

## BUDNICK — TIMME

Requested by “Limosm”: Budnick - Timme

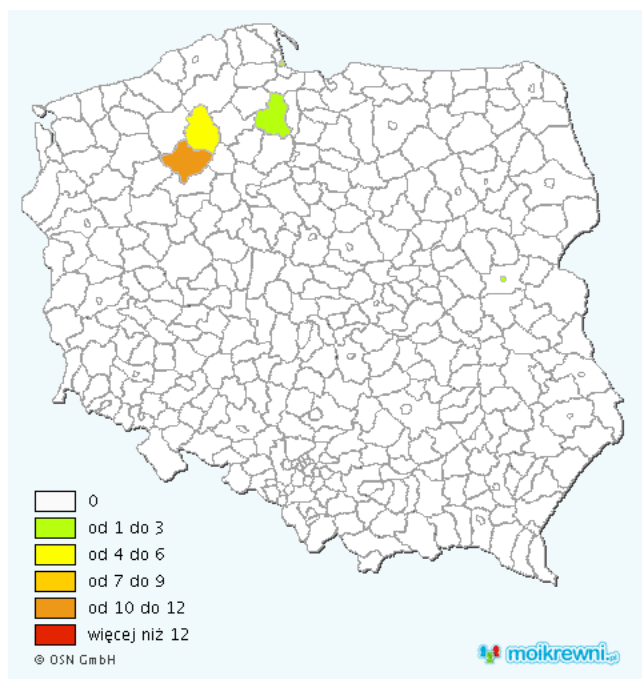
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Neither of these names is spelled the way Poles would spell them. **Budnick** is almost certainly a Germanized spelling of the Polish surname **Budnik**. **Timme** is more complicated, since it could be a name of German linguistic origin, or a Germanized spelling of a Polish name. Let’s take them one at a time.

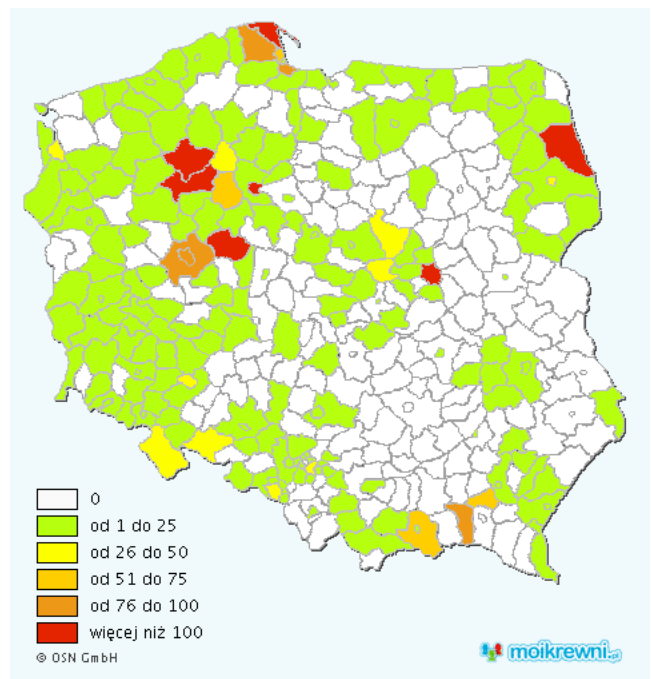
I say **Budnick** is a German spelling because German tends to spell the sound of *k* as *ck*, with the *c* silent (as we do in words such as “black” and “luck”). In Polish, however, *c* is pronounced separately, the same way we pronounce “ts.” So Germans would pronounce *Budnick* basically the same way Poles pronounce *Budnik*, as “bood’-nick”; but Poles would pronounce *Budnick* as “bood’-nitsk,” which just doesn’t sound right at all to the Polish ear. It’s a lot more likely, therefore, that *Budnick* is simply a German phonetic spelling of Polish *Budnik*. In areas long ruled by Germany, we often see Polish names with a spelling modified to suit German tendencies; that’s almost certainly the case here.

That said, the spelling *Budnick* does appear in Poland. The Moikrewni site has a page at <http://www.moikrewni.pl/mapa/kompletny/budnick.html>. I have reproduced the map below at left. It shows 22 Polish citizens as of 2002 going by *Budnick*. Note that all but one (in Siedlce county) all lived in northwestern Poland, in areas long ruled by Germany. I suspect that spelling is a holdover due to German influence.

Compare that with **Budnik** (<http://www.moikrewni.pl/mapa/kompletny/budnick.html>), borne by 3,518 Polish citizens, all over the country but with the largest numbers in the counties of Bydgoszcz (201), Pila (173), Zlotów (165), Sokółka (146), Puck (124), and Gniezno (124). All of those counties are in western Poland, except for Sokółka, the red county on the northeastern border. This establishes the standard spelling of the name, and shows that it appears all over Poland but is most common in the northwest and west central parts of the country. I think we can say *Budnick* is just a rare Germanized form of *Budnik*.



Map showing the distribution of the surname **Budnick** as of 2002.



