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The content of this module is based on teaching materials by Ferjan Ormeling. These teaching materials are made available in the "[documents](#)" section.

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When reading through the following pages, you will come across some uncommon terms. These terms are hyperlinked to the UNGEGN [Glossary of Terminology](#) (pdf). Behind each term a number (#) is given that corresponds to the numbering applied in this glossary, e.g. [toponymy](#) (#344).

For exercises and documents (and literature) on this topic see respectively the "[Exercises](#)" and/or the "[Documents](#)" section of this module.

The complete module can be downloaded [here](#).

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INTRODUCTION

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Aachen is an excellent example of those geographical names that have different forms in different languages.

aachen

AQUAE GRANI	AKWIZGRANIE
AIX-LA-CHAPELLE	CÁCHY
AKEN	AAXEH[E]
AQUISGRÁN	AAXEN
AQUISGRANA	JAHENG

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1. WHAT ARE EXONYMS?

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Geographical names used in a certain language for

**geographical entities situated outside the area
where that language has official status**

and

**differing in its form from the name used in the official language of the area where the
geographical entity is situated. (2nd UNCSGN1972).**

What kind of objects generates exonyms?

- Objects in areas close to linguistic borders,
- Important objects further from linguistic border (names of countries, capitals, large rivers).

Have a look at [Glossary of Terminology \(pdf\)](#), too!

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2. EXONYMS VS ENDONYMS

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Endonyms are geographical names that belong to

a language and relate to objects within the area where that language has an official status.

(endonyms = local official names)

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3. EXAMPLES OF EXONYMS

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Wien (German)	Venezia (Italian)	Norge (Norwegian)
Vienna (Eng)	Venice (Eng)	Norway (Eng)
Vienne (Fr)	Venise (Fr)	Norvège (Fr)
Bécs (Hung)	Velence (Hung)	Norvégia (Hung)
Viena (Span)	Venecia (Span)	Noruega (Span)
Wenen (Dutch)	Venetië (Dutch)	Noorwegen (Dutch)
Wiedeń (Polish)	Wenecja (Polish)	Norwegia (Polish)
Wien (German)	Venedig (German)	Norwegen (German)

Red line = endonyms

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4. EXONYMS AND CONVERSION - A) NUMBER 1

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**Are names converted from one alphabet to another also exonyms?**

Not if this conversion has been effectuated according to an UN-recognised system.

ЧЕЛЯБИНСК -Čeljabinsk

(converted according to the UN-recognised system, GOST 83)
is no exonym,

but the following ones are:

Chelyabinsk (Eng)**Tscheljabinsk (Ger)****Tcheliabinsk (Fr)**

There is one more example:

Aigaion Pelagos is the Greek name of **Aegean Sea** (in Roman transcription).

Aigaion Pelagos is an **endonym**,

Aegean Sea is an **exonym**.

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4. EXONYMS AND CONVERSION - B) NUMBER 2

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Are names, where diacritical marks are lacking, exonyms? **No**

Are names, where the articles are lacking, to be considered as exonyms? **No**

Are names, where case endings are lacking or added, exonyms? **No**

Are names, whose generic parts have been translated, to be considered as exonyms? **Not sure.**

For instance *Aigaion Pelagos* → *Aigaion Sea*

Are exonyms a problem? Definitely!

Both nationally and internationally.

Why?

Because of the confusion they bring.


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5. NATIONAL STANDARD

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A national standard of exonyms is needed in every language. Look at some examples of exonyms taken from Dutch atlases, before exonyms were standardized there:

Bosatlas ('76)	Oosthoekatlas ('78)	Meulenhoff atlas ('78)
Haleb (Aleppo)	Aleppo	Halab (Aleppo)
Bur Said (Port Said)	Port Said	Boer Sa'ïd (Port Said)
El Suweis (Suez)	Suez	As Soewees (Suez)
Dimachq (Damascus)	Damascus	Dimasjq (Damascus)
Mina Hassan Tani (Kenitra)	Mina Hassan Tani (Kenitra)	Mina Hassan Tani (Kenitra)
Tarabulus (Tripoli)	Tripoli	Tarabloes (Tripoli)
Khartum	Khartoum/Khartoem	Al Chartoem
El Djezair (Algiers)	Alger/Algiers	Al Djazaair (Algiers)

Blue line = source

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6. EXAMPLES - A) NUMBER 1

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Some English exonyms:

- Cologne
- Bavaria
- Brittany
- Berne
- Milan
- Burgundy
- The Hague
- Brussels
- Munich
- Copenhagen

Find them on the map!



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6. EXAMPLES - B) NUMBER 2

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Some French exonyms:

- Cologne
- Bavière
- Cornouaille
- Berne
- Milan
- Tamise
- La Haie
- Îles Frisonnes
- Munich
- CopenHague

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Some German exonyms:

- Luxemburg
- Bayern
- Lothringen
- Genf
- Mailand
- Burgund
- Haag
- Brüssel
- Pennisches Gebirge
- Kopenhagen

Find them on the map!



