

PROBLEMS OF THE REGIONAL NOMENCLATURE OF THE POLISH-CZECH BORDERLAND

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Abstract

Similarities and dissimilarities in the number and origin of regional names in the physical-geographical division of the Polish-Czech borderlands are discussed in this contribution. The main aim is to introduce a new regional nomenclature created with the recognition of equality and sovereignty, as well as border changes concerning trans-boundary regionalization at the level of macro-regions and meso-regions. The final results are maps that show the cross-border solutions for the problems discussed, including the English nomenclature that should facilitate international research into this field of research. The subject matter of the study refers to the regional research of the Polish-Slovak borderland carried out by Jarosław Balon and Miłosz Jodłowski from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

Shrnutí

Problémy regionální nomenklatury v polsko-českém pohraničí

Článek se zabývá současnými podobnostmi a rozdíly v počtu a původu regionálních názvů fyzicko-geografického členění v polsko-českém pohraničí. Cílem je představit novou regionální nomenklaturu vytvořenou s vědomím rovnosti a sурchovanosti zemí i změn hranic týkajících se přeshraniční regionalizace na úrovni makro- a mezo-regionů. Výsledkem jsou mapy, které představují návrh nové nomenklatury včetně návrhu jeho překladu do angličtiny, což by usnadnilo mezinárodní výzkum v tomto oboru. Tato práce vychází z obdobného regionálního výzkumu v polsko-slovenském pohraničí, kterou zpracovali Jarosław Balon a Miłosz Jodłowski z Jagellonské university v Krakově.

Key words: regional names, physical-geographical division, Polish-Czech borderland

1. Introduction

The place names (toponyms) co-create the physical and cultural landscape. They express the morphological and cultural forms that exist in the description of the landscape. Language is a basic tool that describes the history of a place that determines its identity (Chylińska, Kosmala, 2010). This paper addresses the issues of the diverse toponymy of the Polish-Czech borderland. The Polish-Czech border within the Lower Silesian Province is about 500 kilometers long and its overall route from the north-west to the south-east was determined by varied historic and natural factors. The historic factors were decisive in terms of dividing the homogeneous morphological regions into separate parts differently named, e.g. Pogórze Izerskie and Frýdlantská pahorkatina Hilly Land. The accession of Poland and the Czech Republic to the Schengen zone on 21 December 2007 had a significant impact on the transboundary co-operation. The new reality poses numerous questions that are concerned with the directions of the borderland's development and its function. It also requires research into the environmental, social and economic phenomena that started to occur in the borderland. One of problems in the Polish-Czech relations is the necessity of reaching an agreement concerning the borderland regionalization and its nomenclature. This research presents similarities and discrepancies in the quantity and origin of the

physical-geographical nomenclature of the Polish-Czech borderland at the level of macro- and meso-regions. It attempts to introduce new toponyms in accordance with the rules of cohesion, equality and territorial sovereignty. The authors present a proposal for synthetic maps of regional nomenclature.

2. Historical conditions that influenced the existing regional nomenclature of the borderland

The southern geographical and historical border of Silesia, including Lower Silesia, dates back to the 10th century, when the Bishopric of Wrocław was established in the year 1000. The south-western border of Silesia was a line along the massif of the Jizerské hory Mts. (Polish: Góry Izerskie) and the Krkonoše Mts. (Polish: Karkonosze), going through the massif of the Kamienne Mts. (Polish: Góry Kamienne) to the edge of the Sudetic Marginal Fault in the area of the Sowie Mts. (Polish: Góry Sowie). On the line of the Sudetic Marginal Fault, the border went along the edge of the Sowie Mountains, Bardzkie Mountains (Polish: Góry Bardzkie), Złote Mountains (Polish: Góry Złote), Rychlebskie Mountains (Polish: Góry Rychlebskie) to the Jeseník Massif (Czech: Hrubý Jeseník) in the south-eastern direction (Fig. 1)

