It seems that the root forms a base for words with a much broader meaning: wetland, somebody living or coming from the swamp. The form *gudde* then means “bush, forest, wet, mud, bad, Byelorussian” (ТОПОРОВ 2, 329).

Nepokupnyj (1997, 370) goes even further. If the *\*gud-* is a Balto-Slavic root, then Prussian *\*gudān* is parallel to Proto-Slavic *\*g̃djaniñ*.

All those results are used in NMP (III, 110–111). Here, the adduced Slavic morpheme *\*g̃d-* is understood as unrecorded because the *Słownik prastłowiański* does not adduce it. As a base, the Baltic *\*gud-* appearing in Prussian *gudde* “forest” is taken. From *gudde* the reconstructed derivate *\*gudan* “forest inhabitant”, with the suffix *-an*, is postulated. Thus *\*Gud-an-isk* (as Lorentz proposed) was the original name of the settlement with the subsequent Polonized version *Gdańsk*.

In Niemeyer (2012, 119, 199), the authors come out of Rymut (1987) and Rospond (1984). Both *Gdańsk* and *Gdynia* are derived from the Proto-Slavic root *\*g̃d-* “Nässe, Sumpfboden, nass, bewachsen”. Concerning *Gdańsk*, the authors connect the root with the Prussian *gudde* “Wald”, derived with the suffix *-an* > *gudan* “Waldmensen”, and *-isk*. The original form is reconstructed as *Gudaisk*. However, this explanation is far from being plausible.

21 The Prussian origin of *Gdańsk* was advocated by Brückner (1927, 138).

22 *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 22 (1), 1953, 216–217.

However, two problems appear here. First, it is automatically supposed that Prussians sometimes must have been in the *Gdańsk* territory. But this is very dubious. Prussian toponyms and hydronyms, although strongly germanized, cover the area between the rivers *Vistula* and *Nemunas*. The *Vistula* was traditionally considered a western border of the Baltic settlement. For example, Horn's 1938 map of the toponyms of Prussian origin does not show any evidence to the west of the *Vistula* (LIEDTKE 2011, 13).

But soon, the brave men appeared and started to discover the Baltic territory also on the *Vistula's* west bank.<sup>23</sup> One of them was Lothar Kilian (1939) from Königsberg. Having been persuaded that the Balts were present on the east bank already in 1500 BC, he also expects them in the west bank. Later came the Germanic tribes, and only after their leaving the true Prussians settled there. More precisely, they should have occupied a broad territory between the rivers *Paręta* and *Daugava* in the Young Bronze period of the Baltic culture (at about 1000–800 BC). Kilian found only 8 Prussian toponyms in the west of the *Vistula*, including the river *Paręta/Persante*, adapted from the “illyrisch” origin (probably Pre-Indo-European) to Baltic (it does not matter that the first record comes from the 14th century). Kilian's short paper, being published in a local magazine, had a good impact.

Hans Krahe, obviously attracted by everything “illyrisch”, responded some year later. He welcomed the Kilian's discovery of Baltic toponyms in the west of *Vistula* (KRAHE 1943). And because the toponyms did not undergo the Germanic first Lautverschiebung, he agrees with Kilian that the Balts/Prussians were present in the area after the Germanic tribes left and before the Slavs came. With the background of Krahe, Kilian's paper found its way among other scholars.

So the famous but very controversial Maria Gimbutas (1963, 26–27), referring to Kilian's paper, claims that Prussian toponyms are also recorded in the west of *Vistula*. Gimbutas does not doubt that the direct ancestors of Prussians were present in Lower *Vistula* and Eastern Pomerania in the first century, even before the coming of the Goths.

The pastor Brauer, an amateur linguist but a passionate *Heimatforscher*, also comes out of the Kilian's paper and from the manuscript of the monastery *Marienparadies* chronicle in the 13th century in *Karthaus* (*Kartuzy*). He proves on various toponyms that Prussians were present on the west bank of the *Vistula* after Germanic and before Slavic settlement (BRAUER 1988, 55, 93)<sup>24</sup>. Adalbert should even start

23 See IVOŠKA (2016) for an overview and useful biographies of the authors.

24 No wonder that the preface to this seriously looked booklet was written by Wolfgang P. Schmid, a proponent of Baltic languages' centrality and archaic state in the Indo-European language family. However, the Schmid's erudition led him to judge Brauer's work only as “*Merkwürdigkeiten eines von der Liebe zu seiner Heimat geprägten Pfarrers aus Karthaus*” and recommended his opinions to international scientific discussion. It means it is nonsense, but something interesting might come out from the debate over it.