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6. EXAMPLES - E) NUMBER 5

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Some Finnish exonyms:

- Köln
- Baijeri
- Bretania
- Berne
- Mulano
- Burgundy
- Bryssel
- Lontoo
- Koopenhamn

Find them on the map!

7. Suomi

Mittakaava 1 : 8 000 000



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7. EXONYMS & COMMUNICATION- ANSWERS

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- Exonyms of Genève in Switzerland are: Ginebra, Geneva, Genf
- Exonyms of Genova in Italy are: Genoa, Genua, Gènes



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7. EXONYMS & COMMUNICATION

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**Exonyms are a problem: they make communication difficult.**Monaco: *Munich* or *principality on the Riviera*?

Question: Which of the names given below refers to Genève in Switzerland and which to Genova in Italy:

Ginebra/Genova/Geneve/Geneva/Gènes/Genf/Genoa/Genova/Genua

Aachen/Aix-la Chapelle/Akwizgranie/Aquisgrana/Aken/Cachy/Aaxen

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For the answer click on the " Answer-button" below.

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8. UN RESOLUTIONS

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The geographical names used should correspond to those officially used in the country where the named objects are situated.

Roman alphabet rule:

If a country has a roman alphabet, other Roman alphabet countries should copy its names integrally, all diacritics included.

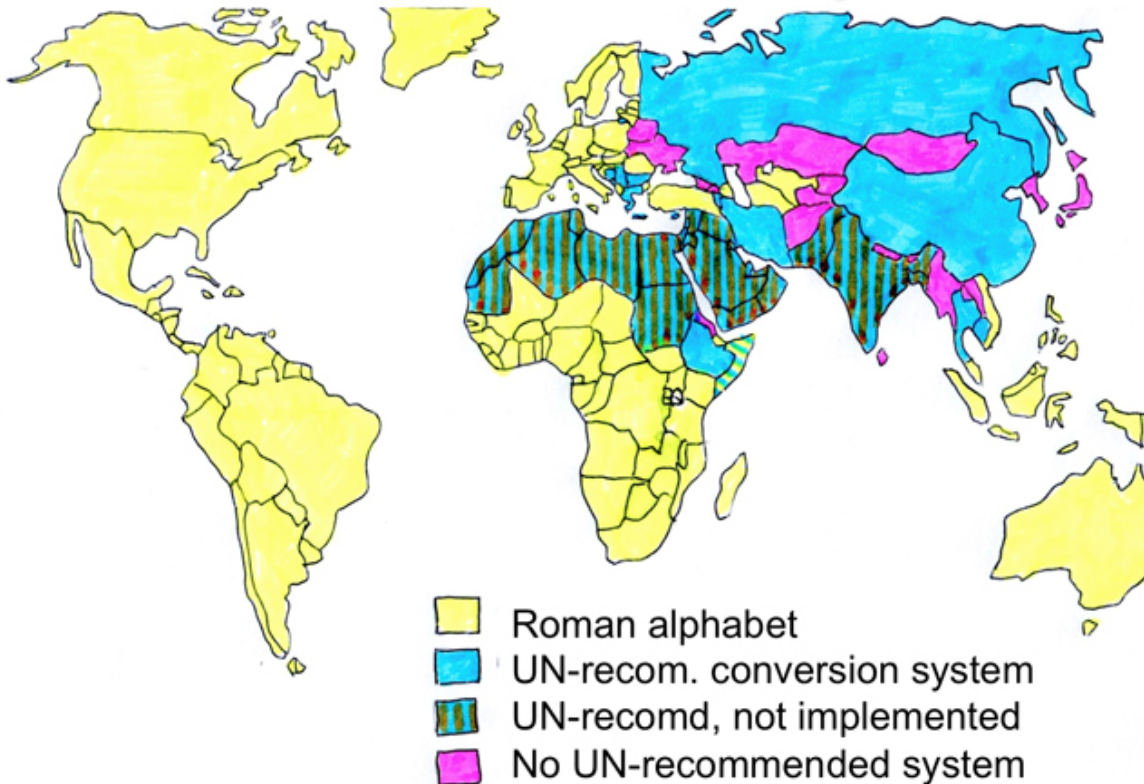
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UN romanization systems



The countries with languages without a UNGEGN-accepted conversion system are mainly located in the margin of on the former Soviet Union. Although the amended Beirut system for the conversion of Arabic to Roman scripts has been accepted in 1972, due to the fact that the pronunciation of Arab differs from country to country, this system has not been implemented yet in most Arab-speaking countries.