As far as the north-western part of Silesia is concerned, the Jizerské hory Mts. and the Krkonoše Mts. have constituted a stable border zone since the 10th century. However, the borderland from Lubawka to Prudnik, including the area of Kłodzko Land had undergone numerous political changes up to the 15th century (Staffa, 2005). At the end of the 10th century, the Kłodzko Land was the property of the Polish house of Slavniki (Polish: Sławnikowice). In 995, it came into the ownership of the Czech Přemyslid dynasty (Czech: Přemyslovci) and was included into the Bohemian Crown. Due to the efforts of Casimir I the Restorer at the beginning of the 11th century, the Kłodzko Land came back to the Polish possession. In the year 1093, Břetislav II rejoined the Kłodzko Land to the Czech state and finally under the terms of the Treaty of Kłodzko from 1137 it belonged to the Diocese of Prague (Praha), thereby to the Kingdom of Bohemia. In the period of the Czech rule in Lower Silesia and the Kłodzko Land, other regulations of the borders took place. In 1477, Náchod and Homole were acquired to the County of Kłodzko, which was reduced by the lands near Bronów in 1491. For five subsequent centuries the Polish-Czech borderland was owned in turn by the Bohemian Crown from 1335 to 1526, the Austrian house of Habsburg from 1526 to 1740, and then from 1740 to 1918 it was ruled by Prussia and Germany (Czapliński et al., 2002).



Fig. 1: Prehistoric and early Piast period to the year 1138 (Authors' elaboration based on the historical map from *Atlas Dolny Śląsk, Śląsk Opolski, Eko-graf, Wrocław 2008*)

The problem of the ethnic identity of inhabitants living in the Polish-Czech borderland was not apparent until the 13th century. Apart from the Jewish nation, the population of Silesia was homogeneous in terms of language-wise and it was constituted mainly by the autochthonous Poles (Wójcik, 2006). This situation has been changing since the 1220s when the Walloons, Germans and Flemish started to settle down in the area on the Magdeburg Rights. During the rules of Henry I the Bearded (1165–1238), a new settlement law related to both the Polish and German population, eliminating the previous divisions that mainly consisted in isolating the Polish nation. Since the times of Bolesław II the Rogatka (1220–1278), the immigrated German knighthood dominated the manors where the German culture, customs and language were introduced. The turn of the 13th and 14th centuries was a period of dominating German language in urban administration, trade, crafts, judiciary and trade guilds (Wójcik, 2006). The period between the 14th and 16th centuries was characterized by the occurrence of two national groups in Silesia. The area to the west of the Oder River (today's area of Sudeten Mts. and Sudeten Foreland) was inhabited by the German population with a minority of the Polish people. In the area to the east of the river, Polish nationals outnumbered the Germans (Goliński, 2006; Mrozowicz, 2006).

The existence of the politically and ethnically homogeneous formation of today's Polish Sudeten came to end after World War I and II. Since the end of World War II, almost the whole area of historic Silesia, including Lower Silesia, Opole Silesia and Upper Silesia has belonged to Poland. The border delimitation however aggravated a conflict between Poland and Czechoslovakia, already existing after World War I, which became especially apparent in the 1940s and 1950s. This problem concerned the area of Zaolzie, Kłodzko Land (near Kudowa Zdrój and Międzylesie), and the regions of Głubczyce, Racibórz, Wałbrzych, Jelenia Góra and the areas of Żytawa, Głucholazy and Koźle. Under pressure from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Poland and Czechoslovakia signed a treaty of friendship and solution of the border conflict on the 10 March 1947 in Warsaw. Nevertheless, it was not until the 13 April 1958 when the agreement concerning the border delimitation was signed, which definitely ended the arrangements relating to the borderline in the Lower Silesia section. This situation gave rise to new conditions which were decisive in the development of the settlement in the area, and which determined its current shape, including the place names. The process of Polonization was multidimensional and among other things comprised the changes of the regional nomenclature. As early as in 1945, Aleksander Zawadzki banned usage of the German language with a simultaneous order to remove traces of the German culture (Czapliński et al., 2002). The expansion of the Polish borders by regained territories in 1945 led to another interesting phenomenon, namely Repolonization. Ideological politics of the People's Republic of Poland aimed at demonstrating the justice of history, which was to be expressed by the fact that the Piast lands were Polish again. The politics of Repolonization led to the struggle against the presence of the German language on monuments, printed matters, place names, geographical objects and to the ban on using the German language. The urgent need of this period was to introduce the new Polish nomenclature of places, topographic points and geographical elements. Most existing names did not have any equivalents in either Polish or Slavic meaning. New names started to appear spontaneously thanks to the creativity of the first settlers or authorities of the Polish Army (Kamiński et al., 2006).