his mission about 7km to the south of *Gdańsk*, where the Prussian population was quite large. The people who, according to the *Vita prior*, were massively converted to Christianity had to be Prussians, who willingly accepted the word of God. Others did not. (Why then had Adalbert to travel further to the east when the Prussians were everywhere?) Those Prussians who, according to Brauer, evolved from West Baltic tribes at about 1000 BC. No wonder that “*ganz Westpreußen gehörte damals zur Urheimat der Balten*” (p. 94). They lived on friendly terms with the Germanic tribes forming a Balto-Germanic culture. The Goths, Gepids and Vandals strengthened the settlement in the 1st century BC or so, and the Slavs (Pomeranians) came only after the 6th–7th century AD. The good pastor sees the Prussian toponyms everywhere around *Gdańsk*. No wonder that *Gyddanyzc* originally means “*die Gedane gehörige bzw. auf Gedane zurückgehende Siedlung*” (p. 99). Those Prussians named *Gedane*, whose name is recorded only in such toponym. Such things may happen in onomastics, but without another source, we can fabricate any term of a putative tribe and use it to prove our belief that our etymology is correct.

Believe it or not, the pastor’s *Heimatskunde* verve was appreciated. Although he completely forgets that different authors and their theories defended with no less effort. I refer to the thorough review of his book by Toporov (1983, 268–273) who not only welcomed the Baltic/Prussian origin of Brauer’s data and checking them, but also made a bow: “*Наука о прусском языке и прусских древностях должна быть признательна В. Брауеру за его ценное исследование*” (ТОПОРОВ 1983, 273). No wonder that the advocates of the Prussian origin of *Gdańsk* consider Toporov a strong pillar supporting their theory.<sup>25</sup>

Already 20 years earlier was Toporov was willing to admit that Prussian toponyms can be found in the west of *Vistula*, even if they may have undergone partial or total Slavic influence (ТОПОРОВ 1966). He pointed out that most of the Baltic toponyms here belong probably to the Balto-Slavic toponym stock. But Kilian’s Baltic toponyms in the west of *Vistula* are considered indisputable and the period of their presence in the area (ТОПОРОВ 1983, 265). Toporov’s map of the alleged Baltic toponym, based on Kilian’s and Krahe’s papers, even shows the range of the Baltic territory not only to the *Parseța*, but even up to the *Elbe* (ТОПОРОВ 1983, 267). The Prussian presence should represent the second wave of Baltic settlement, as stated by Krahe.

Suppose that Kilian, Brauer and Toporov are right. Yes, there was a vast settlement of the Balts up to the *Parseța* or even the *Elbe*, and they established a network of towns and villages which left traces in the names recorded in old documents. But why did they have to retreat so far back to Eastern Pomerania? Because of the so much pressure from the Slavic tribes? As Schmid (1987) remarks, the West Pomer-

25 As this paper concerns *Gdańsk*, I cannot discuss the individual toponyms of the putative Prussian origin in detail.

ania between the *Vistula* and the *Parsęta* contains traces of Baltic hydronyms, but the language is similar to Prussian. Some other Baltic tribes had to be there. But for Schmid, this *Westbaltische Randsprache* only contributes to his (and Krahe's) conception of Old Europe hydronym territory, which continues directly to the Baltic languages continuum. The non-existing Baltic tribes are postulated only from a handful of toponyms and hydronyms.<sup>26</sup>

The Old Pomeranians did not leave any written materials. The oldest documents are written in Latin since the 14th century only in German. The language of Pomeranian can be reconstructed only by the study of toponyms. And this can throw light on the possible Prussian presence in the area to the west of *Vistula*.

The Pomeranian suffixes *-sk/-sko*, *-ow*, *-in*, *-ec*, *-ica*, *-ice*, *-jъ* are Slavic, and most Pomeranian toponyms are Slavic. There are also toponyms of German origin. They appeared on the west bank of *Vistula* in the 13th century and on the east bank in the 14th century during the Teutonic order crusades. The Prussian names can be found only in the east bank of lower *Vistula*. The toponyms on the west bank come from the 13th century; see GÓRNOWICZ - BROCKI (1999, 26–28), who described the situation in the *Województwo Pomorskie*. The part of this area, former *Powiat Gdański* and *Tczewski*, described by Bugalska (1985), confirm those results. And, the analysis of Pomeranian toponyms suggests that the Slavs colonised West Pomeranian along the coastal belt from the *Oder* to the east (RZETELSKA-FELESZKO - DUMA 2008, 2013).