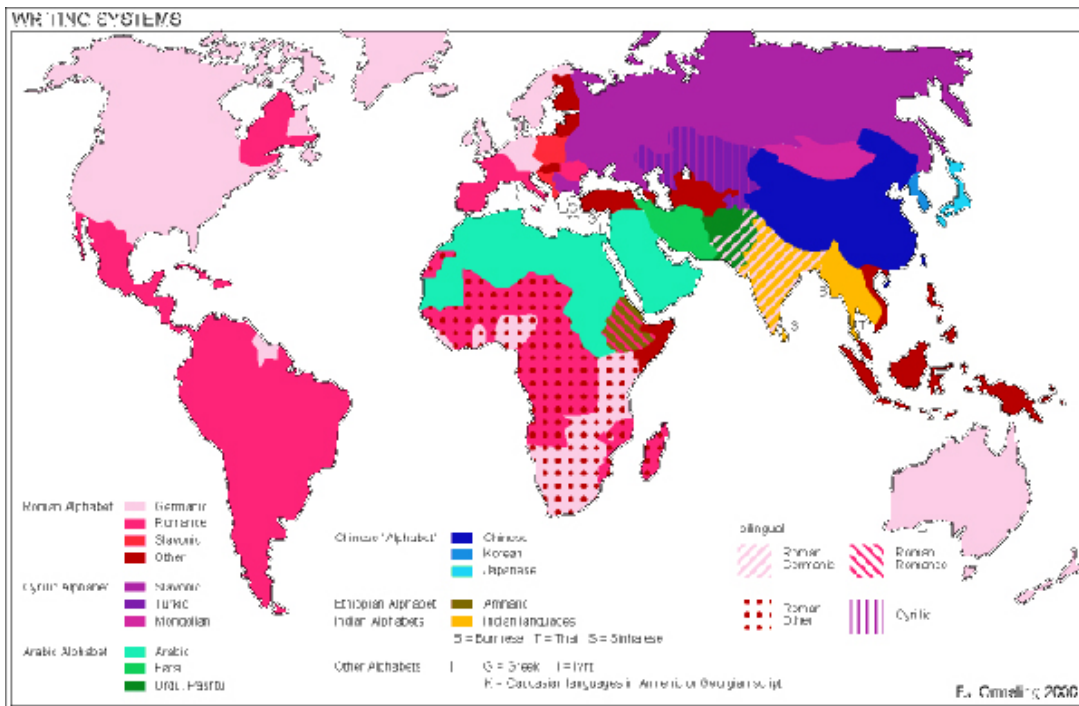
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9. WRITING SYSTEMS

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Question: Find out on the web site of the [UNEGN Romanization Working Group](#) for which of the non-roman alphabets official UN conversion systems have been accepted?

For the answer click on the " Answer-button" below.

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10. ORIGINS OF EXONYMS

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- Separate development of the same name in different language areas
- Use of different letters in different language areas to render the same sounds
- Use of new transcription/transliteration systems parallel with traditional ones
- Spelling reforms
- Adaptation of names to other languages
- Gradual change in pronunciation of letters



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11. CATEGORIES OF EXONYMS

[<previous](#) - [next>](#)**Pronunciation-exonyms vs orthographic exonyms:**

Pronunciation-exonyms (pronounced differently): *Paris* (Eng) vs *Paris* (Fr)

Orthographic exonyms (pronounced the same): *Moescroen* (Dutch) vs *Mouscroun* (Fr)

Exonym categories based on their development:

- Exonyms resulting from transcription (*Constanța* > *Konstantsa*)
- Exonyms resulting from simple adaptation (*København* > *Kopenhagen*)
- Exonyms due to separate development from common origin (*Colonia* > *Cologne, Köln, Keulen*)
- Exonyms resulting from different origins (*Hellas/Greece/Junani*) (*Deutschland/Allemagne/Saksa/Germany/Németország*)
- Exonyms due to translation (*Ecuador* > *l'Equateur; Kaapstad* > *Cape Town*)

Exonym categories based on object categories:

- Names for independent countries
- Names of other administrative units
- Names for historical and geographical regions
- Names of hydrographic features
- Names of other physical features
- Names of settlements

Time aspects of exonyms:

- Contemporary exonyms (in current use)
- Historical/obsolete exonyms (current in the past)

Historical exonyms are not the same as Historical names!

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12. THE ROLE OF THE UN

[<previous](#) - [next>](#)**UN policy towards exonyms**

- UN recommendation to reduce the use of exonyms (1972, 1977)
- UN recommendation to produce lists of current exonyms

Arguments used within the UN

- **Nationalistic approach:** maintain all exonyms to preserve national cultural heritage (including history)
- **Idealistic approach:** use only endonyms for better international communication
- **Intermediary approach:** as each language's vocabulary is changing anyway, exonyms are also subject to change, and are due to disappear after a certain lifecycle

(Safety aspects, revanchism, pronunciation difficulties, ever increasing multitude of names mainly in Eastern Europe)

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13. ARGUMENTS AGAINST & FOR ABOLITION OF EXONYMS

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**Arguments against abolition of exonyms:**

- Exonyms are part of national culture,
- Exonyms reflect historical relationships,
- Abolition of exonyms would lead to difficulties in pronunciation,
- Abolition of exonyms leads to confusion in international traffic, safety problems.

Arguments for abolition of exonyms:

- Keeping exonyms leads to confusion,
- Use of exonyms delays identification of objects,
- Why use incorrect/distorted names when correct ones are available,
- Keeping to exonyms reflects reactionary, neo-colonialistic ideas,
- Abolishing exonyms improves international communication.

