NoSo 2021

Nordisk tidskrift för socioonomastik
Nordic Journal of Socio-Onomastics

Utgiven av Kungl. Gustav Adolfs
Akademien för svensk folkkultur

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Innehåll

Förord

Namn är en del av språket, men också av platser, kulturer och samhällen. Den här tidskriften är tänkt att vara en plattform för forskning som utforskar namns roll i samhället och i människors sociala interaktion – det vill säga en tidskrift för socioonomastik. Målet med tidskriften är att synliggöra forskningsbidrag och möjliggöra idéutbyte, kritiska diskussioner och såväl teoretisk som metodisk utveckling inom området. Eller, som en av författarna i det här numret uttrycker saken, att skapa "a contact zone, or space of convergence, for scholarship that examines the diverse ways in which names and naming shape, and are shaped by, worlds-in-the-making" (Rose-Redwood s. 164 i detta nummer).

Tanken är att genom tidskriften sammanföra forskare från olika discipliner som arbetar med socioonomastiska frågor. Därför har tidskriften ett brett anslag och inkluderar artiklar som kan bygga på alla typer av namn, på historiskt såväl som modernt material, på olika typer av metoder, på teoretiska likaväl som praktiska frågeställningar och där analysen även kan innehålla annat än namnmaterial. All forskning som fokuserar på att skapa ny kunskap om namns betydelse i någon del av samhället på mikro- eller makronivå är välkommen.

Socioonomastiken som forskningsområde har en tvärvetenskaplig ansats, både i relation till olika grenar inom språkvetenskapen och till andra vetenskapliga discipliner. I den här tidskriften är avsikten att synliggöra detta ytterligare så att forskning som har producerats inom olika ämnesområden får plats och kan berika varandra. Det behövs en mångfald av teorier, metoder och material för att förklara namns roll i samhället och lösa namnrelaterade samhällsproblem.

NoSo utges av Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akademien för svensk folkkultur och utkommer med denna sin första volym år 2021. Tidskriften har ett nordiskt anslag på så sätt att forskningen som diskuteras ska vara intressant ur ett nordiskt perspektiv. Det kan vara ett material från Norden som ligger till grund för analysen, nordiska forskare som vill föra ut sin forskning i ett internationellt forum, eller utomnordiska forskare som har studerat ett ämnesområde som har relevans för nordiska läsare. Förhoppningen är att därigenom inkludera forskare med namnintresse både i och utanför Norden. Artiklar kan skrivas på något av de skandinaviska språken (danska, norska, svenska) eller på engelska.

Vad som utgör socioonomastik är hela tiden förhandlingsbart och artiklarna i det här numret är ett exempel på hur mångskiftande området är. Vi

ser här en samling vetenskapliga bidrag med diversifierade forskningsfrågor och metoder, som tillsammans ger en bred bild av symbiosen mellan namn och samhälle. Artiklarna studerar flera olika namntyper: namn på personer, platser, kommersiella idrottsanläggningar och sjukdomar. Här finns både bidrag som är namnteoretiska och mer empiriska analyser. Utgångspunkten är i flera fall språkvetenskaplig, men bland författarna medverkar också forskare inom etnologi, kulturgeografi och socialpolitik. Flera artiklar belyser namnbruk i samtiden, men även historiska förändringsprocesser behandlas. Vi hoppas att artiklarna ska inspirera forskare till nya socioonomastiska forskningsansatser och ser fram emot fortsatta bidrag av skilda slag till tidskriften.

Preface

Names are a part of language, but they are also a part of places, cultures and societies. This journal is intended to be a platform for research that explores the role of names in societies and in social interaction – that is to say, a journal of socio-onomastics. Its aim is to make this research visible, enable an exchange of ideas and critical discussion among researchers, and encourage both theoretical and methodological development within the field. Or, as one of the authors in this volume puts it, to create "a contact zone, or space of convergence, for scholarship that examines the diverse ways in which names and naming shape, and are shaped by, worlds-in-the-making" (Rose-Redwood p. 164 in this volume).

The intention is to bring together researchers from different disciplines with an interest in socio-onomastic topics. The journal is therefore broad in scope and includes articles building on all kinds of names, on historical as well as contemporary data, on different methods and on theoretical as well as practical issues, and analysing other kinds of data as well as names. All research that focuses on developing new knowledge about the role of names in some part of society, at the micro or macro level, is welcome.

Socio-onomastics is a multidisciplinary field of research, in relation both to different branches of linguistics and to other academic disciplines. This journal aims to make this even clearer, enabling research from different disciplines to be accommodated in a single space and to be mutually enriching. A multitude of theories, methodologies and data are needed to explain the role of names in society and address name-related societal issues.

NoSo is published by the Royal Gustavus Adolphus Academy for Swedish Folk Culture, and is appearing for the first time in 2021. The journal is Nordic in the sense that the research discussed should be of interest from a Nordic point of view. The analysis may be based on Nordic data, it may be written by Nordic researchers who want to reach international readers, or it may be the work of researchers outside the Nordic region who have studied a topic that is relevant to Nordic readers as well. We thus hope to include researchers both inside and outside the Nordic countries who are interested in names and naming. Articles may be written in any of the Scandinavian languages (Danish, Norwegian, Swedish) or in English.

The definition of socio-onomastics is constantly under negotiation and the articles in this volume are an example of the diversity within the field. What we see here is a collection of scholarly contributions with a variety of research questions and methodologies, which together provide a broad picture of the symbiosis between names and society. The articles study different kinds of names: personal names, place names, names of commercial sports facilities and names of diseases. Both name-theoretical contributions and more empirical analyses can be found. In several cases the starting point is linguistic, but the participating authors include, in addition, researchers from the fields of ethnology, cultural geography and social policy. Several articles deal with contemporary name use, but historical processes of change are also addressed. We hope that the articles will inspire new socio-onomastic endeavours on the part of researchers and look forward to a variety of future contributions to the journal.

Places of power: Naming of affective places

Terhi Ainiala & Pia Olsson

Terhi Ainiala & Pia Olsson (University of Helsinki). Places of power: Naming of affective places.

Abstract: By analysing Finnish data drawn from 106 written responses to a questionnaire, we have studied the ways people name their places of power and the ways affective meanings are present in their descriptions. Places of power renew, calm, invigorate and help in distress. They allow the respondents to be alone and listen to their own thoughts, or they make them feel at one with nature. Four main strategies are used to identify these places of power: official place names, relational place descriptions, unofficial place names and classifying expressions. In the process of placemaking, three kinds of agency stand out: the agency of the materiality of the place, that of emotions and affective practices, and that of the person experiencing the place. Identifying the place by naming it is part of this process.

