

● On **4 November 2011**, the National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation coins commemorating Ferdynand Ossendowski, with the following face values:

10 zł struck in proof finish in silver,

2 zł struck in standard finish, in Nordic Gold.

The National Bank of Poland

holds the exclusive right to issue the currency
of the Republic of Poland.

In addition to **coins and notes for general circulation**,
the NBP issues **collector coins and notes**.

Issuing collector items is an occasion to commemorate
important historic figures and anniversaries, as well
as to develop the interest of the public in Polish culture,
science and tradition.

Since 1996, the NBP has also been issuing **occasional 2 złoty**
coins, struck in **Nordic Gold**, for general circulation.

All coins and notes issued
by the NBP are legal tender in Poland.

COINS ISSUED IN 2011 COINS ISSUED IN 2011

Since 1997 the NBP has issued the
“Polish Travellers and Explorers” coin series.
The “Ferdynand Ossendowski” theme
is the tenth in the series.

Information on the issue schedule can be found at the
www.nbp.pl/money
website.

Collector coins issued by the National Bank of Poland
are sold in the Kolekcjoner service (Internet auction/Online shop)
at the following website:

www.kolekcjoner.nbp.pl

 **KOLEKCJONER**

and at the NBP regional branches.

The coins were struck at the Mint of Poland in Warsaw.
Edited and printed: NBP Printing Office

NBP

National Bank of Poland

c o i n s



POLISH TRAVELLERS AND EXPLORERS

Ferdynand Antoni
Ossendowski
(1876-1945)



The Polish Travellers and Explorers: Ferdynand Antoni Ossendowski (1876-1945)

● Ferdynand Ossendowski was born near Vitebsk, situated in the area that had constituted the remote eastern reaches of pre-partition Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He pursued his education in the zone under the Russian administration, and then continued his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris. He became one of the best worldwide known Poles in the 20th century. Ossendowski was a colourful character surrounded by legend and several fragments of his biography remain mysterious to this day attracting interest of modern authors (especially Witold S. Michałowski). He was first of all a traveller and explorer of remote regions of the world, and also a travel author, widely considered in the inter-war period as one of the leading writers of the genre. Many of his travel memoirs won international acclaim and were translated into foreign languages, e.g. *The Shadow of the Gloomy East* (1923), *Beasts, Men and Gods* (1923), *From President to Prison* (1925). In a number of countries also his other works, representing different genres, became bestsellers – among them the biography of Lenin (1930) (banned in communist countries and triggering the hostility of communist authorities towards the author in post-war Poland, manifested in a consistent policy of erasing his legacy from the memory of the living), his fiction books for children and the youth, like *The Life Story of a Little Monkey: A Diary of the Chimpanzee Ket* (1929), and the novels *Female Eagle* (1925) and *Desert Falcon* (1928). At the end of the inter-war period, Ossendowski became the most

frequently translated living Polish writer (among Polish authors in general, second only to Sienkiewicz). His scientific works on geography and chemistry as well as travel books were translated into 20 languages and had around 150 editions worldwide.

● His skilfully crafted documentary and fiction books drew from extensive travel on which Ossendowski embarked after his studies in Petersburg at the end of the 19th century. Places which he got to know from personal experience included remote regions of the Russian empire: the Altai Mountains, the Caucasus, the Baikal lake with its environs and the Dniester Liman. Later on, he travelled across Siberia and the Russian Far East. During the Russian Civil War, he explored Manchuria and Mongolia from where he went to the USA via Japan. Having returned to Poland in 1922, he continued his scientific and literary journeys: several times to Western Europe, to Northern Africa (1923), to Western Africa (1925–26), and to the Middle East (1932–33).