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14. COUNTER-ARGUMENT

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Language	Pronunciation of letter "c"	Spelling of sound "sh"
Spanish	k or th	ch
Italian	k or ch	sci
French	k or s	ch
Czech	ts	š
Turkish	j or dzj	ş
German	ts, k or s	sch
Dutch	k or s	sj

So in order to pronounce a name we need to know in which language it is spelled.

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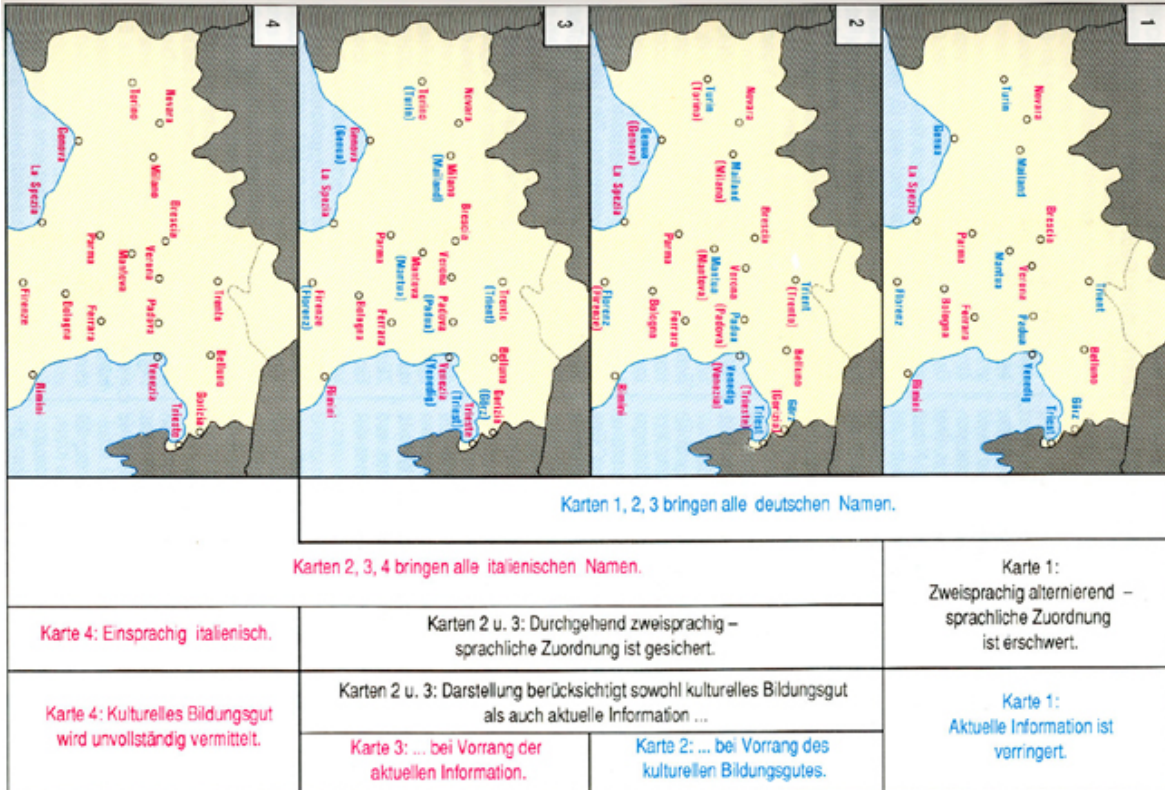
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15. REFLEXIONS OF THESE ARGUMENTS ON OUR MAPS

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We find four different modes regarding exonyms:

1. Exonyms without additional endonyms
2. Exonyms with additional endonyms in brackets
3. Endonyms with exonyms in brackets
4. Endonyms without exonyms



Source: Wiener Schriften zur Geographie und Kartographie (click [here](#) for enlargement)

Map 1: only exonyms

Map 2: exonyms (endonyms)

Map 3: endonyms (exonyms)