The theory of Prussian presence to the west of *Vistula* is also disrupted by a serious etymological analysis (apart from the zealous search of enthusiasts) of hydronyms between *Vistula* and *Oder*. As shown by Rzetelska-Feleszko - Duma (1977), most of the analysed hydronyms in the research area are derived from Slavic bases. Both authors also checked the adduced Baltic hydronyms. From the 28 names of problematic Slavic etymology, only a handful can be traced to the Baltic origin. Moreover, they are first recorded in the second half of the 13th century (RZETELSKA-FELESZKO - DUMA 1977, 177–178). One of them is the well-known *Motława* (which is very close to the left bank of *Vistula*). The *ace in the hole* of the Baltic settlement east of the *Vistula*, the river *Parsęta*, is derived from the root *\*pārs-* (see Polish *prosię* “swine”) with the Pomeranian development of *ToRT* group. The base contains the thematic/formative suffix *-ęt-* and the original form was *\*Parsęty*.

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26 “Von diesem Titel müssen sowohl die interessierten Laien gewarnt werden, da sie durch dieses Büchlein keinen Erkenntniszuwachs gewärtigen können, als auch die Fachleute, da sie durch die Lektüre dieser Schrift ihre Zeit vergeuden würden. Wäre dieses Opusculum nicht bereits mit frapperender Gleichgültigkeit, die einer Ermutigung zu falschem Etymologisieren gleichkommt, besprochen, und auch sonst schon zitiert worden, wäre Verschweigen des Titels das beste.” This is the beginning of the devastating review of Brauer's booklet by F. Hinze (*Zeszyty naukowe Wydziału humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Prace językoznawcze*, Nr. 15, 1989, 129–140). Brauer's etymologies are swept away as nonsensical and their welcome by Schmid and Toporov is left uncommented. Hinze explains them in detail as of Pomeranian and therefore Slavic origin. Even those place names which resemble Baltic are actually of Slavic origin.

So originally it is an nt-stem with the meaning “rzeka rwąca, wylewająca”<sup>27</sup> (RZETELSKA-FELESZKO – DUMA 1977, 85).

From the linguistic point of view, we can safely say that the larger Baltic presence east of *Vistula* was just wishful thinking of some authors.

The second problem that disturbs the Prussian/or Baltic origin of *Gdańsk* and *Gdynia* is similar toponyms outside Pomerania with undoubted Slavic origin. One of them is *Gieczno*, a village at *Łódź* area, a place untouched by the Balts. The name of the village is recorded in 1350 AD, and even if the etymology is a little bit problematic, the authors of the NMP (III, 121) are even willing to derive it from the Proto-Slavic root \**gъd-* (!) Another interesting toponym that creates more chaos in our problem with Balts is the Czech town *Kdyně*, first recorded in 1369 AD. Profous (MJČ II, 218) connected the root *Kd-* with Polish *Gdynia* even if he did not have any older records of that Polish town. Profous thought that *Kdyně* and *Gdynia* should have the Middle German origin from *gedinge* “court area, contract, promise, fence, condition”. According to Profous, *Kdyně* would initially mean the “labour law”. The authors of the subsequent volume MJČ V suggested that the base of *Kdyně*, as well as *Kdanice* (1406), should be the Slavic root \**kъd-* (probably adverbial, as in *kde*) with the suffix *-yně-* (p. 197). This explanation is quite plausible. MJMS also accepted the reconstruction (I, 388) for the origin of Moravian *Kdousov* (1342) < proper name *Kdús* + *-ov*. The root \**kъd-* is not only contained in adverbial \**kъde* but also in the Old Czech proper names: *Kdús*, *Kda*, *Kděša*, *Kdýka* which formed the base of toponyms.

As we can see, the bases of the names of those settlements can be connected with *Gdynia* and *Gdańsk*; the root \**gъd-* or \**kъd-* is Slavic, not Baltic. The previous authors did not join the bases of the Czech toponyms with *Gdańsk*/*Gdynia*. Therefore, the original form of *Gdańsk* is \**Gъd-an-ъskъ* and with a Slavic root followed by common Slavic suffixes.