Keywords: space, place, affect, emotion, place naming, placemaking, place reference

1. Introduction

As we write this article in the spring of 2020, we are living in a world that is coping with the coronavirus crisis. The situation has given rise to various kinds of restrictions in our everyday lives: our social circles have shrunk and our movements have been limited. In Finland, these restrictions have meant that people have found new and more active ways to relate to their immediate environment. Taking walks in nature or surrounding neighbourhoods has become an important leisure activity and means of taking care of oneself. Via social media and news coverage, it has become

very clear that people have been empowered by different kinds of places. This has highlighted a phenomenon that has been analysed in many studies: places are infused with different atmospheres that can cause different emotions and feelings to arise in people as they experience their environment (see for example Edensor 2017; Manzo 2003).

Even before the arrival of coronavirus, we had discussed in a small group of urban researchers the ways places affect us. During the conversation, one of us said that he had drawn analogies between power songs – 'a song that makes you feel powerful and ready to whop some serious ass'[1] – and power places. He wondered what kind of power places there might be for people, because there was definitely such a place for him. This conversation led to an experimental research project in which we specifically asked people about their 'power places'. Asking about the different meanings people attach to places has been done before in the Finnish context. For example, the City Museum of Helsinki asked residents of the city to name their favourite places in 2015 in preparation for a new exhibition. For this project, the museum received over 1,000 responses. Other questionnaires dealing with relationships to places have also been popular among researchers of urban dwellers (e.g. Åström 2016; SKS 2004–2005). The popularity of these enquiries and questionnaires may reasonably be assumed to demonstrate the many meanings places have for people. However, a specific focus on the ways places empower people was something we had not previously encountered.

This study focuses on *places*, as distinct from *spaces*. In this understanding, *spaces* refers to physical environments in general and *places*, in contrast, to more specific, socioculturally meaningful entities. Thus, following the definitions of Tim Cresswell (2015:15), we are interested in the ways in which spaces can be turned into places, a process of placemaking in which names and naming are of key significance. Besides proper names, however, languages provide many additional resources for formulating places out of physical space (see also Schegloff 1972; Williams 2017).

Our aim in this article is twofold. Firstly, we study the ways in which 'power places' are identified, i.e. whether the places in question are identified using proper names or other linguistic resources. Secondly, we explore how people describe these empowering places, in particular in the context of emotions and affective practices. We do not answer our two research questions separately, but rather wish to be able to combine them and look

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[1] Urban dictionary ('powersong'): https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=power-song (accessed 6 May 2020).

for the connections between place naming[2] and affect. Our theoretical and methodological background derives from socio-onomastics and ethnology; we aim to bring new insights to research on place naming and placemaking.

In our analyses, we use affective reading (see for example Rinne & Olsson 2020). We therefore focus on how affect can be read both in the ways people have named places that are important to them and in the ways they give reasons for this naming. In our analysis of the emotion and affect present in the descriptions given, we refer to Margaret Wetherell et al. (2015) and their understanding of the relationship between these two concepts. They challenge the separation of emotion and affect both theoretically and methodologically. For them, it is impossible to separate the bodily and non-representational from the discursive and culturally bound (Wetherell et al. 2015:57). For Wetherell, affect is 'sense as well as sensibility'. Affective patterns are based on distinct kinds of histories, narratives and discourses and on body patterning with feelings and thoughts. Wetherell also considers the surrounding materiality to be an active agent in people's lives (Wetherell 2012:13–14, 88; Rinne & Olsson 2020:337). She uses the term 'affective practice' to refer to a psycho-discursive 'figuration where body possibilities and routines become recruited or entangled together with other social and material figurations' (Wetherell 2012:19; Wetherell et al. 2020:15).

The idea of the material surroundings having an agency is an important starting point for us, as in our questionnaire the hypothesis was that places have empowering effects on people. This being the case, the emotions and affective practices present in the respondents' descriptions are mostly positive. This emphasis on the positive affect of place has been criticized, as it can ignore the negative affect and lead to simplified readings (Manzo 2003). That criticism is also important to bear in mind: we are not arguing for specific places to be places of power as such. Instead, it is important to understand the mechanisms through which some places become chargers for people in different life situations. For Sara Ahmed, emotions 'are what move us', but they are also about 'attachments, about what connects us to this or that' (Ahmed 2004:27). Following this, we understand that not only material surroundings have agency; so too do the emotions and affective practices arising in specific places. It is this interaction between the different

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[2] By 'place naming' we mean all the possible ways to identify a place (see e.g. Schegloff 1972). Likewise, in the following the general term 'names' is most often used to include all the place references in the data.

agencies – the materiality of a place, the emotions and affective practices, and the person experiencing the place – that is the focus of our analysis.

In the following, we will first examine the way our data was produced and how this may affect the ways places of power are interpreted, and then go on to analyse the ways these places are named and described. After categorizing the descriptions by the way the places have been named, we engage in a close reading of the words and impressions that reflect the emotion and affect in them.

2. Research data

Our data consists of 106 responses involving references to and descriptions of empowering places. The places were documented using a questionnaire survey conducted by the Finnish Society for Urban Studies (the authors are members of the Society and were responsible for the survey) over two months from the beginning of December 2019 to the end of January 2020. The questionnaire was designed for Internet users and was circulated via social media.[3] Its design was simple, with only five questions. The first four concerned the gender of the respondent, year of birth, current place of residence, and identification of a place of power. The fifth part of the questionnaire was an open-ended request for a description of the respondent's place of power. Respondents were encouraged to write freely in their own style. The descriptions received varied from a couple of sentences to half a page of typewritten text. The shortest version of a response was one with a place name repeated three times: as the respondent's current place of residence, as his/her place of power and as the description of that place of power (#34F).[4] In a sense, this could be interpreted as referring to a place of power that is self-explanatory.

The questionnaire was circulated in three languages: Finnish (101 responses), Swedish (1 response) and English (4 responses). In it, we did not direct respondents to choose a certain kind of place, such as an urban place. However, the fact that the questionnaire was circulated by the Finnish Society for Urban Studies understandably guided respondents' thinking towards urban places. However, this was not always the case: the respon-

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[3] We also arranged a world café-type discussion event in January 2020, but this data is not included here and will be analysed in another context.
[4] The reference is the incoming number of the response plus the language it is written in (F = Finnish, S = Swedish and E = English).

dents described the actual places that they found empowering, regardless of the location.

Even so, most of the places described were situated in the Helsinki capital region (92 responses in all). One surprising fact was that one specific place, Helsinki–Malmi Airport, was described in a total of 41 responses. This shows once again that questionnaires designed for research operate not only on a neutral level, but also on a political and social level (Olsson 2016:164–169; in the context of oral history, see Portelli 1997:9). These responses also highlight the political nature of people's place attachment (Creswell 1996; see also Manzo 2003). In this case, the future of the airport in question, which also has cultural and heritage value, has been much debated and respondents apparently viewed the questionnaire as a way of participating in this discussion and safeguarding memories of a place that is now being repurposed.

Table 1. Distribution of participants.

