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REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION
IN THEIR REGIONS AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE
IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE
THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE STANDARDIZATION
OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Progress report on the standardization and treatment
of geographical names in Finland, 1977-1982

Paper presented by Finland

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Collection of names

In Finland, the Onomastic Division and the Swedish Language Division of the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages are responsible for the collection of geographical names in the field, as well as for preserving collections of names in archives. The Research Centre grants 50 to 55 scholarships annually for the collection of names in the field. Fieldworkers are linguistically trained. It obtains additional information about names by compiling forms appearing on old documents, particularly those dating from the 16th century, from sources in the National Archives. The purpose of these collections of geographical names is to serve scientific research as well as to deal with the everyday problems which arise in connection with names. Of these, the correction of names on maps, the standardization of names, and general problems requiring the opinion or advice of onomastic experts might be mentioned.

a) Finnish names. During the period 1977 - 1981 the field studying and collecting of geographical names was continued by the Onomastic Division of the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages. About 227,000 new cards were added to the toponymy collections. In the Finnish toponymy archives' files were in the beginning of 1982 approximately 2,245,000 cards. Each card contains the following information: 1) the name written in standard Finnish, 2) the dialect form of the name and information on its declension, 3) the location of the place and its co-ordinates on the basic map (1:20,000), 4) an explanation of the nature of the place, i.e. farm, lake, wood, meadow; often expanded to give a more precise characterization of the name and place, 5) the district and date of collection and the fieldworker's name.

Field collection is still underway; it has been estimated that approximately 10 % of the country's Finnish place names are yet to be collected. It is hoped that this work will be concluded during the current decade.

During the period from 1977 to 1981 the collection of names culled from old documents increased by 180,000 cards. These contain the names of persons and places which appear in 16th century documents. There are altogether 455,000 cards in the collection devoted to old documents, and work on them is continuing.

b) Swedish names. During the period 1977 - 1981 a total of ca. 25,000 new cards were collected by the Swedish Language Division of the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages in the Swedish language areas of Finland. At the beginning of 1982 the Swedish toponymy collections contained about 220,000 cards in all. It has been estimated that approximately 93 % of existing Swedish names in Finland have been collected. The collection of the Swedish names in Finland is expected to be completed in three or four years.

c) Lappish (Sami) names. During the period 1977 - 1981 about 800 new cards were added to the Lappish toponymy collections of the Onomastic Division of the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages. The Lappish collections contain about 8,400 cards. The entire area where Lappish is spoken has served as a source of names, but in some districts an insufficiently systematic procedure was followed when collecting them. The task of collection will be continued as circumstances permit. Work has progressed only with difficulty because of the small number of speakers of Lappish and a lack of field-workers competent in the Lappish language.

Standardization and treatment of names

The Onomastic Division and the Swedish Language Division of the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages function as the organs responsible for official matters connected with names. During the years 1977 - 1981 they provided official reports concerning approximately 2,700 geographical names in Finnish, and 560 geographical names in Swedish. Additionally, they checked the names of a total of 1,100 sheets of the basic map, a total of about 308,000 names.

The basic map, which is compiled and published by the National Board of Survey, was completed at the end of 1977. The map contains 3,712 sheets, and its scale is 1:20,000. It contains approximately 750,000 geographical names which the cartographers recorded in the field. The accuracy of these names has been checked by the Onomastic Division and the Swedish Language Division. The map is constantly being updated and it is completely revised every 10 to 15 years, with some parts of it being revised even more frequently. When this map is being revised, the names appearing on it are also checked through the collaboration of the National Board of Survey, the Onomastic Division and the Swedish Language Division of the Research Centre for Domestic Languages. In this manner the names appearing on the

basic map continually represent the current inventory of normalized geographical names in Finland. The basic map provides the framework from which the names appearing on other maps are selected. These include road and general maps in scale 1:200,000, 1:250,000, and 1:400,000, as well as nautical charts drawn up in different scales.

Treatment of names in bilingual areas

Finland has two official languages: Finnish, spoken by 4,465,000, and Swedish, spoken by 300,000. Lappish (or Sami), with approximately 2,000 speakers in the three northernmost parishes of the country, does not enjoy official status, but a considerable amount of attention is now focused on the care and preservation of the language as well as of Lappish place names.

In bilingual areas the names in both languages are indicated on road markers and street signs, on maps etc. The name used by the local majority is given first. When the linguistic proportions prevailing in a community change the order of the names is changed. If the place has no name in the other language which is officially accepted or generally used by the local population, the cartographers or editors do not attempt to make one up for the map or any other publication by translating or using some other means. The same holds true for the Finnish-Lappish area. For information concerning the right to present proposals for names see Administrative structure of national names authorities p. 5.