The phenomenon of resettling the Sudeten region after World War II did not concern its Czech part largely. After the displacement of the Sudeten Germans, the area remained to be inhabited by Czech settlers, whose lineage dates back to the 9th century when the Slavic-Czech tribes were united by the Přemyslid dynasty. Until the beginning of the 16th century, the political and ethnic stability of the Bohemian Kingdom guaranteed giving and evolving the Czech names. The stability was destroyed, however, when the Habsburg dynasty ascended the Czech throne. A religious and political conflict began, which led to the Germanization of the Czech lands that became part of the Austrian Empire and part of Austria-Hungary in 1867. After the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1918, an independent state – Czechoslovakia was established. This entailed the revival of the Czech language in toponyms. Czech names of sites and orographical units were officially proclaimed

after 1918. Austrian names in the German language were either translated or adjusted to the requirements of the Czech language and among others comprise the following examples: Spindelmühle – Špindlerův Mlýn, Karlsbrunn – Karlova Studánka, Hohes Rad – Vysoké Kolo, Altvater – Praděd, Friedland – Frýdlant, Braunau – Broumov, Adersbach – Adršpach. All of the above-mentioned factors of the complex history of Silesia resulted in a situation where the neighbouring geographical objects on both sides of the border frequently have completely divergent names (Potocki, 2008; Rozenkiewicz, Łach, 2010).

3. The existing and proposed regional division and nomenclature of the Polish-Czech borderland

The commonly used physical-geographical divisions of the borderland at the level of macro- and meso-regions by Kondracki (1998) and Demek et al. (1987), for Polish and Czech regionalization respectively, are not coherent and show significant differences relating to borders, nomenclature and ranks of the regions (Fig. 2).

The research has shown numerous problems with the physical-geographical interpretation of regions considering their ranks, the spelling of their names in Polish and Czech and their origin. Problems of incoherent regional names in the borderland area of the Sudeten were discussed by Walczak (1968) and Kondracki (1994). The issues pertaining to the nomenclature, particularly in the area of the Central Sudeten, were also addressed by Potocki (2000, 2008). Similar problems of inconsistency in the regional nomenclature regarding the Polish-Slovak borderland were argued by Balon and Jodłowski (2004). The subject of our paper relates to the regional research undertaken by the above-mentioned authors from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków.



Fig. 2: Meso-regions of the Polish-Czech borderland (according to Kondracki, 1998; Demek et al., 1987); Symbols at the names of regions refer to symbols used in Tab. 1. (Adapted after Łach et al., 2010)

The Polish-Czech borderland zone in the border section of the Lower Silesian Province is located in the province of the Bohemian Massif (Czech: Česká vysočina), and the sub-province of the Sudeten with the Sudeten Foreland (Czech: Krkonošsko-jesenická soustava). There are substantial differences in the nomenclature of the same regional unit even at the level of sub-provinces. According to Potocki (2000), the Czechs stopped using the name Sudeten because of its negative political connotation in the 1980s. They replaced it with an artificially created name Krkonošsko-jesenická soustava, which consists of the names of two highest mountain ranges of the Sudeten – the Krkonoše Mountains (the Giant Mts.) and Hrubý Jeseník (Mts.). In a further regional division of the same area Demek et al. (1987) distinguished four macro-regions (Czech: soustava), three of which are transboundary and are characterized by different nomenclatures on both sides of the border. The concerned macro-regions comprise the Western Sudeten (Czech: Krkonošská soustava), the Central Sudeten (Czech: Orlická soustava), the Eastern Sudeten (Czech: Jesenická soustava) and one region located entirely on the Polish side of the border – the Western Sudeten Foreland. For these macro-regions, the Czech names are similar to the Polish ones and stem from the highest mountain range within each unit.

On the taxonomic level of macro-regions, the borders of regions on the territory of Poland and the Czech Republic are convergent and coherent. Taking into consideration the common macro-regional nomenclature, the authors suggest that the Czech Sudeten should be given similar names to their Polish equivalents – the Western Sudeten (Polish: Sudety Zachodnie, Czech: Západní Sudety), the Central Sudeten (Polish: Sudety Środkowe, Czech: Střední Sudety) and the Eastern Sudeten (Polish: Sudety Wschodnie, Czech: Východní Sudety).

