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**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names
2019 session
New York, 29 April to 3 May 2019
Item 14 of the provisional agenda *
Exonyms (Working Group on Exonyms)**

Survey of exonym use

Submitted by Austria**

Summary

The full report serves to highlight volume 7 of the toponymic book series *Name & Place*, which contains a selection of reports on exonym use in several countries as well as general considerations on exonym use. The reports were presented at the 19th meeting of the Working Group on Exonyms, which was established by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and was held in Prague from 6 to 8 April 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to elaborate a list of globally common characteristics and criteria for exonym use. The primary purposes of the list are to identify the circumstances in which exonyms are currently used and to serve as a guideline for exonym use in the future.

* GEGN.2/2019/1

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A Survey of Exonym Use

Proceedings of the 19th UNGEGN Working Group on Exonym Meeting,
Prague [Praha], 6-8 April 2018

The Working Group (WG) on Exonyms of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) was established by resolution VIII/4 of the Eighth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in Berlin in the summer of 2002. So the papers in this present volume of *Name & Place*, marking the 19th Meeting of the Working Group in Prague in 2017, represent a cross-section of the knowledge acquired after fifteen years of collective activities, in which the Working Group has developed – and hopefully enhanced – its understanding and appreciation of the subject of exonyms.

It has become clear in those fifteen years that several sub-themes within the overall topic of exonyms recur repeatedly: usage, standardization, definitions, and criteria. All of these sub-themes have been examined in the various volumes of this book series, and in this particular volume we return to the subject of exonym usage, through papers which reveal to the reader a survey of the circumstances under which exonyms are deployed in individual countries today.

This volume begins with two papers providing a most useful summary of the very topic outlined in the first paragraph above: how the discussions on exonyms have evolved in the fifteen years since the inception of the UNGEGN Working Group, and how our approach to and understanding of the topic have developed over that period. A short etymological discussion of some of the most significant toponyms to be found in Czechia, and how their spellings have evolved over time completes this introductory section.

The two principal sections of this volume consist of thirteen papers exploring the use of exonyms in individual countries – classified into European and East Asian and African situations. We read of Norway's enduring preference for the use of endonyms (with some inevitable exceptions), and the use of and standardization criteria for exonyms in Catalonia and Croatia. Exonym standardization is also the theme of a paper from Czechia, while in a second paper from Hungary exonym use within that country is explored in detail using the results from a questionnaire on the use of place names. Austria and Latvia also provide papers outlining the use of exonyms within their respective countries. A paper from Slovenia provides an interesting variation of emphasis, by exploring the use of colour in Slovenian exonyms. And in another variation on the main exonym theme, a paper from the United Kingdom discusses the relationship between toponymy and the definite article in English-language text and speech.

East Asia is represented by a very valuable contribution relating to the endonym/exonym situation in Taiwan. From the Republic of Korea we learn of another fascinating survey, this time exploring the use of exonyms among college students. A paper from Japan describes exonym use in this country. An African situation is highlighted by throwing a glance on the dramatic but sadly under-appreciated decline of toponymic awareness in Sudan.

Based on their findings during this and earlier meetings, the WG developed in a general debate the list of globally common characteristics and criteria for exonym use as presented below. These criteria are primarily conceived as noting the circumstances in which exonyms are currently used, but they may also serve as a guideline for exonym use in future.

Globally common characteristics and criteria of exonym use

(1) Language-related criteria

Exonyms tend to be used,

- in receiver language environments;
- if the endonym is composed of a specific and a semantically transparent generic word.

(2) Feature-related criteria

Exonyms tend to be used, if the geographical feature marked by the name

- has close and traditional relations to the community of the receiver language;
- is historically or currently important (for the receiver community);
- extends across language boundaries.

Bibliographical citation:

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Peter Jordan / Irena Švehlová / Paul Woodman (eds.)

A Survey of Exonym Use

**Proceedings of the 19th UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting,
Prague [Praha], 6-8 April 2017**

Editorial preface to the series

Preface to this book

Contents

Section 1: Introduction and local namescape

JORDAN, Peter (Austria): The endonym/exonym divide – Questions resolved and still open at the 15th anniversary of the UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms

POKOLY, Béla (Hungary): Exonyms and endonyms; national names and foreign names

HARVALÍK, Milan (Czechia): What's behind the name? Praha, Vltava and other Czech toponyms

Section 2: Exonym use in Europe

HELLELAND, Botolv (Norway): Norway: still going strong on the endonymy line

CEKULA, Zane (Latvia): The use of exonyms in Latvia

BOHÁČ, Pavel (Czechia): List of Czech exonyms

BÖLCSKEI, Andrea; GERCSÁK, Gábor; MIKESY, Gábor (Hungary): Use of exonyms in present-day Hungary

JORDAN, Peter (Austria): Exonym use in Austria

KLADNIK, Drago; GERŠIČ, Matjaž (Slovenia): Colours expressed in Slovenian exonyms

CRLJENKO, Ivana (Croatia): Comments on the proposed list of criteria for the use of exonyms – a Croatian perspective

BATLLE, Maria del Mar (Spain): Handling exonyms in Catalan: general use and criteria for standardization

WOODMAN, Paul (United Kingdom): Toponyms and the definite article in English text and speech

Section 3: Exonym use in East Asia and Africa

CHOO, Sungjae (Republic of Korea): Use of exonyms in Korea: results of a survey

WATANABE, Kohei (Japan): Current use of exonyms in Japan

LIŠČÁK, Vladimír (Czechia): Endonyms and exonyms in Taiwan

BELL, Herman (United Kingdom): The dynamics of exonyms and an accusation of 'cultural suicide'

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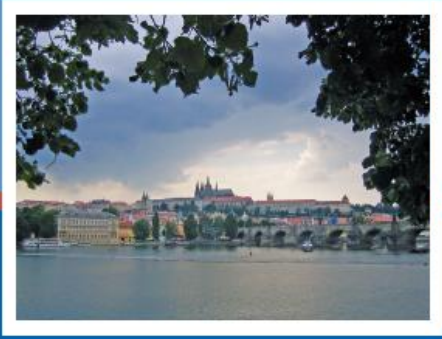
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7

Peter Jordan, Irena Švehlová &
Paul Woodman (eds.)

A Survey of Exonym Use

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