## 9 Digging up the past

As we have seen, the proponents of the Prussian origin of *Gdańsk* seem to defend the following ethnic changes in the area: first - Goths, then Prussians followed by Slavs, then again Prussians (due to the 13th century crusade). Or, Goths first, Balts second, German tribes third, Prussian fourth, and the Slavs last. Or, first Goths, then Slavs and finally Prussians. Or Late Bronze Balts, then German tribes, then Prussians followed by Slavs. Ethnic groups are moved as armies on the battlefield. Any of them could name or rename almost every natural or human object - the success is measured by the number of fans and arguments from authorities. Because the views were mainly linguistic or historical, let's briefly look at what modern archaeology says.

27 The waves are rolling around like pigs in the mud.

The beginning of the early Iron Age is marked by Pomeranian expansion (do not mistake with the later expansion of the Pomeranians who are Slavs!) characterised with urn burials, specific types of face urns in cist graves. The culture disseminated to the south

The older theories operated with a migration approach closely identified with particular ethnic groups: Early Germans, Early Slavs, Early Balts. Now the Pomeranian expansion is explained by the unequal distribution of resources, the rise of polygyny or the aim to play a more active role in the Baltic amber exchange. Those factors would trigger the movement to the south so that the bare subsistence and social needs would be satisfied within societies adjusted to the new strategies. (DZIĘGIELEWSKI 2016, 30).

a) The Balts. The oldest recorded Baltic culture in Poland is the West Balt Barrow culture. It is dated from 500 BC to 1 AD and was found between the lower *Vistula* and *Nemunas*. The culture does not exceed the west bank of the *Vistula* and shows the tendency for permanent occupation – livestock breeding and horticulture cultivation. Stable societies also offer a multifaceted economy. Cemeteries are formed by barrows (BIEGEL – JASKANIS 1987, 22–27; HOFFMANN – RZESZOTARSKA-NOWAKIEWICZ 2016).

The following period is characterised by stable settlement. The population can be connected with the historical Aesti described by Tacitus in his *Germania* (98 AD). The area near the *Vistula* Lagoon is one of the many amber deposits. Tacitus's description of *Aestiorum gentes* does not mean one tribe but a system of complex ethnic groups. The archaeological analysis revealed two different archaeological cultures. In the east is the Baltic Dolkheim-Kovrovo culture reaching the river *Paslęka*, while in the west down to the *Vistula* Lagoon, the Germanic Wielbark culture spread. But what language the *Aestiorum gentes* in the amber-rich land spoke is unknown. From the 1st century onwards to the south of Dolkheim-Kovrovo in *Mazury* and *Suwałki* territory, the new Bogaczewo culture appears. Again, it is a complex culture containing Baltic elements and the imported objects from the neighbouring *Przeworsk* and *Jastorf* cultures. Starting from the 4th century, the new Sudovian culture more to the east appeared due to the transformation connected with searching new amber roads. The Sudovian culture had intensive contacts with the provinces of the Roman empire and the Letto-Lithuanian, Scandinavian, Finnish, and the neighbouring Germanic *Przeworsk* and *Wielbark* cultures. The amber trade produced new local elites (BITNER-WRÓBLEWSKA – RZESZOTARSKA-NOWAKIEWICZ 2016). But generally, the Baltic tribes stayed a few hundred years behind their neighbours in social and economic evolution (LUCHTANAS 2000, 200).

None of the Baltic culture described here appears beyond the west bank of the *Vistula*, and the whole concept of the Baltic presence in the area remains a myth created by some authors.<sup>28</sup>

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28 Schall (1964) even considered the name *Berlin* a Baltic name. For him, practically all the “*dunkle*

b) The Germanic tribes. Since the 4th century BC, we can recognize the Germanic Jastorf culture in Poland. It spread from Jutland and the *Elbe* region to the south-east. The Wielbark culture (1st century AD – 3rd century AD) occupied the lands of the lower *Vistula*, a narrow strip of the Baltic coast, part of the Pomeranian lake district deep inland south-eastwards (CZEŚLIŃSKI 2016). It has traditionally been connected with Jordanes' account of the movement of the Goths from the Baltic Sea towards the Black sea (ODLA 1590). Since the 3rd century AD, the Cherniakhiv culture in Ukraine and Moldavia with the Sarmatian and Scythian elements continues the Wielbark culture (CZEŚLIŃSKI 2016). Now the population is considered to contain mainly Germanic societies: Goths, Rugii, Lemovii, Gepids and other ethnicities. Goths are archaeologically reflected differently from those in the Black Sea region, where they formed the multi-ethnic amalgam (CZEŚLIŃSKI 2016).