Administrative structure of national names authorities

In Finland authority over place names is divided. In accordance with a desire expressed by Parliament in 1957 when state and local officials make decisions concerning names they must take the opinion of experts in the field of onomastics into consideration. Since 1976 matters of this type have been entrusted to the Onomastic Division and the Swedish Language Division of the Research Centre for Domestic Languages. They are responsible for making general recommendations and drawing up guidelines concerning proper names and their use, as well as for providing reports concerning new names to be taken into official use and official proposals for changes in names. Additionally, they are responsible for checking and correcting the names appearing in new maps compiled by the National Board of Survey.

The power to make decisions concerning various administrative names has been designated to the official body responsible for the administrative sphere in question. In this manner the Council of State makes decisions concerning the names of municipalities/parishes, the National Board of Survey those concerning the names of villages, the Ministry of the Interior those concerning the names of the parts of a municipality/parish which are included in its general plan, that is to say, of districts, streets, etc., on the basis of proposals for names made by the local administration, the National Board of Post and Telecommunications those concerning the names of places providing postal and telephone service, the National Railway Board those concerning the names of places served by railway, the National Board of Aviation those concerning the names of airports, and the National Board of Roads and Waterways those concerning the names of bridges, crossroads etc.

The inhabitants of a locality, the local administration, as well as the administrative body responsible for each sector all have the right to present proposals concerning new names which are required, as well as the changing or correction of already existing ones, to those bodies with the power to make decisions. The plans for naming streets, parks etc. in new areas are usually proposed by the parish committee on names, by the local board of culture or construction, or by some other organ or official who has been assigned this responsibility in the parish. Practice varies because there is a considerable difference in the need for names of planned areas from parish to parish.

Toponymic guidelines

With respect to the normalization, orthography, and inflection of geographical names in Finnish the following prescriptive publications exist:

- Terho Itkonen, Nimestäjän opas, Helsinki 1961, 67 p. [Guidelines for the Name Collector.]
- Viljo Nissilä, Paikannimistömmen huolto ja suojeleminen, Helsinki 1965, 117 p. [The Maintenance and Protection of our Geographical Names.]
- Kielikello. Kielenhuollon tiedotuslehti 8. Helsinki 1976, 30 s. [Informational journal for Language Maintenance.]

The manuscript Toponymic Guidelines for Cartography - Finland (1981) has been made in accordance with the plan proposed by UNGEGN.

Gazetteers, lists of exonyms, and other publications

There is no official Finnish gazetteer. Gazetteers named in the reports submitted by Finland to previous UN conferences on geographical names (E/CONF. 61/L.47 London and E/CONF. 69/L.40 Athens) are still available. The following gazetteers appeared after 1977:

- Fennia. Suuri Suomi-kartasto. Helsinki 1979, 224 p. ISBN 951-35-1955-4. [The Atlas of Finland 1:250,000 and the index of 9,000 place names.] The classification and symbols used in the index were devised especially with international use in mind.
- Jouko Vesikansa, Ulkomaiden paikannimet. Porvoo 1980, 187 p. ISBN 951-0-07429-2. [Toponyms in foreign countries.] The index contains approximately 3,000 toponyms of foreign origin and exonyms used in Finnish with guidelines for the pronunciation and inflection.
- Martti Kahla, Neuvostoliiton paikannimet. Helsinki 1982, 203 s. ISSN 0355-5437. [The toponyms of the Soviet Union.] - A joint publication of the Institute for Cultural Relations between Finland and the Soviet Union and the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic languages; this work contains a selection of about 6,000 toponyms in the Soviet Union. It contains information concerning their orthography, transliteration, and accentuation.

The Swedish Division of the Research Centre for Domestic Languages is currently preparing a new edition of Svenska ortnamn i Finland med finska motsvarigheter. Third edition 1963, Helsingfors. [Swedish geographical names in Finland with Finnish equivalents.] The list of exonyms used in Finnish which was published in Terra the journal of the Finnish Geographical Society, in 1969 (81:2), is being revised. The revised version will probably be completed in a year.

List of country names

The bulletin Maiden nimet ja kansallisuuksien nimitykset, printed in Denmark 1979, 48 p. (ISBN 91-7260-277-5) contents country names and names of the nationalities in Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish. The list has been published on the initiative of Language Boards of the Nordic countries.

Writing systems

a) The new Lappish orthography.