Map 4: only endonyms



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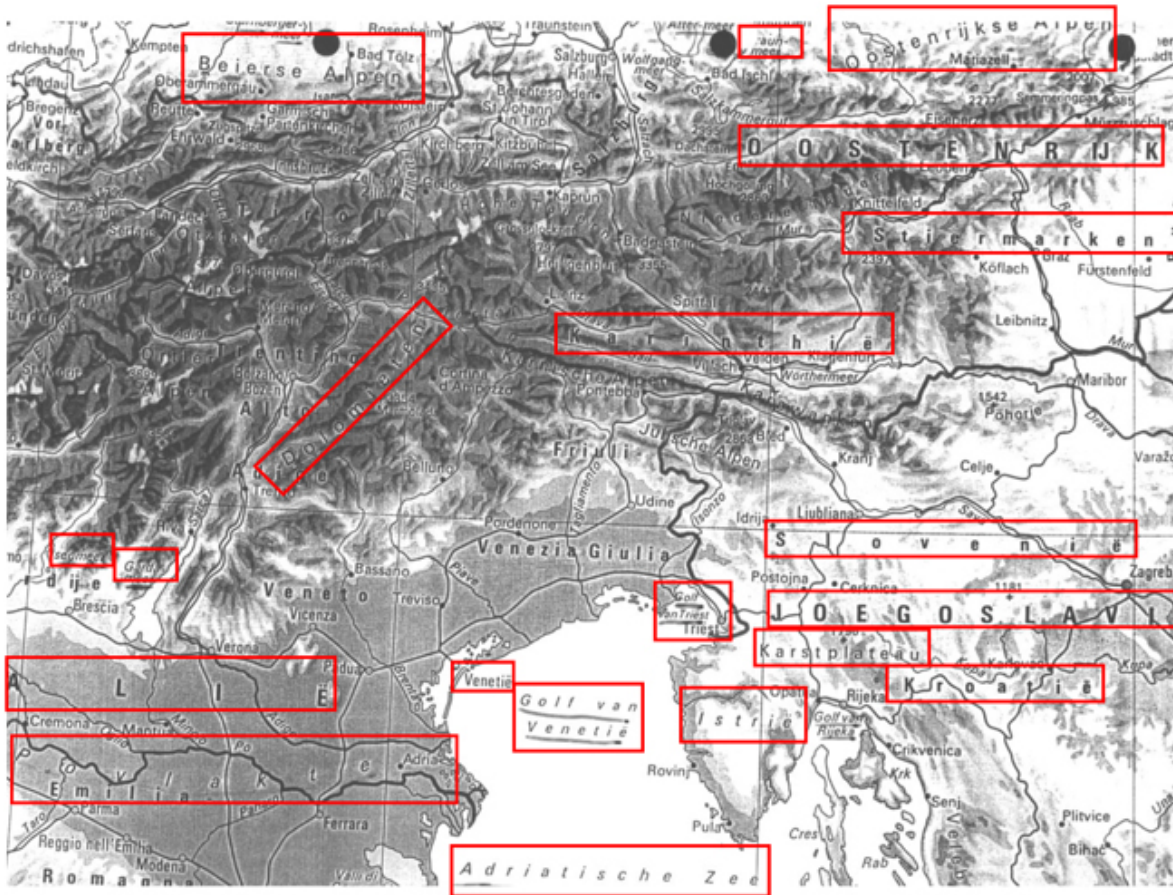
[21. New trends](#)

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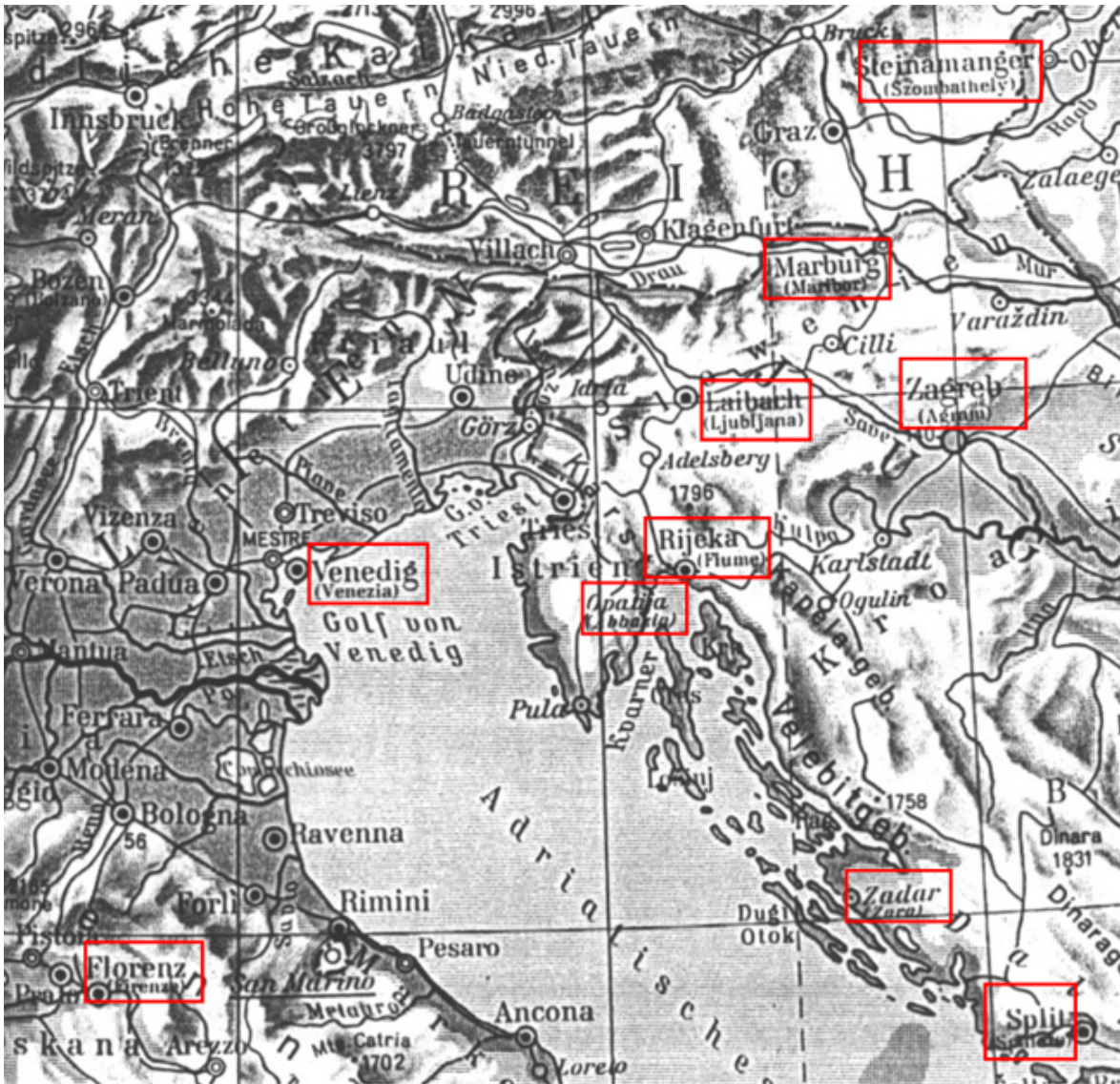
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17. EXONYMS WITH ENDONYMS IN PARENTHESES