From the 2nd century BC to the 4th century AD, the Przeworsk culture was located in central and southern Poland. It is coupled with the more easterly Zarubintsy culture. Older opinions connected the Przeworsk culture with the Venedi and connected this territory with the Slavic homeland. Other scholars argued that the Przeworsk culture was pure Germanic (MALLORY – ADAMS 1997, 470). The culture is now understood as a Germanic culture with close Celtic contact (till the end of the 1st millennium BC) and a multi-tribal society of farmers-stockbreeders with a majority of Germanic ethnics (MACIAŁOWICZ 2016, KONTNY 2016). The social and economic organization of Przeworsk culture people mainly focussed on the warrior class.

c) Early Slavs. The presence of the early Slavic cultures on Polish territory dates to the 6th/7th centuries AD. The findings are scarce and mostly contain objects made of clay. There are two conflicting approaches to the Slavic presence in Poland. The autochthonous theory locates the origin of the Slavic culture between the *Oder* and *Dnieper*. The allochthonous theory takes the upper *Dnieper* basin as the cradle of early Slavs. Here, the Kyiv culture in the 4th century appeared and later the separate cultural areas as the Prague, Penkovka and Koločin cultures associated with the Slavic ethnoses. In the middle of the 5th century, they reached Poland (Prague culture), and in the 6th century, west Poland was already a part of the Slavic settlement (SZMONIEWSKI 2016). During the late 6th and early 7th century, north-eastern Germany and *Vistula* were dominated by the Slavic Sukow-Dziedzice culture.<sup>29</sup>

d) *Gdańsk*. Concerning the Slavic settlement in Pomerania, at least since the 9th century AD, the most developed part was the northwest area due to mutual trade

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*Namen in Nordwestslawischen baltischer Herkunft sind*" (p. 166). However, *Berlin* is definitely a Slavic word, coming from the Polabian \**birl-/berl* "Sumpf, Morast" (NIEMEYER 2012, 60). But the lure of Balts is stronger, e.g., Kulakov (1987, see the map No. 2) considers *Gdańsk* a Prussian town, even if there is no other settlement to the west of the *Vistula*.

<sup>29</sup> See also Dulinicz (2006) for detailed analysis of the Early Slavic settlement between the *Lower Vistula* and the *Elbe*.

with Scandinavian lands and non-agricultural domains. Remarkable was the intense feeling of separatism (ŚLIWIŃSKI 2000, 39). The introduction of Christianity during the incorporation of Pomerania to the Polish kingdom (late 10th century) was prolonged. In the 10th and 11th centuries, mostly only the nobility was baptised. It is supposed that this also happened in *Gdańsk* when Adalbert baptised the local citizens. Most of them were ordered to gather by some officials (ŚLIWIŃSKI 2000, 10).

The recent archaeological research has also shown that we can trace the oldest datable records of *Gdańsk* to the 1060s AD. The castle with the town's fortification is not older than from the 1090s (KOŚCIŃSKI - PANER 2005; PANER 2015). It means that *Gdańsk* in 997 was not the same place as the later medieval *Gdańsk*. Instead, it was a cluster of individual settlements with different functions (ibid.)<sup>30</sup>

## 10 In Search of Ariadne's String

Now it is time to come back to the beginning because the Adalbert legend starts to be essential for our analysis.

The complete critical edition of the *Vita prior* was prepared by Karwasińska (1962). There are at least 29 manuscripts with full text, 8 manuscripts with partial text, one reworked version and some fragments in breviaries. The texts are divided into three redactions: A: Ottonian, B: Aventinian, C: Monte-Cassinian. Concerning *Gdańsk*, the Ottonian version is essential. The paragraph of the baptism happens in *Gyddanyzc* while the redactions B and C confuse *Gyddanyzc* with *Gniezno* where the remains of Adalbert were later kept. See the same paragraph in B: *Ipse uero adiit primo urbem **Gnesdon**, quam ducis latissima regna dirimentem, maris confinio tangunt...* and in C: *Sanctus uero Adelbertus adiit primo urbem **Gesdon**, quam ducis latissima regna dirimentem maris confinia tangunt...* Karwasińska does not doubt that an Italian author wrote the text of the *Vita prior* version A, very probably the monk in Aven-tium monastery Ioannes Canaparius. His informant was Gaudentius and probably a German monk Willigis, the archbishop of Mainz, who ordained three Prague bishops, including Adalbert. Pope Sylvester II. probably initiated the redaction, and the manuscripts appeared in 1002–1004 AD. The redaction C came out from the redaction B and can be dated to the first third of the 11th century.<sup>31</sup>

The original text mistook *Gdańsk* and *Gniezno*, and the correction was made just in the Ottonian version (KARWASIŃSKA 1962, XXVIII). Apart from the redaction B and C of the *Vita prior*, *Gniezno* as a place where Adalbert stopped and baptised

30 Mielczarski (1967, 75) remarks that Adalbert might have been not in *Gdańsk* proper but in *Święty Wojciech*, a former settlement (now part of *Gdańsk*), traditionally connected with the cult of St. Adalbert. Already in the 12th century, the Benedictines came there. This idea is in perfect harmony with the later archaeological results.

