

Discussion

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The use of geographical names reflects the focuses of usergroups. Thus a change in representation of geographical names also displays a change in focus. From a personal point of view, I grew up with the old colonial names *Godthåb*, *Sukkertoppen* and *Sønder Strømfjord* in Greenland. Nowadays, however, these names are no longer in official use (and hardly in private use either). Instead Greenlanders and Danes alike use the indigenous names *Nuuk*, *Man ðsoq* and *Kangerlussuaq*. Only *Sønder Strømfjord* still has a slight amount of usage as a parallel name to *Kangerlussuaq*.

On a formal level, this change in geographical names use in Greenland reflects the fact that Greenland since 1979 has had Home Rule, which also gave Greenland autonomy over its language policy, and thus geographical names. And for this matter, Greenland has its own geographical names board, over which the Danish Place-Name Commission has no jurisdiction. However, the indigenous names are not only recognized at formal, international, national or regional levels, they are also very much the standard forms of daily usage of ordinary Greenlanders and Danes.

When talking about the use of geographical names it is important to distinguish between user groups and how the different user groups' attitudes can differ. For instance, the local users' usage can be very different from official or state sanctioned usage and imbued with very intense feelings – particularly if the local users feel their traditional forms have been sacrificed in favour of political correctness or political opportunity.

Thus, when contemplating a change in name usage focus from official side, it is important to move forward with care and try and avoid a forced change but rather let nudging be the guiding principle in any geographical names focus change. In this respect, the media and teaching institutions' role become very vital players in constructing appropriate identities for geographical names, be they local, regional, national or international. Without their aid in changing naming focus, a top-down enforcement is almost bound to result in either failure or local antipathy at the very least.

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Sometimes, however, the media find that they have to tread carefully in geographical names matters, as Philippe Rekacewicz so eloquently described in his paper. The center of the problem lies in the fact that most of international toponymy disputes also almost always relate to territorial dispute. Here, naming a territory, region, or an area is a strong symbolical and political act, as it is seen as an extension of national identity. When writing about disputes, there is usually space to discuss different views, but in mapping the dispute is instead a rather difficult task, and prone to inadvertently express one side's preference over the other in order to avoid graphical noise that would make the map incomprehensible. For instance, is there room for two geographical names variants, and if so, which of the disputed names would go first? An often used solution is to leave out the disputed area blank and 'unnamed' – to the detriment of both understanding the problem and furthering special name usage.

A specific study of the usage of the names of the sea separating the Korean peninsula and Japan, Saangkyun Yi and Eun Jin Lim, studied the geographical names usage newspapers and other media in selected Francophone countries, namely Algeria, Belgium, Luxembourg and Quebec in Canada. The talk illuminated how the disputed names of the sea, *Sea of Japan* and *East Sea* were used in certain Francophone countries and what kind of influence media usage had on the daily usage in those countries, analyzing such things as current usage, the decision making processes about the names and their diffusion from France to other Francophone countries.

The role of the educational system in naming matters in the United States was investigated by Doug Andersen. Although outsiders see the USA as a uniform entity, its educational system is a complex body of locally controlled school systems influenced by state and national politics. In addition, the interests of individuals and communities and the nation as a whole often also influence local teaching policies. Without a national curriculum in the U.S., there is no standard way in which international naming issues or territorial conflicts are taught and represented in teaching. Since most educational materials such as textbooks and atlases are developed by private companies, the actual matters taught in any classroom throughout the United States is highly individual. However, national standards documents such as the current *Geography for Life* and the *Advanced Placement Human Geography Curriculum Articulation* provide guidance on how international naming issues could be addressed in Geography throughout United States' high schools. Nonetheless, there is only little point in including more specific content standards about international territorial disputes. Instead, U.S. educators should be given the opportunity see how such issues can be used to dynamically illustrate the geographic principles and content present in the National Standards in order to deepen their students' geographic understanding and apply their knowledge from a local to global scale.