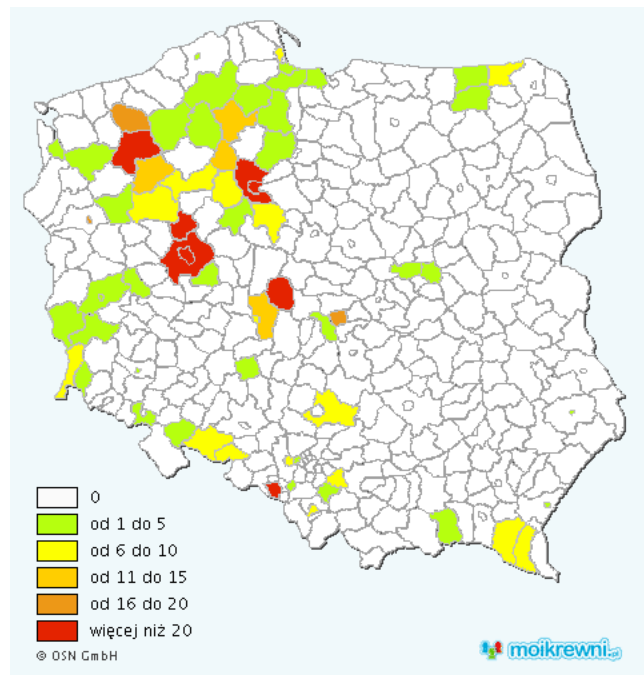
Map showing the distribution of the surname **Budnik** as of 2002.

Polish name expert Prof. Kazimierz Rymut mentions **Budnik** in his book *Nazwiska Polaków* [The Surnames of Poles]. He says it appears in Polish records as early as 1409 and comes from the noun *budnik*, “stallkeeper,” that is, a vendor who kept a little stall for selling goods at market. The basic root of the name is *buda*, a term for a small shed, booth, stand, stall, even a dog house. I suppose you might find the term *budnik* applied at times to almost anyone who had a shed or worked out of a shed, such as a road maintenance worker who kept tools in a shed by the road, or something like that. Still, Rymut indicates the name would have started in most cases as a reference to an ancestor who sold goods from a stall or stand at a market. Markets at fairs were the site of much of the trade that went on in Poland, and a person who was too poor to have an actual, permanent shop could always set up a stall and sell what he had—sort of like what people do at flea markets and Renaissance fairs in this country.

According to Rosa and Volker Kohlheim in *Duden Familiennamen*, the German name **Timme** developed from a short form of the ancient Germanic personal name *Thiedmar*, a variation of *Dietmar*, from Germanic roots meaning “people” and “fame.” The name probably meant originally “[may he be] renowned among the people,” or perhaps “[may he be] his people’s fame.” But *Timme* is just a nickname, with no independent meaning—much as “Ed” means nothing by itself in English, it’s just short for *Edmund* or *Edward*, names that did originally mean something when they first developed.

It is possible, however, that *Timme* can also be a Germanized phonetic spelling of Polish **Tyma**. Both sound the same, roughly “tim’-ah”; when you say that to a German and a Pole, the German writes it down as *Timme*, the Pole as *Tyma*. Rymut says *Tyma* shows up in Polish records as early as 1374, and it developed from a short form or nickname of *Tymoteusz*, the Polish form of “Timothy.” In other words, it’s a lot like our nickname “Tim,” and just indicates that an ancestor went by that nickname.

So the question of what the name means depends on whether it developed as a German or Polish name. Only research into the family history can settle that.



Map showing the distribution of the surname **Tyma** as of 2002.

The spelling *Timme* does not show up in the database used by the Moikrewni Web site. The spelling *Timma* did appear—it’s really just a slightly different phonetic rendering of the same name. There were only 19 Polish citizens who went by *Timma*: 12 in the county of Kościerzyna, 7 in the county of Bytów. So this form shows up only in northwestern Poland, at least these days. Of course, that data, and the absence of *Timme*, can be misleading. After World War II, millions of Germans fled Poland—some voluntarily, some not—and ended up resettling in East Germany. So if we had data from before 1939, it might paint a different picture.

The map at left shows the data from <http://www.moikrewni.pl/mapa/kompletny/tyma.html>, which shows 612 Polish citizens named **Tyma**, most of them living in western Poland—in other words, in areas long ruled by the Germans. The largest num-

bers were in and around the city of Poznań (61 in the city itself, 49 in the county around it). Other counties with significant numbers of Tymas were Drawsko Pomorskie (36), Wodzisław Śląski (29), the city of Bydgoszcz (28), Oborniki (27), Bydgoszcz (25), and Turek (24)—all in western Poland.

From analysis of the surname alone, we can't say for sure if *Timme* is the German name *Timme*, a nickname that developed from the Germanic given name *Dietmar*, or if it's a German phonetic spelling of Polish *Tyma*, a short form of *Tymoteusz* (Timothy). The only way to settle the matter is to trace the family history. If ancestors were Lutherans and went by first names such as *Hans* or *Johann* or *Gregor* or *Georg*, they were almost certainly ethnic Germans who settled in lands once ruled by Germany but now part of Poland. If they were Roman Catholics and went by first names such as *Jan* or *Grzegorz* or *Jerzy*, they were almost certainly ethnic Poles. Chances are good that successful genealogical research will uncover facts that will shed light on the origin of the name.