31 KARWASIŃSKA (1962, XXVI–XXIX). Information about Willigis taken from Slavnikovci: 454.

appears in later manuscripts: *Vita altera, redactio longior* (XXIV, 22–7 (following folio), *Vita altera, redactio brevior* (XXIV, 10–17) written by Bruno of Querfurt at about 1008–1009:

*Est in parte regni ciuitas magna Gnezden, ubi nunc sacro corpori requiescere placuit... Baptizat populum grandem nimis. Inde nullas moras nectit, nauem ascendit, quam ne prophanus quis tangere presumat, dux sollicitus multo milite armauerat. Non post multos dies carina secante terga maris Deum nescientibus illabuntur Pruzorum terris.* (Quoted from KARWASIŃSKA 1969).<sup>32</sup>

Obviously, in this version, Adalbert's route to the Prussians is entirely different, apart from the striking fact that he could not reach their land by ship.<sup>33</sup> The only way by ship could be the sail on the *Vistula*, which is about 100 km east of *Gniezno*.

Surprisingly, historians are not quite sure how Adalbert travelled to *Gdańsk*. Some authors consider the starting point *Gniezno* or *Poznań* or *Międzyrzecz* (to the west of *Poznań*) or *Wyszogrod* on the *Vistula* (LABUDA 1969, 21). Others would prefer the route from *Wyszogród* to *Gródek*, *Starogard* and *Gorzędziej* – basically the journey westward of *Vistula* (MIELCZARSKI 1967, separate map).

The possible informant of the author of *Vita prior* was Adalbert's brother Radim. Radim shared with Adalbert the same monastery in *Aventinum* (here, he adopted the name *Gaudentius*). He then accompanied Adalbert on his mission to Prussia and became the archbishop of *Gniezno* in March 1000 AD when even Otto III. was present in this town.<sup>34</sup>

But what about presbyter *Benedictus*, the second companion of Adalbert who was with him after the *Bolesław's* ship left the three missionaries on the seabank of Prussia? We do not know anything about him. Who he was or what happened to him after Adalbert's death is a mystery. Only the anonymous *Passio sancti Adalperti martyris* from about the first third of the 11th century names Adalbert's second companion *Bogusz*. But who this *Benedictus/Bogusz* was if he was even a Pole (KAR-

32 “In the territory of the (Bolesław's) kingdom is the big city called *Gniezno* where the (Adalbert's) holy body (now) pleased itself to rest... He (Adalbert) baptised a great number of people (here). Having not hesitated any more, he embarked on the ship which the prudent duke had armed by many soldiers so that nobody godless would dare to touch it. After not so many days during which the ship cruised the sea, they reached the land of Prussians who did not know the (true) God.” (translation mine).

33 This incongruity failed to be noticed by the editors of the otherwise splendid anthology *Slavníkovci*, see the entry *Hnězdno* on page 407: *Přes Hnězdno šel biskup Vojtěch na svou neúspěšnou misi k Prusům...* “Through *Gniezno* went bishop Adalbert to his unsuccessful mission to the Prussians”. This claim is ambiguous. Adalbert was in *Gniezno* at the court of *Bolesław the Brave*. Being refused as a bishop in his homeland diocese, he decided to go for a mission (see *Cosmas*, Book I, Chapter 30). Because of Otto's war against the *Liutizi* and *Havolans*, Adalbert could not go to them, although it would be easier because they spoke a language understandable. Instead, he was sent to the Prussians whose language was incomprehensible to him. But *Boleslav's* court even did not provide him with an interpreter and nobody cared about Adalbert's fate (LABUDA 1997, 72).

34 *Slavníkovci*: 431–432.

