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EXONYMS

CATEGORIES AND DEGREE OF USE OF EXONYMS

Exonyms in cartography

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## EXONYMS IN CARTOGRAPHY

What is an exonym?

The definition which is relevant to the cartographer, a definition narrower than in general linguistics insofar as for technical reasons it is based on official usage only, was laid down by the United Nations in 1972 as follows: "Exonym - A geographical name used in a certain language for a geographical entity situated outside the area where that language has official status and differing in its form from the name used in the official language or languages of the area where the geographical entity is situated".<sup>1</sup> By analogy the term endonym, coined in 1975, is used for the local official names.<sup>2</sup> How much an exonym deviates from the endonym is irrelevant to its definition as an exonym:

Marseilles (English) for Marseille (French) is just as much an exonym as Ragusa (Italian) for Dubrovnik (Serbo-Croat). Often exonym and endonym, like translations, have the same meaning as Fiume (Italian) and Rijeka (Serbo-Croat), both names meaning river. In many cases the exonyms of a third language are taken over without change. Thus Prague (English) is derived from identically written Prague (French). In this process adaptations are possible as in Copenhagen (English) from Kopenhagen (German) (Danish endonym: København). Frequently names are taken over unchanged from classical or modern Latin: Tagus (English) for Tajo/Tejo (Spanish/Portuguese) or Styria (English) for Steiermark (German). Even if only the generic element is translated, an exonym results: Îles Lipari (French) from Isole Lipari (Italian). The names of the oceans and of international waters used in non-contiguous language areas cannot be regarded as exonyms, nor can the names of the continents. In connection with these name categories it is hardly possible to speak of official languages in the sense of the definition quoted above.

How far is the use of exonyms justified at all?

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Any language community has the right to use its own linguistic resources in naming the world around it, a right that cannot be taken away or restricted by any outside authority. Exonyms are part of the vocabulary of the language using them and are just as subject to historical change as the respective language itself.

What should the cartographer do about exonyms?

In the preparation of maps the cartographer has to follow rules different from those prevailing in other fields of linguistic communication. To replace well-established exonyms by endonyms is a thing generally avoided in coherent speech since the speaker will aim at an uninterrupted flow of linguistic expression wherever possible. In cartography it is often the other way round: the few English exonyms for geographical features on Polish territory are out of place in a map edited in English and destroy the linguistic unity of the map. This does not mean that exonyms have to be banned from all maps. The use or non-use of exonyms in cartography largely depends on the type, the scale and the purpose of a map. Certain guidelines are offered in the pertinent resolutions of the United Nations<sup>3</sup>, which recommend the following: In maps and charts intended for international use endonyms should be employed as far as possible. Since, however, exonyms are losing ground even in national use their reduction should also be considered in publications intended for national use only. In those cases where exonyms are retained endonyms should be shown in addition as far as possible.

These recommendations of the United Nations largely conform with cartographic practice. Maps edited or sponsored by international bodies such as the International Map of the World on the Millionth Scale, edited under the auspices of the United Nations, or the World Map - Karta mira 1:2,500,000, edited by the CMEA countries, generally use endonyms only. The same is largely true of maps and atlases which, though edited by a single publisher, are intended for international use. This would include among others so-called international atlases such as the Atlante Internazionale del Touring Club Italiano<sup>4</sup> or Stieler - Grand Atlas de géographie moderne<sup>5</sup> as well as many road maps for motorists and air service schedules distributed by airlines. The "international" atlases, however, in their

continental maps often pay tribute to the exonyms of the editing language to avoid both overcrowding and a confusing change of languages at least where important and conspicuous categories of names such as names of states, national capitals and major mountain ranges are involved.

Let us now consider the products of "national cartography", i.e. maps and atlases that are intended for use in the editors' own language area. Here exonyms are firmly established, although nowadays obsolescent exonyms are increasingly being abandoned in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations. Similarly the practice of adding the respective endonyms is gradually gaining ground. The degree to which exonyms are used and endonyms added depends on two factors: first of all, on the type and purpose of the publication - thus atlases for the lower grades of secondary school generally make wider use of exonyms than university atlases and the map sections of more demanding encyclopedias - and, secondly, on the name categories involved.