The situation is different on the level of meso-regions where complications stem from a different number and different origin of the names. Within the Polish-Czech borderland, in the Lower Silesian Province there are 14 Polish meso-regions distinguished by Kondracki (1998) and 11 Czech meso-regions in the classification by Demek et al. (1987) – see Tab. 1.

In the research on the nomenclature, the number of existing regional names was reduced respecting the principles of equality and sovereignty. With this end in view, the following rules of creating the new names of the regions were used (adapted after Balon and Jodłowski, 2004):

- If the region has two different physical-geographical names on both sides of the border, then only one, common, compound name should be accepted. In accordance with the rule of sovereignty, the newly created compound name should consist of the names used in Poland and in the Czech Republic, e.g. Frydlandzko-Izerskie Foothills/ Jizersko-frýdlantská Foothills (Polish: Pogórze Frydlandzko-Izerskie, Czech: Jizersko-frýdlantská pahorkatina). Frequently, the compound names comprise names of local towns, rivers and cultural regions what might exclude creating a homogeneous name in terms of the origin;
- If the border regions have similar physical-geographical names, then the local names should be left unchanged. However, while describing the region we should refer to it as to a whole, including both cross-border parts. For instance, Karkonosze and Krkonoše (the Giant Mountains) should be used for Polish and Czech publications respectively but with reference to the area as a whole. The same solution is proposed for example for the Izerskie Mountains/Jizerske Mountains and the Orlickie Mountains/Orlicke Mountains;
- If the region has two similar names but one of them represents the physical-geographical features of the region better, it should be left as the valid one, e.g. Masyw Śnieżnika + Králický Sněžník = Masyw Śnieżnika (English: the Snieznik Massif); and
- If the region has a name only on one side of the border and it does not exist on the other, the existing name should be left unchanged, e.g. Lubawska Gate (Polish: Brama Lubawska) or the Bystrzyckie Mountains (Polish: Góry Bystrzyckie).

As a result of applying the above-mentioned rules, a new map of the physical-geographical division of the Sudeten was made. It includes the following newly-created or reduced regional names in the Polish and Czech language (Fig. 3):

- Polish: Pogórze Frydlandzko-Izerskie, Czech: Jizersko-frýdlantská pahorkatina;
- Polish: Góry Stołowo-Broumowskie, Czech: Stolové a Broumovské hory;
- Polish: Góry Kamiennie-Jaworowe, Czech: Kamenné a Javoří hory;
- Polish: Obniżenie Ścinawsko-Broumowskie, Czech: Scinavská a Broumovská pánev;
- Polish: Góry Rychlebsko-Złote, Czech: Rychlebské a Zlaté hory; and
- Polish: Masyw Śnieżnika, Czech: Masiv Snežníku.

Another new element was the introduction of the name of the Polish meso-region which was reduced from Obniżenie Żytawsko-Zgorzeleckie to Obniżenie Żytawskie (English: Żytawska Basin).

The reduction and unification of the nomenclature of the physical-geographical regions is not an easy process as both countries have distinct orthography and spelling rules. It is recommended that in the further research the names are consulted with the Czech and German experts in this field. The simplification of the Polish-Czech borderland's nomenclature would facilitate the process of academic research not only for regional but also for European significance. Furthermore, the implementation of the proposed changes would also allow the usage of the unambiguous English nomenclature, where the overall number of the regions was reduced from 25 to 16 (Fig. 4).