In 1978 the Nordic Sami Council decided that from July 1, 1979 the Northern Lappish (Northern Sami) dialect spoken in Finland, Sweden, and Norway would be written in the same manner. Up until that time a different orthography was in use in each country. Finland has abided by this decision. Nonetheless, maps including names written in accordance with the old orthography have not been taken out of use, but rather the new orthography is beginning to make its appearance in Finnish maps as the basic map is revised for the area of the country where Lappish is spoken. As of now the Lappish names appearing in the 22 sheets of the map (1:20,000) for Enontekiö as well as the map for checking the Finnish-Swedish border have been written in the new orthography. The Toponymic guidelines for Cartography - Finland includes a brief presentation of the new orthography.

b) Russian

The Research Centre for Domestic Languages has submitted its recommendations for romanization of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet when writing Finnish. It was published in Kielikello 10/1977 (ISSN 0355-2675) and it includes two romanizations: a simple "general" romanization which has long been in use in the Finnish press, in literature, and in the travel industry, etc., and a more exact romanization which is identical with that proposed by ISO (ISO/R9-1968 (E)) and which also is in relatively wide use in scientific publications, in scientific libraries, etc.

The Institute for Cultural Relations between Finland and the Soviet Union, and the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages have also submitted their recommendations for a system for writing Finnish names in Russian with Cyrillic letters. The system was published in the same issue of Kielikello (10/1977). The Soviet organ Glavnoe Upravlenie Geodezii i Kartografii pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR has also approved this proposal as a system to be used officially when writing Finnish names according to the Russian Cyrillic system.

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c) Chinese

The Pinyin system came into general use from the beginning of 1979 as the official system to be used when writing Chinese names. There are about ten typonyms in use, spelled in accordance with the old system, and these may be regarded as exonyms.

International co-operation

Finland organized in autumn 1977 the Nordic symposium dealing with the protection and maintenance of names, as well as with the planning of names for new urban areas. The papers presented at the symposium were published in Swedish along with the discussions under the title *Ortnamnsvård och ortnamnsplanering. Norna-rapporter 13*. Uppsala 1978, 213 p. (ISSN 0346-6728). In particular, discussions concerning the taking into use of new names for countries have been carried on together with the other Nordic countries, either by letter or at meetings of the Language Boards of the Nordic countries.

The addresses of the institutes responsible for the treatment and standardization of geographical names are:

Onomastic Division of the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages, Liisankatu 16 A 2, 00170 Helsinki 17, Finland

Swedish Language Division of the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages, Fabiansg. 7 B, 00130 Helsingfors 13

National Board of Survey, PL 84, 00521 Helsinki 52

The Map Service of the National Board of Survey, Etelä-Esplanadi 10, 00130 Helsinki 13.

SUMMARY

During the period from 1977 to 1981 the collection of geographical names in the field resulted in the recording of 227,000 Finnish and 800 Lappish geographical names for the Onomastic Division of the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages, and of 25,000 Swedish geographical names for the Swedish Language Division. It has been estimated that of all the names in use in Finland, approx. 7 - 10 % have not yet been recorded. It is hoped that the task of recording them can be brought to conclusion during the course of this decade.

The Onomastic Division and the Swedish Division of the Finnish Research Centre for Domestic Languages function as the official organs in Finland responsible for the treatment and standardization of proper nouns. During the years 1977 - 1981 they submitted reports concerning almost 3,300 geographical names in addition to checking the names appearing on 1,1000 sheets of the basic map, that is to say 308,000 names. The 3,712 sheets of the basic map (1:20,000), which was completed in 1977 are revised at intervals of 10 to 15 years; when these are being revised the names appearing on them are checked so that they always represent names in accordance with current standards. The names appearing on other maps are based on those of the basic map.

In the case of bilingual areas efforts are made to represent place names used in both languages in maps and other public contexts. These names must, however, be genuine and actually in use. Cartographers and other publishers neither translate nor create names.

The report mentions the most important publications in Finnish providing guidelines for the normalization, orthography, and inflection of geographical names, as well as gazetteers published in Finnish.

The Nordic Sami Council has decided that from the first of July, 1979 the same orthography would be used in Finland, Sweden, and Norway. Efforts have been made in Finland to abide by this decision in public contexts.

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For the transliteration of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet the so-called national system has been recommended for the Finnish Language when writing Russian names in the press, in literature, in the travel industry etc., the international system proposed for use in scientific libraries and publications, etc. Both systems have a long tradition of use. The proposal for transliterating Finnish names into Russian Cyrillic letters has been approved in Finland and in the Soviet Union. Nordic cooperation in the field of the treatment of names has continued along established lines. At the end of the report some addresses are given which might be useful to those interested in the treatment of geographical names in Finland.