Gender		Birth decade		Place of residence	
female	65	1930s	4	Helsinki	64
male	38	1940s	12	Espoo	10
N/A	3	1950s	17	Vantaa	1
Total	106	1960s	39	Other Greater Helsinki[5]	8
		1970s	17	Other Finnish cities, towns and municipalities[6]	21
		1980s	10	Cities in Sweden	2
		1990s	7	Total	106
		Total	106		

Source: Data available by request from the Finnish Literature Society.

The distribution of respondents by gender, age group and place of residence is presented in Table 1. As can be seen, most of the respondents were women born in the 1960s. Nevertheless, the age distribution was quite broad, with the oldest respondents in their eighties and the youngest in their twenties. Furthermore, many respondents live in or near Helsinki. It is not surpris-

[5] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greater_Helsinki (accessed 20 July 2020).
[6] Heinävesi, Hollola, Joensuu, Jyväskylä (2); Kemi, Lahti (3); Mikkeli, Nokia, Pello, Pori, Raisio (2); Tampere, Turku (4), Varkaus.

ing, therefore, that most of the power places identified are situated in the Helsinki region. Besides Helsinki dwellers, there are respondents from both cities elsewhere in southern Finland (Tampere, Turku, Lahti) and cities and towns in other parts of the country (Jyväskylä, Joensuu, Mikkeli, Kemi). A few reside in smaller municipalities (e.g. Hollola, Heinävesi) and two respondents live in Sweden. It is worth mentioning that in our analysis of the data we do not take these variables (gender, age, place of residence) into account, owing to the nature and the number of responses. The individual groups in our source material are too small to make exact comparisons and the descriptions are so compact that it would be impossible to distinguish among the groups. However, on a general level, we find it interesting and significant to note that the question of power places was important for so many different age groups and for people in different locations.

3. Many ways to identify a place: naming categories

In responding to the question about a place of power, respondents simultaneously identified the place in some way. It is worth noting that we did not explicitly ask them to give a proper name, but simply to identify the place of power. This approach gave us an opportunity to study the various ways people identified their specific places (see for example Schegloff 1972; Ainiala 2014), an essential starting point in socio-onomastics, which acknowledges and explores the social and situational variation in the use of names and other identifying resources (see for example Ainiala & Östman 2017). Further, as will be seen, not all our respondents even wrote an identifying expression, giving a classifying expression instead.

The responses varied from a single name to expressions of many words. However, most of the answers consisted of a single name or a name with a specifying element. The responses given can be divided into four main categories according to their status as a place reference: official place names, relational descriptions, unofficial place names and classifying expressions (see Table 2). The categorization is not entirely clearly defined and there is some overlap. These cases will be explained in the analyses.

Table 2. Naming categories.

Naming category	Number of responses	Examples
Official place names	69	*Tampere* (city), *Haltiala* (outdoor recreation area), *Uunisaari* (island)
Relational descriptions	25	*Helsingin rannat* (Helsinki + shores), *Silta Kulosaaren ja Herttoniemen välissä* (a bridge between Kulosaari (neighbourhood) and Hert-toniemi (neighbourhood))
Unofficial place names	3	*Kaivarin ranta* (shore), *Sörkän silta* (bridge)
Classifying expressions	9	*Kirjastot* ('libraries'), *Metsä* ('a forest')
Total	106	

In the following sections, we will present and analyse the respondents' places of power according to these categories. We will also analyse the affective expressions under each category. This is not to argue that the way people identify and name a place directly correlates with the affect they express about the place. However, we find it interesting to look at the possible connections between naming strategies and ways of describing places.

When giving examples and quotations from the data, we present the names and the descriptions exactly as our respondents did. Besides original responses in Finnish or Swedish, we include an English translation.

3.1 Official place names

The largest group includes official place names, which we define as names that have been planned for a specific area. Official names are typically those referring to neighbourhoods or districts, streets and parks. Additionally, official names of cities and municipalities, as well as official company names, names of institutions and other public names (e.g. names of public swimming pools) used as place names belong to this group (Ainiala et al. 2012:99–105).

In the group of official place names, the responses referring to Helsinki–Malmi Airport make up the majority (41 answers in all). In addition, there are 28 responses referring to other geographical locations. In this latter group, one place is mentioned in two responses (the city of Tampere), but all the other responses refer to different places.

Names in this category are most often names of neighbourhoods, districts and parks (14). Additionally, cities, municipalities (2 referents, of which Tampere is mentioned twice) and bridges (2) are mentioned. There is only one representative of each of the following groups: airport (i.e. Helsinki–Malmi Airport, with 41 responses), indoor market, shopping mall, art museum, university, statue, cemetery, church, café and swimming pool. Obviously, these places primarily represent urban and built environments. It is noteworthy that not a single street or road is mentioned, even though they are central not only to urban but also to rural settings. The places mentioned mostly seem to be for spending time in an extremely specific atmosphere; they are places in which to stop and enjoy the surroundings for an extended period. This may also explain the absence of streets and roads, as they can mostly be regarded as places to move and pass through.

Some of the responses in this category also contain a specifying element that clarifies the country, city or neighbourhood where the place is located: e.g. *Tampere,* **Finland**; **Helsingin** *Lapinlahti* (Helsinki + GEN + Lapinlahti); *Hauhonpuisto,* **Vallila** ('a certain park in a neighbourhood in Helsinki'). By using these specifying elements, the respondents probably wanted to ensure that the places were correctly situated geographically, even if the researchers did not necessarily know them themselves. This suggests that respondents were directing their answers to a wider audience, and this may also have influenced the ways in which the places were identified in other respects.

In this category, the affective practices associated with the places are not interwoven into the place names. Rather, naming with official names is very neutral. The affective practices become explicit in the section where respondents describe their place of power. Many of these descriptions reveal that the respondents have a long history with the place and that important phases in life and experiences may have taken place there (e.g. #1E; #10F; #17F). This highlights the idea of a space transforming into a place through a growing knowledge and understanding of its nature (Tuan 1979). The place may have empowered the respondent in a very concrete way, as for example with a university, where the person could 'freely interact with diverse opinions' or where their thinking was widened. It may have been a place that had given an opportunity to visit different countries: 'It therefore was my stepping-stone to the world. It will forever be dear to my heart for I see the universe through its lenses' (#3E). Here, the place has had a life-long effect on the narrator's life and the social factors associated with it are primary.

The relationship of a place to resolving important questions in life is also mentioned in other responses, as in the one referring to a public swimming pool where the respondent had solved many problems and felt herself renewed (#21F; also #40F). In another response, a church and cemetery were reported to have helped the person to concentrate and get in touch with themselves, hear their own inner voice (#52F). Respondents sometimes used a simple appellative (e.g. *kirkko* 'the church') to describe the place, instead of an official name, and this may actually be a common, everyday practice for identifying and referring to a place (see also Schegloff 1972:97; Ainiala 2016:377; Williams 2017). In these responses, it is not so much the social as the material environment that empowers people: it is the calming atmosphere that allows the respondent to be alone and to feel and hear their inner self.