WASIŃSKA 1962, 41, Note 158, Slavníkovci 186–193; also 386) is unclear. Moreover, he was not an informant.<sup>35</sup>

Matuszewska (1948) remarks that *Gdańsk* in the *Vita prior* is called *urbs*. It was not a small fishing village but a centre of Baltic trade (not so big as the other towns further in the West, like *Szczecin* or *Wolin*, which in other documents are called *civitates*). But from the previous paragraphs, we know that it was probably a cluster of settlements and some part(s) had the name of *Gdańsk*. At the time of Adalbert's visit, *Gdańsk* was already part of the Polish kingdom, but the inhabitants were not Prussians. Apart from traders, the dominant part of inhabitants were probably Slavic Pomeranians.

However, there is a different look on the *Vita prior*. A German medievalist Johannes Fried published in 2002 a long paper in which he tore Karwasińska's theories into pieces. After the detailed textual and philological analysis of various *Vita prior* texts, he believes that its author was not Canaparius and it was not written in Rome. The more probable author seems to be the Notker of Liège, a close supporter of Otto III. Notker is known to be a promoter of education in Liège. Here, the *Vita prior* might have been written. Another place that might come into consideration and is connected both with Notker and Otto is Aachen. In 2005, Jürgen Hoffmann published a new critical edition of *Vita prior* using the texts of the Aachen Dome archives, with the commentary of the Karwasińska edition. The new findings are essential for the historic not only for literary debate about the archetype and the origin of the *Vita prior*, but also for the origin of the name *Gdańsk*.<sup>36</sup>

## 11 Gyddanycz puzzled out

The analysis of the West Pomeranian toponyms by Rzetelska-Feleszko – Duma (1996, 22–25; 2008, 18–21) showed an interesting result. The written sources up to the 14th century were in Latin, but the scribes were Germans. It means that the record of a proper name is influenced both by the Latin alphabet and the Middle Low German sound system. The authors noticed that the records show that original vowels are usually substituted by the vowels with a close articulation: *i, y* ↔ *e* (*Stetin* 1112–1118 > *Stitin* 1294; *Slivin* 1159 > *Slevyn* 1321); *e* ↔ *o, a* (*Schallin* 1248 > *Schellin* 1325); *a* ↔ *e*,

<sup>35</sup> *Passio* puts both Adalbert's companions into an embarrassing situation. Immediately after Adalbert's death, both Bogusz and Gaudentius fled away and hid in the nearby woods to save their lives. They even did not care for the dismembered body of their master. His impaled head was taken away by an anonymous passerby who took it to *Gniezno* and told Bolesław the whole story. Nevertheless, I agree with Labuda (1969, 23), who has no doubts that the informer of Adalbert's death was Gaudentius (Radim).

<sup>36</sup> Otto's great favour for Adalbert and their close friendship is well-documented from Otto's reaction when he heard the news of the martyr's death. Otto started to build churches dedicated to Adalbert, promoted his cult, had *Vita prior* written and made a pilgrimage to Adalbert's grave in *Gniezno* (ALTHOFF 2003, 70).

o; (*Clodo* 1320 > *Cladawe* 1328; *Sedlin* 1224 (older form) > *Sadlen* 1194 > *Sodelin* 1285); u ↔ o (*Burrentin* 1224 > *Borentin*). It seems that something like that could also have happened in the recorded form *Gyddanycz* where the high vowels are substitutes for Slavic vowels of similar articulation.

Consonants *b, p, d, t, g, k, w, f*, are recorded without changes and the contrast voiced/unvoiced is mainly preserved. But, in 999 AD in Aachen, if the *Vita prior* was written there by Notker of Liège, the language is Old Low German. Old Low German has both the voiced geminate *-dd* and the voiced dental fricative *ḏ*. The origin of those consonants in Old Low German is beyond the topic of my paper. What is essential is that the *-dd-* in *Gyddanycz* is the Old Low German substitute spelling of the Late Proto-Slavic *\*d*. The substitute is the voiced geminate or a voiced interdental fricative. Both sounds fit perfectly into the context  $-V_{\text{high}} dd V_{\text{low}}$  or  $V_{\text{high}} \dot{d} V_{\text{low}}$ .

The Middle Low German substitutes for the Proto-Slavic suffix *\*-ьскъ* is *-ts, -z, -tc, -tsch, -cz* (*\*Ježevьскъ* > *Geschewz*, *\*Kopьскъ* > *Kampts* (Soll)). The suffix *\*-ьскъ* is recorded as *-sk, -z, -tzik* but as the authors note: “*Do tego modelu substytucyjnego mogq nawiązywać inne grupy spółgłoskowe o podobnej budowie*” (RZETELSKA-FELESZKO – DUMA 2008, 27). Or, reversely, the *\*-ьскъ* could have been substituted by similar consonant clusters in Old Low German and subsequently adapted into Latin, like *-cz*. But beware, concerning *Gyddanycz*, we deal with the 10th century **Old Low German**, and there are no other Slavic records here. So we cannot talk about some general usage of how to write Slavic names, apart from the Middle Low German office workers in Pomerania, as we saw above.