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18. ENDONYMS (EXONYMS) APPROACH

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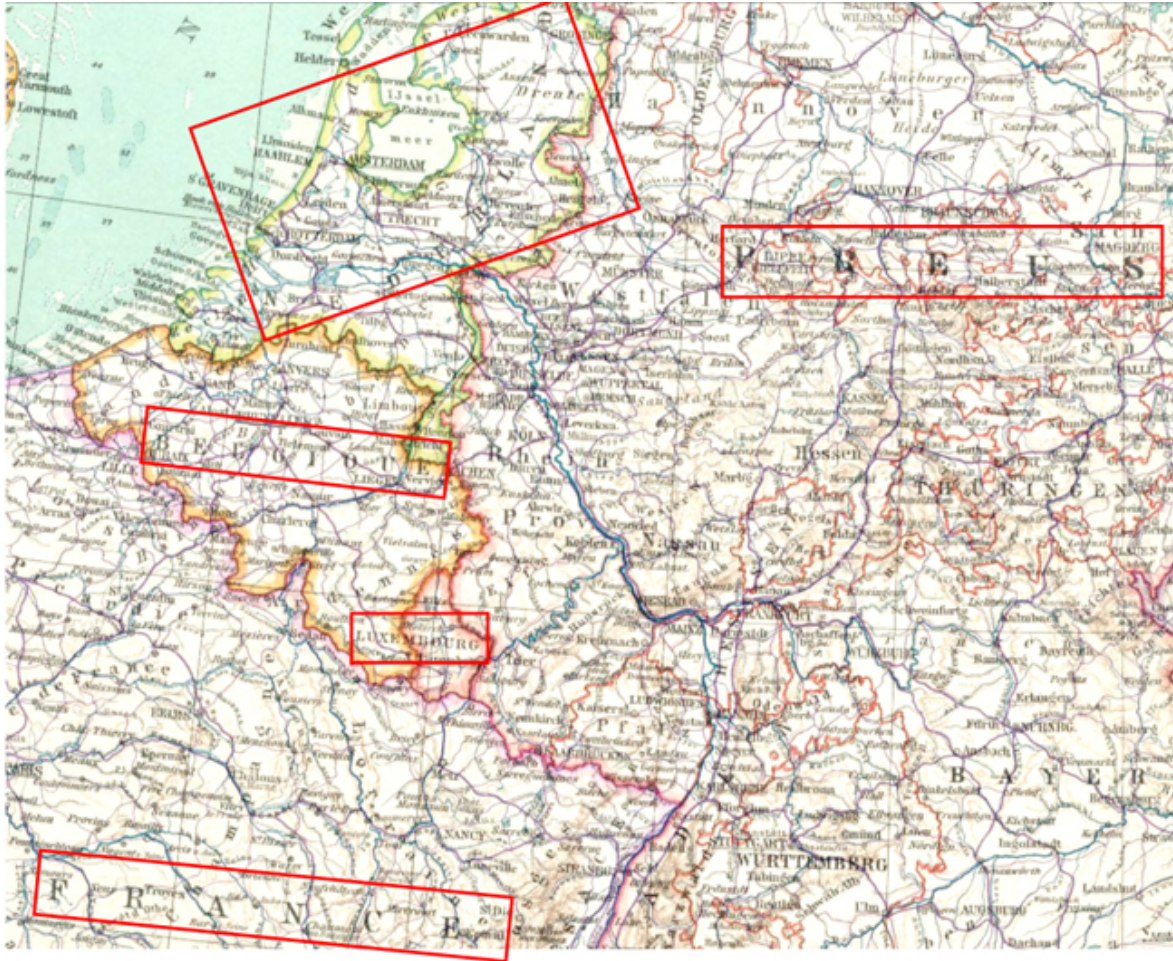
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19. ONLY ENDOYMS