The places of power in this category vary, as mentioned, including cities, institutions and smaller attractions within a city such as statues. The specific attractions can be described as places or locations that form a routine when a person visits a certain destination. For example, when visiting Helsinki one of the respondents 'always' visits two specific statues in the city. The affect she expresses for these attractions is described in a very concrete way: 'When visiting Helsinki, I always try to take a photo or selfie with them or even touch the pedestal of Paraske's sculpture'. It seems that it is important to document each visit and that it is not enough to see the place: it also has to be physically felt by touching it, and recorded by taking a photograph. The respondent refers to it being of 'special personal importance' for her emotions, but does not further explain these reasons (#4E).

While in the case just mentioned visiting the place of power is a special occasion, for others the importance of the place arises from their everyday lives, as for example with the outdoor area in Viikki, a forested neighbourhood on the outskirts of Helsinki. For one of the respondents, this place is part of everyday life throughout the year, where '[seeing] the cows is a summer bonus!' (#2F). For another respondent, the everyday source of power is a park with roses beside a busy road:

> Puisto on minun arkipäivieni kauneuden lähde, rauhoitun puistossa kun pysähdyn katsomaan ja haistelemaan.
> [The park is the source for my everyday beauty; I calm myself in the park when I stop to observe and smell [the flowers]]. (#13F)

Here, moreover, the importance of the place is described in a very physical and sensory way. It is noteworthy that the respondent does not once use

the official name she gave to identify her place of power (*Hauhonpuisto*: Hauho, a former municipality in Finland), but constantly talks simply about *puisto* ('the park'). This reflects a widely used way of talking about places in everyday contexts (see also the example of *kirkko* 'the church' in this section). Furthermore, the respondent uses *ruusupuisto* ('the rose park') as a characterizing expression, but it might also be used as an unofficial name. From previous research we know that these kinds of unofficial descriptive names are common everyday names (e.g. Ainiala et al. 2012:108–109). The name *Ruusupuisto* would also describe the concrete feelings and emotions attached to the place more vividly than the official name. This might also make it easier for an outsider to understand the different affective practices the place can give rise to.

Sometimes the places are described as 'emotionally significant' (#1E) or places that can calm (#4F; #6F; #8F) or invigorate (#6F) a person. The elements of nature in the city make a person forget they are in the largest city in Finland (#6F). In the descriptions, it is not only the place as such but also the landscape it is immersed in that matters (regarding landscape, see for example Stewart & Strathern 2003). It may be enough just to stop and admire the view (#22F) and the surrounding beauty is soothing when one feels distressed (#24F). Nature also offers an empowering 'lap' or 'embrace' (#28F; also #36F). Looking forward to and awaiting the flowers in bloom is something the respondents mention in their descriptions, which were written in the darkest time of the year (#33F). Nature in all its forms, whether in the middle of the city or out at sea, plays an active part in empowering the respondents, thereby demonstrating the agency of their material surroundings (see also Rinne & Olsson 2020):

> Tässä paikassa tunnen aina, että jokin henki on kanssani ja tunnen oloni turvalliseksi – ajatuksiani kuullaan ja saan siitä voimaa sekä uskoa tulevaan.
> [In this place I always feel there is some spirit with me and I feel safe; I feel confident in my thoughts and get/receive power and trust in the future.] (#42F)

However, places of power are not always places for solitude or retreat. In one of the responses, it is the possibility of manifesting one's opinion that is considered the empowering element of the place, in this case an art museum (#2E). Another place is a combination of nature and historical buildings, namely the grounds of a former mental hospital (*Lapinlahti*) close to Helsinki city centre. Here the respondent highlights the specific nature

of the place: it is considered an open space for ideas and for diverse groups of city dwellers to be and act in:

> Rahaton, työtön saa ilmaiseksi oleilla kauniissa ja elvyttävässä paikassa...
> [The moneyless, unemployed may spend their time in a beautiful and regenerative place...] (#46F)

Helsinki–Malmi Airport was mentioned as a place of power a total of 43 times[7] (#54F–#86F; #88F; #90F–#98F; #100F–#101F). The place itself was referred to in numerous ways, though all the expressions are regarded here as official names. All the answers contained both a neighbourhood name *Malmi* in the genitive and a Finnish word for airfield (*lentokenttä*) or airport (*lentoasema*) as a generic element. In the official name the word *lentokenttä* is used, but since *lentoasema* is also commonly used in standard Finnish, we have included them both in this group, as well as a shorter form *kenttä* ('field') which was used once. Moreover, it is convenient to analyse all the names referring to the airport under the same category. Some of the responses contained a specifying element (*Helsinki*) stating the home city of the airfield, a practice already seen in some other responses in this category.

Of special interest are the two responses (#72F, #90F) that also included supplementary information (e.g. 'and its surrounding nature/forest'); thus, they also referred to the natural features adjacent to the airport. In these place formulations, the respondents probably wanted to point out that the place was not just an airport, but a broad area with trees and shrubs and other natural elements. The descriptions people gave reinforce this interpretation. The place was related to layers of both personal and national history, with comings and goings, an optimistic future and a sense of timelessness. The fact that the airport is going to be closed and repurposed for housing has aroused strong emotions in some of the people who responded: anxiety, anger and sorrow (e.g. #64F; see also #69F). One of the respondents wrote that the prospect 'Brings a tear to the eye' (*tippa tulee öögaan*) (#97F).

In this category, both in the case of Malmi Airport and also in descriptions of the Munkkivuori shopping centre in Helsinki, the affective practice can be read not only from the way the change in the environment is described, but also from the way different historical and social layers are

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[7] In addition to 41 answers counted as explicit Malmi Airport responses, the airport was mentioned as an additional place of power in two responses. In general, only one place was specified per response, but a couple of answers mention two or even three places, usually geographically close together. In our categorization, we have only taken the first place mentioned into account.

present simultaneously in a certain place (see #37F; #43F). The narrative may otherwise even be quite neutral (e.g. #1S), but certain expressions and comparisons reveal the emotions associated with change. In the *Munkkivuori* (or *Munkshöjden* in Swedish, as in this response) shopping centre, the removal of park benches had given rise to a 'Benchgate' (*Penkki-gate*, as in Watergate), and a comparison is made with a large new shopping mall – the Mall of Tripla – opened in the neighbouring area the same year as the old shopping centre with its cultural heritage value celebrated its 60th birthday: 'It remains to be seen if Tripla will still be there in 60 years' time' [*Det återstår att se om även Tripla får stå kvar i 60 år*]. Future change is expected to be even quicker than hitherto, or perhaps the architecture is seen as more disposable than that of the present centre, which seems so powerful to this respondent.

