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Exonyms

Polish names of foreign buildings and other urban objects

Submitted by Poland **

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Polish names of foreign buildings and other urban objects

At the end of 2013, the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography published the “Official List of Polish Geographical Names of the World” [“Urzędowy wykaz polskich nazw geograficznych świata”] (Fig. 1)¹. This 874-page publication was prepared by the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland. This is the second list comprising Polish exonyms from the whole world – the previous one, entitled “Polish geographical names of the world” [“Polskie nazwy geograficzne świata”], was issued in the years 1994-1996. Unlike the previous list, this one has, according to the Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration, the status of the official list.

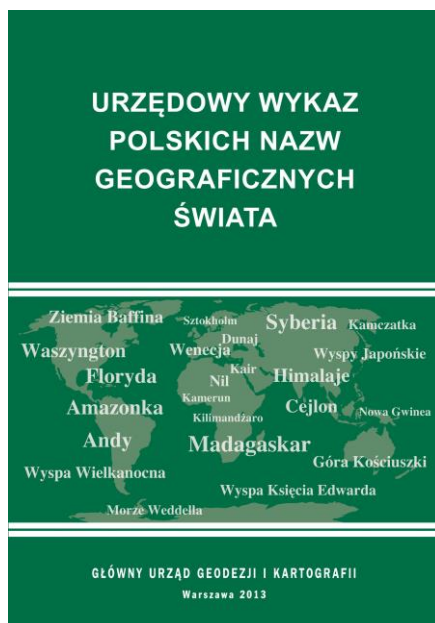


Fig. 1. The cover of the “Official List of Polish Geographical Names of the World”.

The list includes names of geographical features from all continents, as well as names of undersea features, however, the names of objects lying entirely in the Polish territory have been excluded. The list refers only to the features for which Polish geographical names are recommended, such as *Nowy Jork* for New York, *Mozambik* [Mozambique] for Moçambique, *Wyspy Japońskie* [Japanese Archipelago] for Nihon Rettō, or *Zatoka Wenecka* [Gulf of Venice] for Golfo di Venezia / Venecijski zaljev. Therefore, geographical features for which this kind of name either does not exist or are not recommended have not been contained, including names commonly used in Polish such as *Berlin*, *Oslo*, *Alaska*, *Jawa* or *Mali*, which – although well-established in the Polish language – are identical to the original names (which means that endonyms are used in Polish in these cases).

The list refers only to the features for which Polish geographical names (exonyms) are recommended. Therefore geographical features for which this kind of name either does not exist or are not recommended have not been included. The Polish names for 13,359 geographical features have been given in the list. Most of the features are included in the chapter with European countries – 9,646, whereas the smallest number of the features are listed in the chapter with countries from South America – 170. Due to the fact that the names of transboundary features have been repeated in the lists of individual countries, there is a total capacity of 14,975 name entities in the publication.

¹ The whole publication is available on the website of the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland: http://ksng.gugik.gov.pl/english/wpngs_en.php.

During the preparation of the list, the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland considered what types of objects should be included in it, and what types excluded – in other words: what types of objects are ‘geographical features’. The definitions of a ‘geographical feature’ are quite vague and do not allow for a precise determination of what is such feature, and what is not. For example, the definition given in the “Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names” states: “geographical feature: topographic feature on the surface of Earth”, where a “topographic feature: a portion of the surface of Earth or of any other planet or satellite that has recognizable identity”. Moreover, the “Glossary of Terms” states that geographic features can be natural (“natural feature: topographic feature not made or significantly modified by man. Examples: river (but not canal); forest (but not plantation)”) or anthropogenic (“man-made feature: topographic feature made, or significantly modified, by man. Examples: canal; road; populated place”). These definitions do not explicitly indicate, which types of objects that occur on the Earth can be classified as ‘geographic features’. Some of the features are unquestionable geographical objects, such as: rivers, mountains, seas, cities, states. However, for other types of objects doubts arise. Are such object, as for example: sea currents (e.g. *Prąd Zatokowy* [*Gulf Stream*]), areas of high or low atmospheric pressure (e.g. *Wyż Azorski* [*Azores High*], *Niż Islandzki* [*Icelandic Low*]), winds and other weather phenomena (e.g. *El Niño*) ‘geographic features’? Are all types of objects created by humans (such as buildings, streets, bridges, parks, monuments, communication stops, stadiums, etc.) ‘geographic features’?

Finally, 73 categories of geographic features were included in the “Official List of Polish Geographical Names of the World”, including 14 categories for submarine objects. Only a few buildings/structures were included in it: dams, roads (without streets), railways, tunnels (without urban tunnels), seaports, spaceports and historic fortifications (e.g. *wał Trajana* [*Trajan’s Wall*], *wał Hadriana* [*Hadrian’s Wall*], *Wielki Mur Chiński* [*Great Wall of China*]). It was only about 40 objects in total.