The suffix *-an-*, which puzzled the scholars who considered the origin of *Gdańsk* to be Scandinavian or is quite common in Slavic. Cyran (1977, 80–81) described derivatives and denominatives in Polish dialects formed by this suffix e.g. *burzan* “ten, co burzy”, *polewan* “to, co się polewa, garnek polewany”, *kochan* “ten, kogo się kocha”, *dworzan* “parobek dworski”, *werczan* “pracujący w werku” etc. The suffix is very productive and is also used as a final suffix in adaptation of the borrowings: *brutkan* < Germ. *Bräutigam*, *felejzan* < Germ. *Felleisen*, *furyjan*, *muzykan*, *putan* < Germ. *Puthahn* etc.

Now we have all the information complete. *Gyddanycz*, said in Slavic and recorded as an Old Low German adaptation into the Latin text, is the original *\*Gьd-an-ьскъ*. From all that has been written above, I believe that it is a Slavic word composed from the pure Slavic morphemes, including the Slavic root *\*gьd-* recorded in other toponyms, as we have seen. And because the record *Gyddanycz* comes from the late 10th century, the loss of yers in Lechitic was still ongoing. The author of *Vita prior* was Notker, and his informant was Gaudentius, a Slav who had to hear the yers as phonemes. And because the record *Gyddanycz* contains high vowels, it can be supposed that yers were still pronounced, but not as reduced vowels but as high vowels.

Moreover, there was no phonemic distinction between soft and hard yers. Havlík’s rule here does not regularly hold (we are in Pomerania, not in Bohemia). The final

yer was lost at first (as elsewhere in Slavic), and the two remaining yers are still preserved. The Baltic/Prussian origin of *Gdańsk* can be excluded. Both historical and archaeological materials do not prove their significant influence in the *Gdańsk* area at the time of Adalbert's presence. Although there is no doubt that Scandinavians and Balts participated in the Baltic trade network, the results strongly point to the fact that *Gdańsk* started and developed as a Slavic settlement.

## 12 Notker and Thietmar's World

There might be a possibility to compare the possible graphic record of *Gyddanycz* to the Slavic names recordings in the Chronicle of Thietmar of Merseburg. Thietmar was a contemporary of Adalbert. He wrote his Chronicle in 1012 AD and continued work on it till his death in 1018 AD. The Chronicle describes the east part of Germany and adjacent Slavic territories, especially Polabian and Polish. Thietmar seemed to know a variant of Common Slavic called *lingua Slavica missionarica* (HENGST 2018, 287), which can be deduced from how he deals with Slavic names (STRZELCZYK 1977, 75). But it does not mean that Thietmar knew Slavic dialects and reflected the phonemic differences, e.g. Pomeranian in our case. Although Thietmar likes the connection of a name and its etymology, we must take some of his forms of the Slavic proper names carefully because Thietmar took them over from older sources (HENGST 2018, 309).

The Slavic names were studied by various authors, e.g. Stieber (1967) and Eichler (1990), who postulated the phonological state of Slavic during Thietmar's period.

However, concerning yers, Thietmar's records are ambiguous. In *communis opinio*, Thietmar does not record the Slavic weak yers: *Libzi* < \**Lipъsko*. But concerning the names of the Obodrite chieftains *Mistizlav(um)* < \**Mъstislavъ*, *Mistuwoj* < \**Mъstivojъ*, Stieber is both willing to consider the "i" in *Mist-* a reflection of a yer and a "svarabhakti" vowel invented by Thietmar. Eichler (1990, 233) thinks that the "i" represents the disruption of the cluster *Mst-* which was unknown to German. However, *Gezerisca* (secondary final -a) < Old Sorbian \**Jezerъsko* can hardly be treated as an epenthetic vowel. The suffixes *-ъsko/-ъskъ* preserve the rest of the same yer before a coronal: *Gezerisca/Gyddanycz*. Alas, among about 300 toponyms in Thietmar's Chronicle, there is no mention of the name *Gdańsk* (COTTIN 2018) even if Thietmar writes about Adalbert (*Woytech*) and Gniezno. So we are not sure how he would write it or even explain its origin. Nevertheless, my results that *Gyddanycz* reflects the weak yers are not disproved.

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