These responses emphasise not only the historical layers of a city, but also the everyday meanings and practices that have been formed for some people using and living in these places. The sorrow felt as the places change can partly be interpreted as nostalgia for a lost place. According to Korkiakangas, moreover, it is often the threat of future change that arouses nostalgia (2006:27; see also Rinne & Olsson 2020:318–323). Sorrow, a basic element of nostalgia, is also visible in these responses, where the emphasis seems to be more on arguing that the places are being changed for the worse and expressing the perceived injustice of the decisions made about their future. Problems will arise when the people who make decisions about a place do not understand the meaning it has for its users.

The respondents do not usually explain or justify the names themselves when giving their descriptions of places. Thus, there is no metalinguistic commentary on names or name elements in the data, as there often is in onomastic interviews or surveys (see for example Ainiala & Halonen 2017:20–223; Ainiala 2014:38–42). However, there was one exception. In the example below, the name itself is given as a reason for the respondent's attachment to the place and can be regarded as evidence of toponymic attachment (see also Kostanski 2016). The name is *Haltiala*, referring to an outdoor recreation area in Helsinki:

> Haltialan kohdalla myös kaunis nimi on varmastikin vaikuttanut positiivisiin mielikuviin ja läheisen suhteen muodostumiseen.
> [In the case of Haltiala, it must have been the beautiful name that has affected the positive images and the forming of a close relationship.]
> (#6F)

The name includes the word *haltia* ('elf, fairy') and the word and its semantics are probably appealing to the respondent. Possibly the phonology of the name is also regarded as pleasing.

Referring to one's place of power by its official name constituted the largest naming category in the data. This is partly explained by the many responses regarding Malmi Airport. However, use of the official name might also show that it was important for these respondents to clearly identify the specific place of importance for the benefit of those later reading the responses. In the descriptions, the ways of identifying these places vary more. Numerous affective practices are connected to the respondents' places of power.

Most of the descriptions are concisely written. Some characteristics from social media were adopted, which can make the descriptions even more specific. In one of the most straightforward responses, the affect was expressed by a heart emoji at the end of a short sentence (#2E; also #59F; #86F). On the one hand, using the emoji indicates the difficulty the respondent had in putting their affect into words, but it also provides an easy way of expressing emotions in a culturally defined way (see for example Bai et al. 2019:4–5). A review of the responses using official place names indicates that there are a variety of places that can empower people, ranging from a specific park or statue to an entire city. Furthermore, the places may be visited every day or on special occasions to be documented. What is common to these places is that they have had an extraordinarily strong effect on people's lives, as places where they either grew up or learnt something profoundly life-changing. At the same time, the affective practices described are mostly sensory and bodily experiences; respondents have freely described their emotional bonds with certain places. Overall, these respondents easily and naturally put their relationship with a specific place into words.

3.2 Relational descriptions

The second largest group consists of relational descriptions. In this group, the place reference is formulated using some other place as a point of reference (Schegloff 1972:100–101), and the place formulations include a place name or occasionally two, a classifying appellative and occasionally an adposition. These formulations may be used because the place does not have an official name or the respondent does not know it. Even if it does have an official name familiar to the respondent, he/she may want to use

a relational formulation instead if it is regarded as more precise than the official name. The use of an extra specifying name element together with an official name (as presented in the previous section) may have served the same aim of presenting the location of the place as precisely as possible.

Most often, the place formulations in this category follow the pattern PLACE NAME + APPELLATIVE, e.g. *Helsingin rannat* (#9F; Helsinki + GEN + *ranta* 'shore' PL), *Päijänteen saaristo* (#5F; *Päijänne* + GEN + *saaristo* 'islands'). Usually, there is no official name for these places. Moreover, the formulations in question are also used in standard language in the media.

Some of the place formulations in this group state that the place is located between two other places (e.g. *Silta Kulosaaren ja Herttoniemen välissä* 'A bridge between Kulosaari (neighbourhood) and Herttoniemi (neighbourhood))' (#35F). Here, an official name does exist (*Naurissaarensilta*; *Naurissaari* (name of an island) + *silta* 'bridge'), but the respondent may not know it or she may have regarded the longer description as more characteristic. In the description she writes that from the bridge one has a view of the bay in front of *Vanhakaupunki* (a neighbourhood) in all seasons. A special view is also mentioned in other responses; in one, in fact, the place of power was particularly specified as a view behind *Mattolaituri* on a hill (#38F). Here, the name *Mattolaituri* refers to a terrace restaurant named after a jetty for outdoor carpet-cleaning, a practice characteristic of and commonly known in Helsinki.

One of the places in this category is a summer cabin situated in the central part of Helsinki. The name the respondent has given is *Kesämaja Lauttasaaren Länsiulapanniemellä* ('summer cabin located on a cape called *Länsiulapanniemi* in the neighbourhood of Lauttasaari island'). In the description, the respondent has even characterized the place as *Pikku Kesäparatiisi* ('Little Summer Paradise'). The use of initial capital letters emphasizes the importance of the place to the writer. This kind of epithet could also be used as an identifying place name (see also Ainiala et al. 2012:115). In addition, the respondent uses the appellative *mökki* ('the cottage') and a more colloquial form *möksä* to refer to the place, and they could actually be the most common ways for her to talk about it, similar to 'home', 'the office' (see also Schegloff 1972:97; cf. 'the church', 'the park' mentioned in the previous category). When describing the place in more detail, she explains how the walk there from home takes only 20 minutes, during which she turns into another person as she listens to the birds singing (#3F). This is one of the few responses in which the soundscape is explicitly mentioned, although that does not mean that the importance of sounds was not recognized in

other responses. This can be inferred from descriptions in which the calming nature of the environment is emphasized, which would indicate silence or muted sounds. Pitsrick and Isnart have analysed sounds as an important part of placemaking mobilizing feelings of both belonging and nostalgia (2013:506).

As in other categories, nature and especially the sea and the seashore are experienced as key places of power and freedom that support one (#5F; #9F; #19F; #87F). However, in this category it does not have to be a specific place that empowers, but a combination of certain characteristics of nature. The seashore opens up views for those living in the city and the time spent there is described as a time of luxury, in the sense of something precious rather than expensive (#16F). For some, it is nature in the Finnish archipelago in general and a summer cottage there in particular that bring strength and peacefulness:

> Suomen saaristo on niin kaunista, ainutlaatuista, villiä ja karua. Mökillä luonnon keskellä, meren ympäröimänä koen olevani osa luontoa, olen vahva.
> [The Finnish archipelago is beautiful, unique, wild and bare. In the cottage surrounded by nature, I feel as if I am a part of nature; I am strong.] (#11F)

In this example, the respondent becomes one with the environment, which again emphasizes their bodily experience. In another response, the Pori bridge is described as a special place where one can see 'the power of nature in stormy weather, the sunrise in the morning and the sunset in the evening when leaving work, and all those many jackdaws and rooks that spend their time in the structures of the bridge' (#25F). A bridge offers an unobstructed view, sometimes coloured by the city lights, sometimes by the sun. It is a place where the rest of the world disappears (#35F; also #41F). These nature descriptions are very sensory, as in the official name category, and the agency of the material environment is clear. In these responses, the agency of light is given prominence (see Bille & Sørensen 2007). The banks of a river are also described as a lifeline where something is always happening. The flowing water in the river is a symbol of continuity that gives a sense of calm (#32F). The inner-city sea view is described as 'hypnotic, sentimental and empowering' (#38F) and the relationship with the sea as interactive, as if the sea has the role of someone receiving both the happy and the sad emotions of the respondent (#39F). A respondent who in particular named the seashore in Helsinki as her place of power writes that

there are many places in Helsinki that 'thrill' her (#9F), i.e. cause a bodily, affective reaction.