After a publication in 2013 of the “Official List of Polish Geographical Names of the World” the Commission decided to elaborate an addendum to it containing the names of buildings and other urban objects. The Commission recognized that the names of these types of objects – whether they could be classified as geographic objects or not – are often used in Polish publications. Therefore it is worth to standardize Polish names, at least for the most important of them. Preliminary principles on the list were developed in 2014, and works started in 2015.

In the case of buildings/structures, two issues are particularly problematic. Firstly, buildings/structures often do not have official, standardized names. They may have informal names as well as different variants of names. Sometimes buildings are known not under their proper names, but under a description (e.g. *katedra kolońska* [*Cologne Cathedral*]), sometimes it is difficult to decide whether we are dealing with a proper name of a building or with a description only. Secondly, in the case of buildings/structures, it is common to Polonize their names, especially if an original name may be easy translated into Polish. Hence the Polish names are used for a large number of churches, public buildings, monuments. There may be thousands of such Polish names used in publications (e.g. guidebooks). The Commission decided not to include all of them in the list, but only names for the most famous objects. In addition, there are cases where both an original name and a Polish name are used for a given object in different Polish publications (e.g. *Ponte Vecchio* and *most Złotników* [*Bridge of Goldsmiths*] in Florence, or *Wat Arun* and *świątynia Świtu* [*Temple of Dawn*] in Bangkok). In such cases, the Commission decides which of these two names is more frequently used, and whether it is necessary to standardize the Polish exonym.

In the list of Polish names of foreign buildings and other urban objects, the following categories of buildings/structures are included:

- streets
- places
- bridges
- tunnels

- railway stations
- airports
- temples, monasteries, places of worship
- cemeteries, necropolis
- mausoleums
- forts, fortresses, castles
- other historical buildings (e.g. palaces, towers, city gates, pyramids)
- other anthropogenic objects (e.g. city parks, monuments, battlegrounds)

Objects, that are currently served in a different function than the original one (e.g. *Hagia Sophia* is a museum now, not a church or a mosque), are included in a category according to its present association (mainly from the function that makes it known).

Some types of objects will be less likely to appear on the list than the other ones. For example, monuments are limited to the most famous only. At the same time there are excluded names of monuments, which names consist of the generic term (*monument, statue, column, etc.*) and a name of the person that monument is dedicated, e.g. *pomnik Adama Mickiewicza* [*Adam Mickiewicz Monument*] in Vilnius (Lithuanian: *Adomo Mickevičiaus paminklas*), *pomnik Świętego Wacława* [*Statue of Saint Wenceslas*] in Prague (Czech: *Pomník svatého Václava*), *kolumna Nelsona* in London (English: *Nelson's Column*) – if necessary, this type of names may be translated ad hoc. Names of sacred buildings named after a person (such as churches, mosques, temples, monasteries) are also limited – in practice, they may be translated into Polish without any problem. Therefore, only the names of the most important of these objects will be included in the list.

The names of institutions (such as museums, universities) are excluded from the list – however, names of buildings occupied by these institutions are included as long as these buildings have their own proper names and these names are well-known. Unseparated elements of larger buildings, such as *apartamenty Borgia* [*Borgia Apartments*; Italian: *Appartamento Borgia*] (which are rooms of the Apostolic Palace) or *gabinet Owalny* [*Oval Office*] (which is a part of the White House) are also excluded from the list.

In the case of complexes of buildings/structures, especially ruin complexes (such as *Forum Romanum* [*Roman Forum*] in Rome or *Akropol* [*Acropolis*] in Athens), Polish names may be found for most objects located in their area, also for those less significant objects. It is pointless to include names of all such objects in the list. Therefore for complexes of buildings/structures, only name of the most important (most famous, impressive) buildings in such an area will be considered in the list.

Some buildings have both a common name (mostly a short form) and official name (mostly a long form), such as *kościół Świętego Jana* [*Church of St Johns*] and *kościół Świętego Jana Chrzcziciela i Świętego Jana Apostoła i Ewangelisty* [*Church of St John the Baptist and St John the Apostle and Evangelist*] in Vilnius (Lithuanian: *Šv. Jonų bažnyčia* and *Šv. Jono Krikštytojo ir Šv. Jono apaštalo ir evangelisto bažnyčia*). The official names of buildings, given by their administrators, are often widely unknown and they also may change. Buildings are usually known under their popular, short names. Therefore, for these types of objects usually Polish short names will be listed in the publication, because they are more commonly used. On the other hand, Polish long names are only taken into account when such long name is also used in Polish publications.