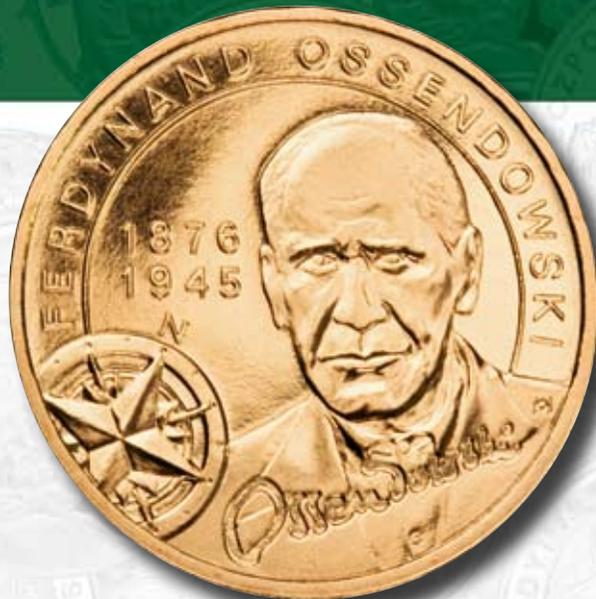
● Ossendowski conducted research (at the Central Technical Laboratory in Harbin, the Technical Institute of the Tomsk University and for the Russian Geographic Society). He also lectured at the University of Technology in Omsk and at Warsaw universities (the Polish Free University, the Higher War School, the Warsaw School of Economics, the School of Political Sciences and the Higher School of Journalism). He was equally active in the social and political domains. His revolutionary activity in Harbin in 1905

earned him a sentence of one and a half years of heavy prison. In 1919–1920, he served as an advisor in the counter-revolutionary army of admiral Aleksandr Kolchak, and then as an advisor to baron Roman von Ungern-Sternberg, the commander of the White Guard who in 1921 declared himself the khan of Mongolia. In Poland, Ossendowski worked as a consultant at the Ministry of Military Affairs and the Ministry of Industry and Trade. He became Deputy Chairman of the Polish Tourist Club and the President of the Writers and Journalists' Association. He was also an active member of the international pacifist organization called All Peoples' Association. During the German occupation of Poland he was engaged in underground activities as a member of the National Party.

● This avid traveller, explorer and writer was both versatile and creative. In the dictionary of contemporary Polish writers compiled under the auspices of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the entry dedicated to Ossendowski lists over 90 books of his authorship. He was a master of popular literature, and in his books he often resorted to the sensational and the exotic. Nevertheless, this did not prevent the Polish Academy of Literature from awarding him a Golden Laurel in 1936 for achievements and merits in the field of travel literature.

Professor Krzysztof Dybczak, Doctorus Habilitatus

COINS ISSUED IN 2011 COINS ISSUED IN 2011



FACE VALUE **10** ZŁ

metal **Ag 925/1000** ■ finish **proof** ■ diameter **32.00 mm**
weight **14.14 g** ■ mintage (volume) **50,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: At the top, a semicircular inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA. Below, an image of the Eagle established as the emblem of the Republic of Poland. In the centre, stylised images of two vintage cars. Under the images, the facsimile signature of Ferdynand Ossendowski, and below an inscription: 10 ZŁ. On the left-hand side, a stylised fragment of a windrose. At the bottom, on the right-hand side, semicircularly, the notation of the year of issue: 2011. Under the Eagle, on the right-hand side, the Mint's mark: M/W.

REVERSE: A stylised image of Ferdynand Ossendowski, against the background of a silhouette contour and a stylised fragment of a globe with a marked network of meridians and parallels. On the right-hand side, an inscription: 1876/1945. Below, stylised images of books. At the top, a semicircular inscription: FERDYNAND OSSENDOWSKI.

Coin designer: **DOMINIKA KARPIŃSKA-KOPIEC**



FACE VALUE **2** ZŁ

metal **CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy** ■ finish **standard** ■ diameter **27.00 mm**
weight **8.15 g** ■ mintage (volume) **900,000 pcs**

OBVERSE: An image of the Eagle established as the emblem of the Republic of Poland. On the sides of the eagle, the notation of the year of issue: 20-11; below the Eagle, an inscription: ZŁ 2 ZŁ. Along the rim, an inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA (Republic of Poland), preceded and followed by six pearls. The Mint's mark: M/W, under the Eagle, on the right-hand side.

REVERSE: A stylised image of the bust of Ferdynand Ossendowski. On the left-hand side, an inscription: 1876/1945. Below, a stylised fragment of a windrose. At the bottom, the facsimile signature of Ferdynand Ossendowski. At the top, a semicircular inscription: FERDYNAND OSSENDOWSKI.

ON THE EDGE: The inscription: NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted by 180 degrees, separated by stars.

Obverse designer: **EWA TYC-KARPIŃSKA**
Reverse designer: **DOMINIKA KARPIŃSKA-KOPIEC**