The way nature is present in the descriptions is not surprising (see for example Vannini & Vannini 2020). In this category, a specific wish is expressed to retain the natural places that are deemed important (#89F). However, there are also descriptions in which the respondents highlight the overall urban atmosphere of the city. The inner city can be a 'home' that is full of new activities and people unknown to the respondent. The mixture of familiarity and the potential for small adventures makes the place special. At the same time, urban life is based on the historical layers between the past and the present (#12F; see also #30F). These features are also apparent in another response, where the person's childhood environment is pictured as a place of almost unlimited possibilities. In childhood memories, the opportunity for adventures is emphasized (#14F; #15F):

> Se oli paikka, josta kadut veivät melkein minne vain.
> [It was a place where the streets led to almost anywhere.] (#14F)

> Yleensä kesän helteisin päivä, ruohikko on palanut ja ilmassa makea elokuun tuoksu. … Päivän päätteeksi vilkuttaa Viking Linen palaavalle laivalle, ja raukeana & vähän auringossa kärähtäneenä talsii hitaasti takaisin lauttarantaan, kaupunkiin.
> [Usually the hottest day in the summer, the grass is burned and the sweet smell of August is in the air…. It is wonderful to wave at the end of the day to the Viking Line ship coming home, and walk back to the ferry dock, to the city relaxed and slightly burned by the sun.] (#18F)

Sensory feelings are also expressed here, as they were in other responses. It is important to be able to hear, feel and smell one's surroundings (#26F). In the empowering forest, the specific parts have been given names:

> pupun koti, kellokääpä, satumetsä ja käärmeen kolo
> [home of the bunny, forest creatures, enchanted forest and snake's hole]
> (#50F)

The respondent describes how she often visits this forest together with her family, sometimes just to walk, sometimes to pick berries and mushrooms, and how these specific parts 'must always be checked'. The semantics of their names gives the impression that they have been given together with or by a child (see also Ainiala et al. 2012:114–115); thus, they are probably part of the creation of a 'forest wonderland'. The names are written in lower case and two of them are presented as phrases rather than compound

names. The respondent may thus be emphasizing their status as unofficial names.

In this category, relational expressions are most probably used as place references for the same reason as official names in the previous category: the respondent wants the specific place to be identified as precisely as possible. With regard to their affective character, the descriptions provided for this group are quite similar, as expected, to those given for places identified only by an official place name: the bodily and sensory elements are high–lighted and the senses can be seen as agents in placemaking (see for example Pistrick & Isnart 2013). However, in this category, it is not always a specific place that empowers, but rather the characteristics of certain kinds of places and landscapes make them empowering. The impulses the environment gives are described as important in creating a certain mindscape.

3.3 Unofficial place names

Unofficial place names are names (most often urban) that have not been officially adopted (Ainiala et al. 2012:105–109). Only three names are regarded as unofficial in our categorization: *Sörkän silta* (*Sörkkä* + GEN + *silta* 'bridge'), *Kaivarin ranta* (*Kaivari* + GEN + *ranta* 'shore') and *Pikku-Vesku* (*pikku* 'little' + *Vesku*). The first two are like the previous group in their formation, namely relational descriptions, and they could also be categorized as such. However, since they include a slang name, *Sörkkä* or *Kaivari*, they are analysed here instead. Additionally, we wish to emphasize that all the names in this category include slang names, which make up a subgroup of unofficial names (Ainiala et al. 2012:105).

Sörkkä is a slang name for the neighbourhood of *Sörnäinen* in Helsinki (Ainiala 2014) and *Kaivari* a slang name for Kaivopuisto park in the same city (Paunonen & Paunonen 2000). They are both very widely used slang names in Helsinki and are recognizable even outside the Helsinki region. In both cases, the respondents begin their descriptions by saying that these are familiar places from their childhood:

> Hämeentie 37 on lapsuuden kotini. Sörkän (olen aina sanonut Sörkän en Sörkan) Tuolla sillalla hypättiin narua, siitä näin ratapitskulle, Pääsky-länrinteen puistoon, Kurvin kulmaan, melkein kaikkialle, missä lapsena leikittiin ja braijattiin ja alkavassa nuoruudessa vain 'notkuttiin' friidut ja kundit kimpassa. Se oli paikka, josta kadut veivät melkein minne vain. [Hämeentie 37 is my childhood home. At the bridge in Sörkkä (I have always said Sörkkä not Sörkka), we skipped and from there I could see

> the railway yard, the park of Pääskylänrinne, the corner of Kurvi, almost everywhere we used to play as children and in our early youth when we hung around with lasses and lads together. It was a place where streets led to almost anywhere.] (#14F)

At the beginning of the description the respondent gives the street address (see also Schegloff 1972:97) of her childhood home. Nevertheless, she did not choose to write it as her place of power in the questionnaire, but as mentioned gave a slang name instead. It is noteworthy that the respondent also uses other slang words in her response: *ratapitsku, braijattiin, friidut* and *kundit* (concerning slang, see Ainiala & Lappalainen 2017:132; Paunonen 1994:237–238). The choice of slang words and names instead of standard Finnish variants is probably an indication of a close, even intimate relationship to the place and displays a strong attachment to it. Slang would undoubtedly have been the language the respondent used as a child and in her youth. Generally, slang is often seen as a language belonging to a special age group, in particular youth (Chambers 2009:170–181). (Regarding the use of slang as an emotional language, see also #97F in the Malmi Airport group.)

The metalinguistic comment the respondent offers concerning the name is also of interest. She states, in parentheses, that she has always used the name variant *Sörkkä* instead of *Sörkka*. She thus makes it evident that she is well aware that there are two variants of the name and that the choice between them is often disputed (Paunonen & Paunonen 2000). Metalinguistic comments of this kind are exceedingly rare in the data (however, see #6F in the official names group).

Both these responses, *Sörkkä* and *Kaivari*, may be seen as echoing some nostalgia for memories of childhood and youth, times in the past but not necessarily present or at least meaningful any more. However, *Kaivari* is explained to be the respondent's own territory and as such still carries a specific familiarity (#27F; cf. the responses about Malmi Airport).