All descriptive designations (descriptions) are omitted from the list, even if they are commonly used, e.g.: *katedra kolońska* [*Cologne Cathedral*; German: *Kölner Dom*] – the proper name is *Hohe Domkirche Sankt Petrus*; *opactwo westminsterskie* [English: *Westminster Abbey*] – the proper name is *Collegiate Church of St Peter at Westminster*; *katedra w Mediolanie* [*Milan Cathedral*; Italian: *Duomo di Milano*] – the proper name is *Basilica cattedrale metropolitana di Santa Maria Nascente*. From the linguistic point of view all of them are not proper names but descriptions. Also descriptive names are omitted from the list, such as *pałac Prezydencki* [*Presidential Palace*], *pałac Rządowy*

[*Government Palace*], *pałac Królewski* [*Royal Palace*], *stadion Olimpijski* [*Olympic Stadium*], *gmach Parlamentu* [*Parliament Building*]. Although sometimes the above mentioned names are proper names, they are identical to descriptions of these objects, and their translation into Polish, if needed, is not difficult – therefore there is no need to include such names in the list.

Moreover, Polish names that differ from endonyms only by translation of a generic term are excluded from the list – for example such names as: *katedra Notre-Dame* [*Notre-Dame Cathedral*] for *Cathédrale Notre-Dame*, *tunel San Bernardino* for *San Bernardino Tunnel / Galleria del San Bernardino*, *zamek Windsor* for *Windsor Castle*, *pałac Buckingham* for *Buckingham Palace*, *Bazylika Santa Maria Maggiore* [*Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore*] for *Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore*.

brama Brandenburska; Brandenburger Tor; 52°30'58,5"N, 13°22'39,3"E [*Berlin*]
Dolina Królów; Bibān al-Mulūk (*trl.*), Biban al-Muluk (*trb.*); Wādī al-Mulūk (*trl.*), Wadi al-Muluk (*trb.*); 25°44'26"N, 32°36'06"E [*część Teb Zachodnich*]
fort Świętego Elma; *malt.* Forti Sant'Iermu; *ang.* Fort Saint Elmo; 35°54'08"N, 14°31'08"E [*Valletta*]
forum Trajana; Foro di Traiano; 41°53'42"N, 12°29'07"E [*dawny rynek w Rzymie*]
grobowiec Akbara; *ang.* Tomb of Akbar the Great; *hindi* Akbar kā Makbarā (*trl.*), Akbar ka Makbara (*trb.*); 27°13'14"N, 77°57'02"E [*Agra*]
mauzoleum Pierwszego Cesarza; Qin Shihuang Ling; 34°22'54"N, 109°15'14"E [*Xi'an*]
most Rosyjski; Russkij most (*trl.*), Russkij most (*trb.*); 43°03'49"N, 131°54'27"E [*Władywostok*]
Ogrody Watykańskie; *wł.* Giardini Vaticani; 41°54'11"N, 12°27'00"E
plac Charlesa de Gaulle'a; place Charles-de-Gaulle; 48°52'26"N, 2°17'42"E [*Paryż; hist.: plac Gwiazdy*]
sobór Kazański; *ofic. sobór Kazańskiej Ikony Matki Bożej*; Kazanskij sobor (*trl.*), Kazanskij sobor (*trb.*); *ofic. sobor Kazanskoj ikony Bożiej Materi na Krasnoj ploščadi* (*trl.*), sobor Kazanskoj ikony Bożyjej Materi na Krasnoj ploščadi (*trb.*); 55°45'19,6"N, 37°37'09,2"E [*Moskwa*]
świątynia Nefrytowego Buddy; Yufu Chan Si; 31°14'35,7"N, 121°26'25,6"E [*Szanghaj*]
zamek Michajłowski; **zamek Inżynierjnyj**; Mihajlovskij zamok (*trl.*), Michajłowski zamok (*trb.*); *Inženernyj zamok* (*trl.*), Inženiernyj zamok (*trb.*); 59°56'25"N, 30°20'16"E [*Petersburg*]

Fig. 2. Examples of entry arrangement.

Entry arrangement for individual names in the list of buildings and other urban features is the same as for names in the “Official List of Polish Geographical Names of the World”. Entries related to particular geographic features present a Polish exonym on the first place, written in bold letters. Then, the original name (endonym) is given in the official language, or original names, where more than one official language is applicable or the feature has official names in more than one language. For names in languages using a non-Roman script, a Romanized form is given, established according to the rules the Commission recommends for use in Poland for the geographical names from the respective language. In such cases, first the transliteration is specified, then the transcription of the original name, or in other words, the phonetic conversion of the name into Polish, usually in letters of the Polish alphabet.

The names are followed by the geographical coordinates of the feature. If necessary, the additional information and observations are provided at the end of an entry, for example additional characteristics of a feature or its localization, selected historical names of a feature, etc. (Fig. 2).

The Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names Outside the Republic of Poland plans that the list of Polish names of foreign buildings and other urban objects will be published in 2018. As the Commission has estimated they will be around 1200-1400 names in the publication. By the end of May 2017, the Commission standardized 650 names from Western Europe, Russia, Arab states, East Asia and South Asia. Preliminary lists have also been prepared for objects from the Americas, Australia and Oceania, the rest of Asia and remaining countries of Africa. The completed list will be available on the Commission’s website.