Let us look at the use of exonyms in respect of some important name categories. (1) For the names of independent countries only exonyms are used as a rule, e.g. Hungary without the addition of Magyarország. (2) For the names of constituent states, provinces and other larger administrative units exonyms are also generally preferred. Where the endonym is given preference, the exonym is usually not added at all. Thus in Italian atlases for domestic use, Carinzia is given without the addition of Kärnten, but South Dakota is either Dakota del Sud or South Dakota. For the names of large islands, mountain ranges and more prominent physiogeographical entities exonyms alone usually predominate, e.g., Sicily (English) without Sicilia, Pyrenäen (German) without Pirineos/Pyrénées, Bassin de Vienne (French) without Wiener Becken. (3) Rivers are generally designated by exonyms only, e.g., Rhine (English) without the additions Rein/Rhein/Rhin/Rijn and Euphrate (French) without Firat/Al Furat. (4) As far as inhabited place names are concerned practice varies greatly. Quite apart from the option of completely dispensing with exonyms, a solution not practicable in "national cartography", the cartographer has three possibilities which are illustrated here by

the example of English exonyms for Italian cities: (a) Milan, Genoa, Florence; (b) Milan (Milano), Genoa (Genova), Florence (Firenze); (c) Milano (Milan), Genova (Genoa), Firenze (Florence). It must be pointed out first of all that especially where inhabited place names are concerned different language communities react in different ways. Whereas, for example, English-language (notably American) school atlases largely try to forgo the use of exonyms, French atlases show a strong tendency to retain established exonyms. Apart from these differences between various languages, however, it is becoming evident that type (a) is losing ground and is now more or less confined to atlases for the lower grades of secondary school, whereas type (b) is generally gaining ground. The more rarely used type (c) is found above all in atlases for use in the higher grades of secondary school, in university atlases and larger encyclopedias. Type (a) has the disadvantage that in many cases only an expert can tell whether a certain name is an endonym or an exonym. Only a person well versed in the geography of ancient and modern Italy will be aware that the English exonym Padua, an unchanged adoption from Latin, stands for Padova (Italian). From the viewpoint of a strictly systematic approach type (c) would be preferable both to type (b) and to type (a) since the endonyms are always in the same position; with type (b) they move from first to second place where exonyms exist and with type (a) they are lost altogether.

A special type of exonyms are those that result from a translation of the generic element. Here the specific element may either remain unchanged or may have to undergo a change in form. This is the case wherever the donor and receiver languages are subject to different morphological rules. Here lies the source of many mistakes which, however, are rarely so well-established in general usage that they cannot be corrected. The generic elements, which are usually translated into the editing language to make them readily understandable, include above all words with meanings such as mountains, plain, plateau, peninsula, cape, gulf, bay, bight, strait, lake, desert, etc. A few examples of exonyms of this type are given below. It must be pointed out in this connection that the extension of the generic element by a preposition and the modification of the

specific element may take place in the donor and/or receiver languages. The following types are encountered as a result: (1) Van gölü/Lake Van, (2) Hudson Bay/Baia di Hudson, (3) Golfo de Valencia/Gulf of Valencia, (4) Alexander Archipelago/arkhipelag Aleksandra, (5) proliv Longa/Long Strait, (6) lake Michigan/Michiganské jezero, (7) Verkhoyanskiy khrebet/Verkhoyansk Range. In these examples Longa and Aleksandra are the Russian genitives of the personal names Long and Aleksander, Verkhoyanskiy and Michiganské the Russian, respectively Czech adjectives of Verkhoyansk (place) and Michigan. For the cartographer, who may want to coin such exonyms to help lower-grade secondary school students to understand their atlases better, the main difficulty arises from the necessity, inherent in the different structures of donor and receiver languages, of establishing the basic form of modified specific elements. Without an elementary knowledge of Russian and a certain familiarity with the history of the exploration of Siberia a cartographer will not be able to convert khrebet Cherskogo into Cherskiy Range.

Exonyms for physiogeographical entities which belong to the technical rather than the general vocabulary should preferably stay as close as possible to the endonymic original provided a new exonymic coinage is considered necessary at all. Thus, unlike *Australische Kordillere* (German) or *Ostaustralisches Randgebirge* (German) *Gran Catena Divisoria* (Italian) is a good translation of Great Dividing Range.

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- 2 Kronsteiner, O.: Mehrnamigkeit in Österreich. Österreichische Namenforschung (Wien), 1975, 2, pp. 5-17.
- 3 Second U.N. Conference, *loco citato*, vol. I, pp. 15, 16.
- 4 Ed. by Touring Club Italiano, 8th ed., reprint, Milano 1977.
- 5 Ed. by Hermann Haack, 10th ed. (international ed.), Gotha 1936.

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Summary:

In this paper the terms "exonym" and "endonym" are defined. Further, it is stated that any language community has the right to use its own linguistic resources in naming the world around it, a right that cannot be taken away or restricted by any outside authority.

In discussing the treatment of exonyms in cartography, a distinction has to be made between national and international cartography. Whereas in international cartography exonyms are practically excluded, in national cartography they still are used. The paper shows that a different treatment is to be observed with different kinds of names categories, but that in general exonyms are gradually loosing ground in national usage.

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