Unlike *Sörkkä* and *Kaivari*, the name *Pikku-Vesku* (or *Vesku*) is not linked to the respondent's childhood or youth. In this case, the respondent just says that the place is a magnificent natural area in the middle of the city: 'Water, greenness, beauty' (#23F). The unofficial name refers to a park and lake area in the city of Lahti in southern Finland, officially known as *Pikku Vesijärvi*. The name *Vesku* is commonly known and even sometimes used in the local media. This unofficial name could thus be regarded almost as a 'semi-official' name and it demonstrates the wide continuum unofficial names cover, from widely known names to rarely used microtoponyms

(Ainiala 2014; Ainiala et al. 2012:116–117). Similarly, the two other unofficial names, *Sörkkä* and *Kaivari*, are widely known and, as such, safe enough to be used in a public survey.

In addition, a parallel unofficial name is once mentioned in a respondent's description of their place of power: *Munkshöjdens köpcentrum eller* [or] *'Ostaren'* (#S1). The name is written in quotation marks to indicate its status as an unofficial name. The respondent does not express any personal relationship to this place; rather, the use of the unofficial name is connected to everyday meanings and practices of the place.

Unlike the previous categories, this one displays an ambiguous (even an emotional) way of naming places of power. By using unofficial place names, the respondents have wanted to emphasize either the special role of the place as part of their childhood memories, or its everydayness. In these cases, reading the particular kind of affect from the responses requires a historical understanding of the use of unofficial names and slang. In a way, the affect is performed in the use of language itself. The slang used can occasionally make the descriptions themselves sound harsh and even unemotional, if the reasons for using it as a symbol of belonging and personal history are not understood. For those using slang in their responses, these emotional meanings are self-evident, and in that sense the responses concerned can be seen as directed at a like-minded audience.

3.4 Classifying expressions

In nine responses, classifying appellative expressions are used to refer to places of power. These expressions cannot be interpreted as proper names and they do not, as such, denote a single entity. The responses mention forests, seashores and libraries as meaningful places. Additionally, one answer mentions 'an aesthetic city' and another 'a city café'. In the latter, a specific establishment is mentioned in parentheses, as an example of a nice café. Sometimes specific places are mentioned in the place descriptions.

In these places, it is often the atmosphere that is described as empowering. Just to go to any library 'calms' and 'refreshes' you, and an unspoken connection between the people within the same place is created (#1F). It is the combination of 'impressive collections, spaces and personnel' that empowers (#53F). Cafés, on the other hand, create a more lively 'non-space between the public and private':

> Kahvilan tuoksut ja äänet, arjen luksuksen mielikuvat ja vapaa-ajan asso-
> siaatiot tekevät kahvilassa olemisesta ilahduttavaa, lataavaa ja rauhoittavaa
> vaikka tekisin töitä.
> [The smells and voices, the images of everyday indulgence and associa-
> tions with free time make being in cafés joyful and both energizing and
> calming even when you are working.] (#45F)

This is also the case with more specific cafés: 'The café is a place where time stops' (#51F).

In this category, nature is also emphasized: 'City dwellers also need experiences of nature' (#20F; see also #99F). For another respondent, the seashore offers the best of the city: there, you do not need to talk, but on the other hand it also offers a place for joyful sociality (#7F). The forest is a place where it is 'good to breathe and be' (#29F), where you experience peace and a good feeling (#48F). One respondent even refers to a specific tree in her local park which she can rarely pass by without taking a closer look at it (#49F).

In addition, the aesthetic city is described through attributes that describe an urban atmosphere: cafés, culture and other opportunities to pursue hobbies and exercise (#31F). For one respondent, open space makes her feel better: '[I like] the feeling of space around me and the wind on my face' (#44F).

The group of responses using classifying expressions is substantially different from the other categories. Here, no individual places are mentioned as places of power, but rather several types of places are described. In a strict sense, these are not 'places', since they cannot be understood as entities (cf. Cresswell 2015). The respondents have not wanted to state a precise place and have interpreted the whole question of a power place partly differently from what we as questionnaire designers had in mind. Nevertheless, these answers have helped us to understand the wide spectrum people may have regarding meaningful places. In addition, here too individual places were mentioned, though only in the descriptions. The affective practices present in these descriptions confirm the factors that are also visible in the previous categories: what gives a place its empowering nature is a certain kind of atmosphere, which can vary from busy urban street life to the soothing effect of nature. However, in these descriptions what is represented is more an image of a place of power than a concrete manifestation of it; respondents reported on a *kind of place* that empowers.

4. Conclusions

Places of power renew, calm, invigorate and help in distress. They allow the respondents to be alone and listen to their own thoughts, or make them feel at one with nature. They may have been a 'stepping-stone' to the world or an 'empowering lap' in a time of need. In these places people sense, touch, hear, smell and observe their surroundings (see Olsson, Rinne & Suopajärvi 2021; Pistrick & Isnart 2013). They interact both bodily and socially with their environment, often consciously aiming to meet their needs (see Manzo 2003). The material surroundings of a power place can vary in size and nature, from an extremely specific geographical spot like a statue to a large and sometimes socially more structured entity like a city or a university. The place may be one linked to everyday life or one for special occasions, and it may carry personal, cultural or national meanings with long and life-changing histories. Sometimes the place of power is more of a landscape or an atmosphere than a geographically defined place.

Despite the variety of power places, there are also many similarities when we compare the mechanisms of the agencies in which we were interested: the agency of the materiality of the place, the agency of emotion and affect, and the agency of the person experiencing the place. It is the specific material particularities that arouse feelings of empowerment. These particularities are important because of the cultural and historical meanings people attach to them (Wetherell 2012). Emotions and affective practices, which are also culturally constructed, guide people physically or mentally to these specific places to empower them, and literally change the way people feel about themselves (see Rinne & Olsson 2020:334–339). When a place makes a person feel safe, as one of our respondents wrote, there is a harmony among these three agencies.

The way places of power are identified and named is another layer of placemaking (see Creswell 2015). We found four main ways of identifying a place in the data: official place names, relational place descriptions, unofficial place names and classifying expressions (cf. Schegloff 1972). The process of naming in the context of a questionnaire has influenced the data collected. Since we did not include a map, and did not ask the respondents to give a precise location or name of the place, we gained more varied and even open-ended responses. For example, 'forests' or 'libraries' as places of power would not have been elicited by a more rigid questionnaire.

Official place names and relational place descriptions were the typical ways of referring to one's power place. These ways emphasize the need

to specify the place as accurately as possible. However, in these categories too, it is not only the place as such that is important, but sometimes a certain atmosphere that can also be associated with other places. The most visible way of expressing emotions and affective practices in naming is to use unofficial place names; in this case, our respondents did so using slang. Classifying expressions in themselves carried an understanding of the nature of the place; the idea was a shared understanding of what an aesthetic city, café, sea or forest could mean to a person. The many ways of naming places of power show both the variety of the places and the diverse ways places become empowering.