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20. TRENDS IN DEALING WITH EXONYMS

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- Country names: exonyms only
- Administrative units: no trend
- Hydrographic features: exonyms only
- Other physical features: exonyms only
- Historical/geographical regions: exonyms only
- Settlement names: no exonyms for newly important places

Gradual reduction of exonyms, starting with settlement names

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- Differentiate approaches according to user groups (age categories, (non)experts)
- Differentiate according to medium (spoken/written language)
- Differentiate according to map types (reference atlases, road maps local names), ergo:

Selective reduction

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22. THE EMERGENCE OF EXONYMS IS DISTANCE-RELATED

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- More exonyms for objects close-by
- Only important objects further away have exonyms



Exonyms from the Netherlands for geographic features in Germany

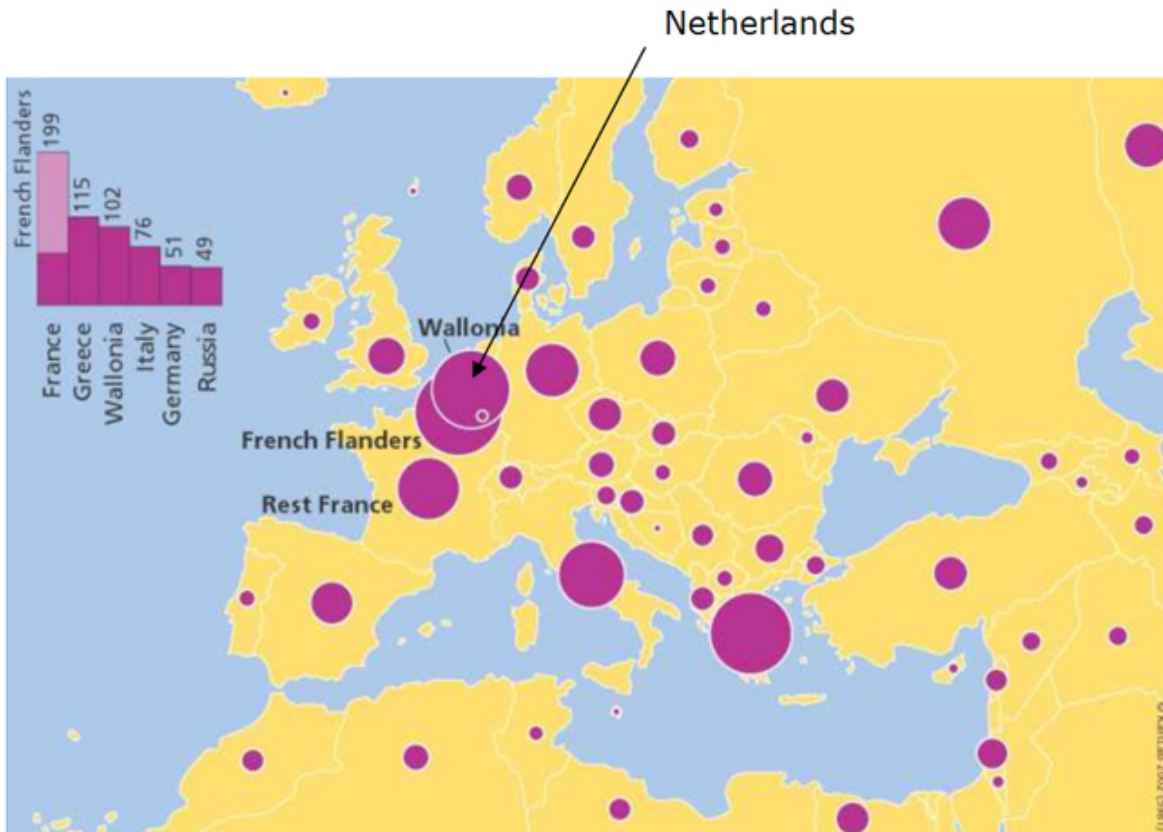
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23. DUTCH EXONYMS

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... for Europe:



With the exception of Italy and Greece (because of classical education) the number of exonyms decreases with distance from the Netherlands.

