

Categories of Polish exonyms

Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names standardized so far over 7500 exonyms. There are in this set commonly known and used names, as well as names rarely used. In practice applied by some countries, the most important exonyms are treated in a special way, recommending their common use, while treating the remaining ones as additional, less important exonyms. In these countries gazetteers of more important exonyms are only published, whereas those less important are often not included.

The Commission plans to publish new gazetteer of Polish exonyms (previous one was published in 1994-96), therefore it was decided to prepare rules of categorizing exonyms due to their use.

Exonyms can be divided into several ways, taking into account various criteria. There are totally different divisions, considering onomastics (e.g. genesis of name) and geography (to what type of features belongs an exonym). The Commission decided to divide exonyms due to recommendation of its usage.

First, general division to contemporary and historical exonyms was done. So far, the Commission was not engaged in collection or standardization of historical exonyms, but perhaps it will undertake this task in future. In order to do it, it will be needed to determine, what does a term historical exonyms mean. It can be preliminarily assumed, that this group comprises exonyms, which are still used, but only in historical context – these names are related to objects, which no more exist or have the other name applied in Poland (e.g.. *Ziemia Van Diemena* [Eng. *Van Diemen's Land*] – presently *Tasmania*, *Konstantynopol* [Eng. *Constantinople*] – presently *Stambul* [Eng. *Istanbul*], *Jugosławia* [Eng. *Yugoslavia*] – non-existing country, *Druga Katarakta* [Eng. *The Second Cataract*] – it disappeared after flooding with waters of Lake Nasser).

Taking into account only contemporary exonyms it was decided to divide them into several groups related to their usage, and, what is more important, to their recommending by the Commission. From various possibilities of division non-wide division was selected – smaller number of categories causes, that it's more easy to classify particular exonyms and the division itself is more clear.

In the course of the works, which were done so far, the working project of division was prepared. Before preparation of new gazetteer of exonyms will start (most probably in 2008) final decision concerning acceptance of division and its final type will be undertaken.

In the working version of division three categories of exonyms were distinguished:

1. Recommended exonyms
2. Acceptable exonyms
3. Non-recommended exonyms

Category of recommended exonyms would cover all Polish names of more important geographical features – names often met in literature and media, names, which are learnt at schools. Both names of natural objects and anthropogenic objects would fall in this category. The category would comprise:

- names of continents;
- names of great parts of continents and large geographical regions (e.g. *Ameryka Środkowa* [Eng. *Middle America*]);
- names of oceans

– names of seas

– names of the most important gulfs and straits (e.g. *Zatoka Perska* [Eng. *Persian Gulf*], *Zatoka Meksykańska* [Eng. *Gulf of Mexico*], *Zatoka Genueńska* [Eng. *Gulf of Genoa*], *Cieśnina Gibraltarska* [Eng. *Strait of Gibraltar*], *Cieśnina Jukatańska* [Eng. *Yucatan Channel*]);

– names of the main geographical regions (e.g. *Melanezja* [Eng. *Melanesia*], *Sahel*, *Zakaukazie* [Eng. *Transcaucasia*]);

– names of major physiographic regions (e.g. *Andy* [Eng. *Andes*], *Sahara*, *Nizina Zachodniosyberyjska* [Eng. *West Siberian Plain*], *Apeniny* [Eng. *Apennine Mountains*], *Wyżyna Abisyńska* [Eng. *Ethiopian Highlands*], *Nizina Nadkaspjska* [Eng. *Caspian Depression*]);

– names of the main rivers, lakes and channels (e.g. *Amazonka* [Eng. *Amazon River*], *Sekwana* [Eng. *Seine*], *Jezioro Wiktorii* [Eng. *Lake Victoria*], *Jezioro Bodeńskie* [Eng. *Lake Constance*], *Kanał Panamski* [Eng. *Panama Canal*]);

– names of major islands, archipelagos and peninsulas (e.g. *Grenlandia* [Eng. *Greenland*], *Wyspa Świętej Heleny* [Eng. *Saint Helena Island*], *Archipelag Malajski* [Eng. *Malay Archipelago*], *Kuryle* [Eng. *Kuril Islands*], *Półwysep Indyjski* [Eng. *Indian Peninsula*], *Peloponez* [Eng. *Peloponnese*]);

– names of the most important mountains, passes and capes (e.g. *Mount Everest*, *Kilimandżaro* [Eng. *Kilimanjaro*], *Wielka Przełęcz Świętego Bernarda* [Eng. *Great Saint Bernard Pass*], *Przylądek Północny* [Eng. *North Cape*], *Przylądek Dobrej Nadziei* [Eng. *Cape of Good Hope*]);

– names of all states and dependent territories;

– names of major cities (e.g. *Meksyk* [Eng. *Mexico City*], *Kajenna* [Eng. *Cayenne*], *Nowy Jork* [Eng. *New York*]);

– names of the most known administrative units (e.g. *Katalonia* [Eng. *Catalonia*], *Bawaria* [Eng. *Bavaria*], *Nowa Południowa Walia* [Eng. *New South Wales*]);

– names of the most important undersea features (e.g. *Rów Mariański* [Eng. *Mariana Trench*], *Grzbiet Północnoatlantycki* [Eng. *North Atlantic Ridge*]);

– names of the main sea currents (e.g. *Prąd Zatokowy* [Eng. *Gulf Stream*], *Kuro Siwo* [Eng. *Japan Current*]);

– names of the most known other objects, including monuments and constructions (e.g. *Wodospad Wiktorii* [Eng. *Victoria Falls*], *Wielka Rafa Koralowa* [Eng. *Great Barrier Reef*], *Wielki Mur Chiński* [Eng. *Great Wall of China*], *Wieża Eiffla* [Eng. *Eiffel Tower*], *Piramida Cheopsa* [Eng. *Pyramid of Cheops*]).

In this category for instance any nature reserves, transportation network, economic regions, parts of localities, bays on lakes, islands and peninsulas on rivers and lakes, caves and variant names were not considered.

The category would comprise ca. 25% of all Polish exonyms, i.e. about 2000 names. The Commission would recommend common use of exonyms from this category, in particular in popular and popular-scientific publications, as well as those used for school teaching, while usage of endonyms should be limited to scientific, specialist and international publications. Because instructions of the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names are only recommendations (not norms), sub-category of obligatory exonyms was not separated.

Category of acceptable exonyms would comprise all the remaining exonyms, which were adopted and standardized by the Commission, including variant names of objects from first category. 75% of exonyms would be here, i.e. about 5500 names. Names belonging to

this category would be acceptable for using, but as names less known and popularized could be replaced in texts with endonyms.

Category of non-recommended exonyms would comprise names, which would be not recommended by the Commission in any publications. In this group would be names, which are no more used (e.g. *Tyflis* – correctly *Tbilisi*, *Piszkek* – correctly *Biszkek* [Eng. *Bishkek*]), names existing in literature sporadically (e.g. *Święta Łucja* for state Saint Lucia), erroneous and doubtful (e.g. *Górny Karabach* – correctly *Górski Karabach* [Eng. *Nagorno Karabakh*]), incorrect copies from other languages (e.g. *Zatoka Gabeska* – correctly *Mała Syrta* [Eng. *Gulf of Gabes*], *Myanmar* – correctly *Birma*), exonyms created *ad hoc* for publication (e.g. *Dolina Andory* instead of endonym *Valls d'Andorra*). The category would not cover historical exonyms. At present the Commission does not have the catalogue of such names.

Adoption of division of large gazetteer comprising standardized Polish exonyms will allow to prepare in future separate gazetteers of the most important exonyms, fulfilling UNGEGN recommendation.