Macro-regions Poland	Meso-regions Poland	Macro-regions The Czech Republic (podsoustava/oblast)	Meso-regions The Czech Republic (celek)
A – Pogórze Zachodniosudeckie (332.2)	1. Obniżenie Żytawsko-Zgorzeleckie (332.25)	E – Krkonošská (IVA)	I – Žitavská pánev (IVA-4)
	2. Pogórze Izerskie (332.26)		II – Frýdlantská pahorkatina (IVA-5)
B – Sudety Zachodnie (332.3)	3. Góry Izerskie (332.34)		III – Jizerské hory (IVA-6)
	4. Karkonosze (332.37)		IV – Krkonoše (IVA-7)
C – Sudety Środkowe (332.4-5)	5. Brama Lubawska (332.41)	F – Orlická (IVB)	V – Broumovská vrchovina (IVB-1)
	6. Góry Kamiennie (332.43)		
	7. Obniżenie Ścinawki (332.47)		VI – Podorlická pahorkatina (IVB-3)
	8. Góry Stołowe (332.48)		
	9. Pogórze Orlickie (332.51)		VII – Orlické hory (IVB-2)
	10. Góry Orlickie (332.52)		
	11. Góry Bystrzyckie (332.53)		
D – Sudety Wschodnie (332.6)	12. Kotlina Kłodzka (332.54)	G – Jesenická (IVC)	VIII – Kladská kotlina (IVB-4)
	13. Masyw Śnieżnika (332.62)		IX – Králický Sněžník (IVC-4)
	14. Góry Złote (332.61)		X – Rychlebské hory (IVC-5)
			XI – Hanušovická vrchovina (IVC-3)
<i>Code 332.x in division by J. Kondracki 1998</i>	<i>Code 332.xy x in division by J. Kondracki 1998</i>	<i>Code IVx in division by J. Demek et al. 1987</i>	<i>Code IVx-y in division by J. Demek et al. 1987</i>

Tab. 1: The division and nomenclature of the macro-regions and meso-regions of the Polish-Czech borderland (Adapted after Łach et al., 2010)

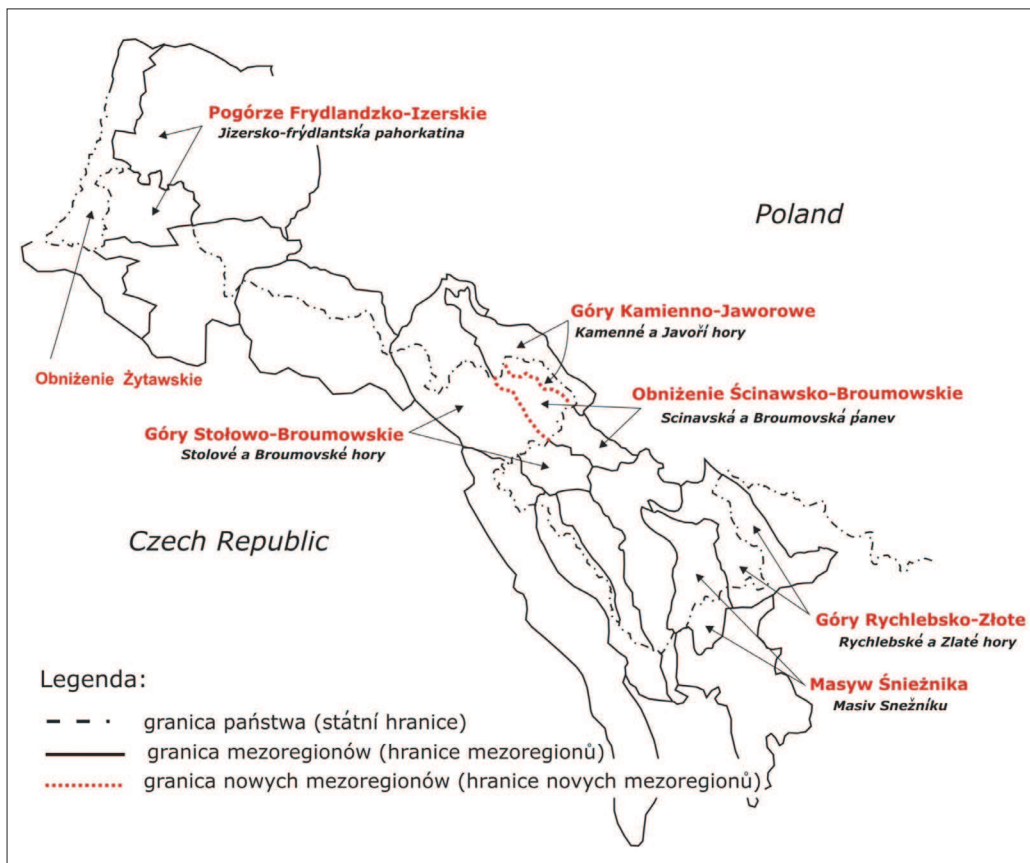


Fig. 3: Proposal for the new nomenclature of the physical-geographical division of the Sudeten (Adapted after Łach et al., 2010)