... for the World:

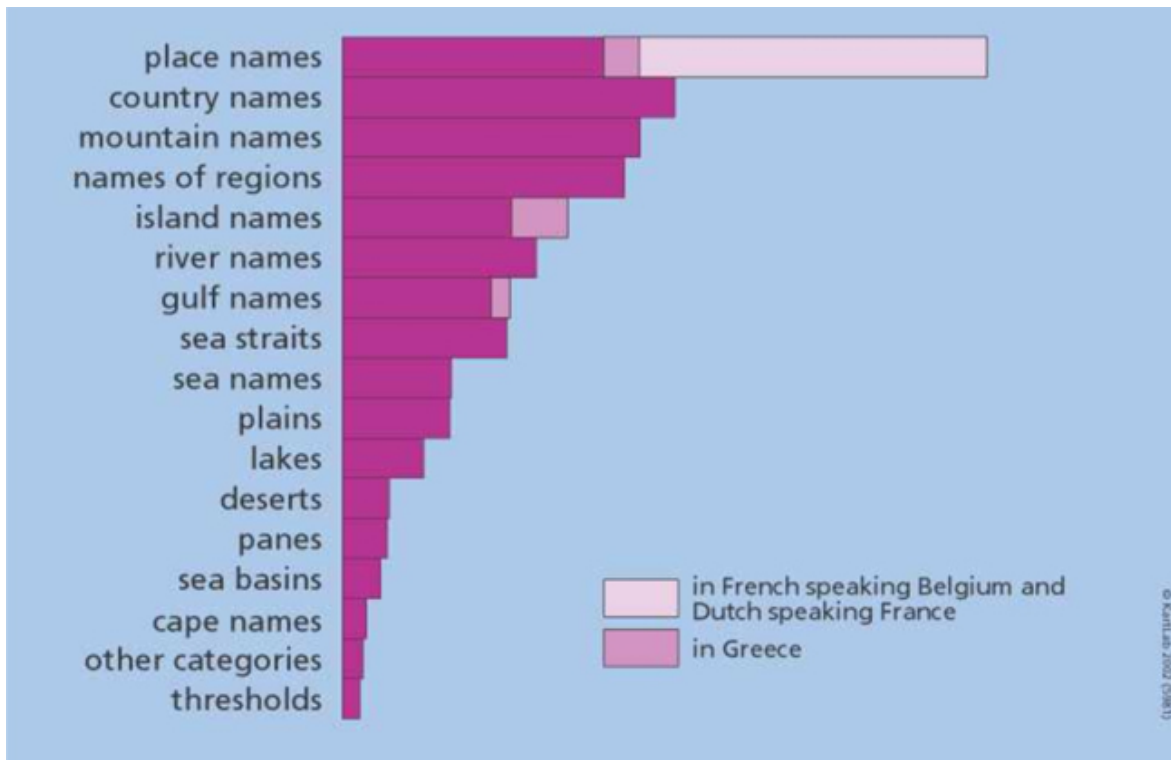
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Per name category:



French-speaking Belgium = Wallonia

Subdivisions of Dutch exonyms into different name categories.

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AVAILABLE EXERCISES

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Where is Alankomaat? Leghorn? Cornovaglia? Trèves?

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EXERCISE 1: WHERE IS ...? - ANSWERS

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Alankomaat = Finnish name for the Netherlands;

Leghorn = English name for Livorno;

Cornovaglia = Italian name for Cornwall;

Trèves = French name for Trier

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DOCUMENTS AND LITERATURE



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Available documents:

- [D13-01](#): Ormeling, F.J. (2003). *Exonyms in Cartography*. pp 119-127 in: Ferjan Ormeling, Jörn Sievers and Hans Stabe (eds.), *Training Course on Toponymy, Enschede, Frankfurt and Berlin 2002*. Mitteilungen des BKG 28, Frankfurt am Main 2003.

Literature:

- *Trends in Exonym Use. Proceedings of the 10th UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Tainach, 28-30 April 2010*. Edited by Peter Jordan, Hubert Bergmann, Caroline Burgess and Catherine Cheetham. Published in 2011. Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kova?. = Name & Place, vol. 1 (EUR 68.-), ISBN 978-3-8300-5656-0.
- *Exonyms and the International Standardisation of Geographical Names. Approaches towards the Resolution of an Apparent Contradiction*. Edited by Peter Jordan, Milan Orozen Adamic, Paul Woodman. Published in 2007, Münster: LIT-Verlag = Wiener Osteuropa Studien, vol. 24 (EUR 24.90), ISBN 978-3-8258-0035-2, ISSN 0946-7246.
- Jordan, P. & H. Bergmann, C. Burgess, C. Cheetham (eds) (2011). *Trends in Exonym Use*. Verlag Dr Kovacs, Hamburg.

Online resources:

- [Report of the Working Group on Exonyms](#), Twenty-sixth session, Vienna, 2-6 May 2011
- [Towards a comprehensive view at the endonym/exonym divide](#), tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, New York, 31 July – 9 August 2012

The United Nations sell the following publications which also can be downloaded from the [UNGEGN](#) website:

- [Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names \(New York 2002\)](#) / [pdf](#)
- [Manual for the national standardization of geographical names \(UN - Ecosoc, New York, 2006 ST/ESA/STAT/SERM/88 Sales No. E.06.XVII.7 ISBN 92-1-161490-2, available in the 6 UN languages\)](#) / [pdf](#)
- [Technical reference manual for the standardization of geographical names \(New York, 2007\)](#) / [pdf](#)
- [Resolutions adopted at the nine UN Conferences on the standardization of geographical names \(English \(pdf\) / French \(pdf\)\)](#)