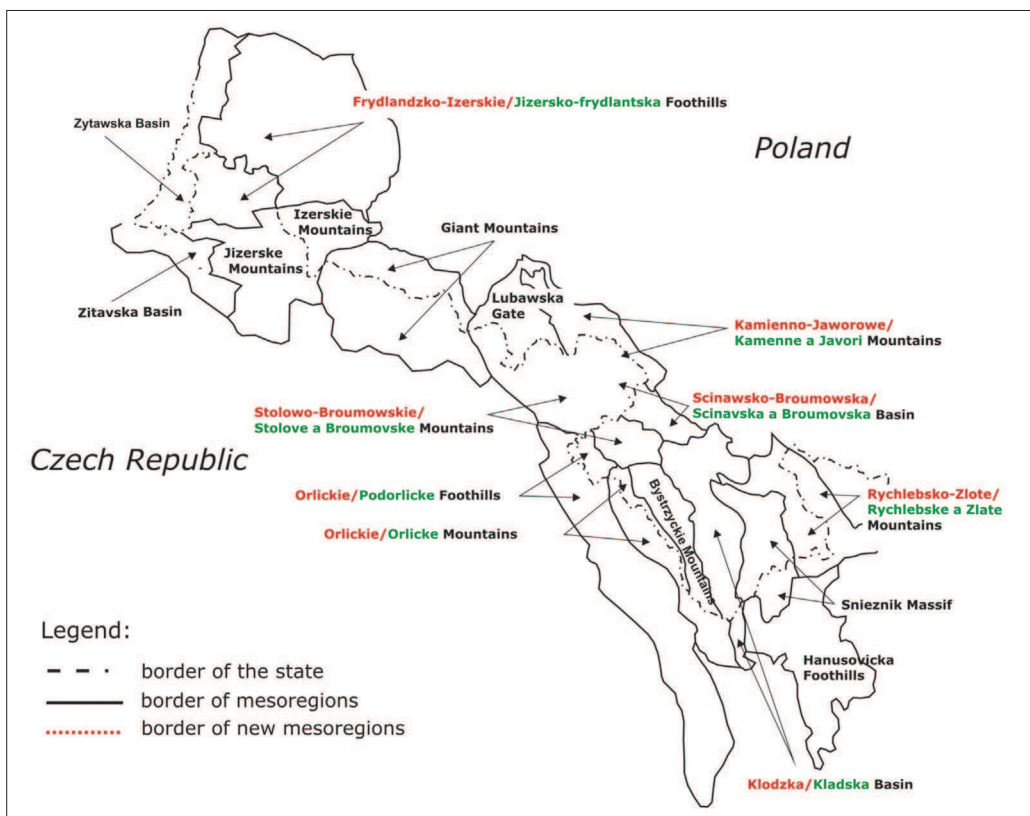


Fig. 4: Proposal for the English nomenclature of the physical-geographical regions of the Sudeten within the Polish-Czech borderland (Adapted after Łach et al., 2010) Summary

Summary

The political and ethnic changes of many centuries determined the current picture of the Polish-Czech borderland, which still remains the area of numerous social and economic actions that facilitate the co-existence and co-operation of its peoples. The historical-political changes of the 20th century resulted in the border issues for the Czech Republic and Poland again in this area. Resulting from the complex history, the regional division of the borderland is far from being geographically or linguistically homogeneous. In case of both Polish and Czech borderlands, the recovered physical-geographical areas were given new names. However, the German nomenclature had a significantly greater impact on creating the Czech toponyms, which were either directly translated from the German language or their semantic form resembles the previous one. The existence of two names of different meaning in one morphologically homogeneous region brings numerous problems in the interpretation of its geographical environment. By the virtue of the fact that the number of the physical-geographical regions of the Sudeten borderland is unequal on both sides of the border, the number of toponyms also differs. However, all the place names consistently refer to morphological terrain forms. This demonstrable proposal for the physical-geographical nomenclature of the Polish-Czech borderland, despite all efforts, still might cause controversy from the content-related or methodological perspective and requires linguistic expertise. Nevertheless, it has to be emphasized that an important element of this research was the rule of sovereignty of local names. The new regional names, where applicable, correspond to elements of the local, national and international languages. Maps of the new physical-geographical division presented in this paper can be used as a basis for further regional agreements in trans-boundary co-operation.

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