To give a place a name is a sign of its importance. Names as such do not necessarily always reveal what kinds of meanings, emotions and affective practices are attached to a place. They can be one way of expressing one's feelings towards a place, though, whether it be the 'rose park', the name of the neighbourhood in which you were born and raised, the calming landscape, or the city with its urban buzz. Identifying places of power lends visibility to the power of places and their agency in people's lives.

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Referring to women using feminine and neuter gender: Sociopragmatic gender assignment in German dialects

Simone Busley & Damaris Nübling

Simone Busley & Damaris Nübling (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz). Referring to women using feminine and neuter gender: Socio-pragmatic gender assignment in German dialects.

Abstract: In German, gender is a strongly grammaticalized category and has the function of indicating grammatical agreement between syntactic units. Usually, each noun is assigned one of three grammatical genders. In standard German, nouns denoting women are typically feminine. However, Luxembourgish and some German dialects show a peculiarity: here, the gender of female first names and other parts of speech (e.g. pronouns) referring to women can be both feminine and neuter, depending on the nature of the interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the female referred to. In these varieties, gender assignment is governed by sociopragmatic factors. Sociopragmatic gender assignment is a result of de-grammaticalization, which is reflected in both syntagmatic and paradigmatic gender variability. The study shows that there is considerable diatopic variation in the use and function of gender in references to women. In some dialects, the neuter has become the default gender of female first names; this is a case of re-grammaticalization.

Keywords: first names, grammatical gender, gender agreement, socio-pragmatics, grammaticalization, German dialects, Luxembourgish

1. Semantic, referential and sociopragmatic gender assignment

German has three grammatical or linguistic genders: feminine, masculine and neuter. Moreover, the language is known for the complexity of its gender assignment system (Köpcke & Zubin 1996; 2003). In addition to some (weak) phonological and (strong) morphological assignment rules which can be subsumed under formal principles, there are different semantic principles. Here, a clear distinction has to be drawn between lexical semantic principles in a narrow sense, on the one hand, and referential and sociopragmatic ones, on the other. This article will focus on the sociopragmatic type. In order to do so, we first need to define these three levels, a common feature of which is that they do not operate on the basis of formal properties of the noun. Thus, the 'locus' of gender (in the words of Dahl 2000:106), or the controller (Corbett 1991), may be an inherent part of the meaning of a noun (semantic gender), it may be determined by the concrete referent to which the noun or name refers (referential gender), or it may be determined by the relationship between speaker and (human) referent (sociopragmatic gender). The notion and concept of sociopragmatic gender was first described in Nübling, Busley & Drenda 2013. In most research about gender, these levels are not distinguished clearly enough, leading to a good deal of terminological confusion. As a positive example, Dahl (2000) explicitly differentiates between lexical semantic and referential semantic gender. This article focuses on sociopragmatic gender, which occurs in some German dialects and has only been detected very recently. For a classification of gender assignment principles that includes sociopragmatic gender, see Busley & Fritzinger 2020.

1.1 Semantic gender

Semantic gender implies that the meaning of a noun determines its gender. In German, this holds for nouns denoting fruit, for example, which always have feminine gender: *die Banane, Birne, Mango, Ananas* [the (fem.) banana, pear, mango, pineapple]. The only two exceptions are *Apfel* [apple] and *Pfirsich* [peach], which belong to the masculine class. New fruit is automatically and productively classified as feminine. More importantly, nouns denoting humans are strictly gender-classified by the sex they denote: lexemes denoting females are feminine – *die Mutter, Tochter, Frau, Nonne* [the (fem.) mother, daughter, woman, nun] – and those denoting males are mascu-

line – *der Vater, Sohn, Mann, Mönch* [the (masc.) father, son, man, monk]. This is the strongest rule. So-called 'linguistic gender reversals' (Aikhenvald 2016:102–109), i.e. mismatches between sex and (linguistic) gender, mostly serve to flag deviations from social norms. The few exceptions from the German gender–sex rule denote on the one hand gays – *die Schwuchtel, Tunte* [the (fem.) queen, fag] – or (male) weaklings such as *die Memme* [the (fem.) coward] and on the other hand viragos such as *der Vamp* [the (masc.) virago]. This highlights gender as a social category (social gender). We therefore have to distinguish between linguistic gender, sex and social gender (see also Hellinger 1990).

Interestingly, neuter as the residual 'third' gender, which is common for inanimate objects, is only used for females. Many neuter nouns more generally denote females who are not sexually mature – as in *das Mädchen* [the (neut.) girl] – or unmarried females perceived to be lacking a husband – as in the obsolescent example *das Fräulein* [the (neut.) miss] – or they are used as an insult, e.g. *Weib*, formerly the normal term for (married) women but today often used pejoratively. The fact that some of these nouns are diminutives (ending in *-chen* or *-lein*), which always require neuter gender on account of morphological gender assignment, provides one strategy for generating neuter nouns from originally feminine ones (e.g. *Magd, die* → *Mädchen, das*). Beyond that, many loans from English conceptualize young women as objects of male desire and are given neuter gender, e.g. *das* (neut.) *Girl, Playmate, Chick, Pin-up*. For these borrowings, no diminutive is necessary to produce the same kind of neuter gender for young women. It is striking that, in fulfilling traditional societal expectations, married mothers appear to be protected from 'third gender' use and are it seems considered to deserve the appropriate feminine gender (see Köpcke & Zubin 2005; Nübling 2017). The neuter, on the other hand, marks deviations from this social norm, which has been firmly anchored for centuries. In German, there are in general only a handful of neuter nouns for socially 'deviant' men, and they also never come in the diminutive, presumably to avoid neuter gender (with few exceptions, such as *Muttersöhnchen* [mummy's boy]). To disparage men, the feminine for the 'other sex' is sufficient (see Nübling 2020).

The German nouns *Mädchen* und *Weib* are quite famous, as they serve as examples of what are termed hybrid nouns. Hybrid nouns are characterized by a conflict between grammatical (or, in the terms of Corbett 1991, syntactic) and semantic gender assignment: grammatically *Mädchen* is neuter, but semantically it refers to a female, which triggers the feminine. The

morphological principle is important here because it overrides all the others. So the diminutive suffixes -*chen* and -*lein* demand neuter gender even if they attach to nouns denoting sexed humans such as *Tochter* (fem.) [daughter] → *Töchterchen* (neut.) [little daughter]; *Sohn* (masc.) [son] → *Söhnchen* (neut.) [little son]. This can lead to a mismatch in gender agreement (see also Corbett 2006; 2015; Fleischer 2012; Birkenes, Chroni & Fleischer 2014). According to Corbett's Agreement Hierarchy, which can be reduced to attributive > relative pronoun > personal pronoun for our purposes, agreements are neuter in all positions except the personal pronoun:

> das Mädchen,   das   ich   gesehen   habe …
> the.neut girl   that.neut   I   seen   have
> 'the girl I saw …' (Corbett 1991:228)

The attributive modifier, i.e. the article *das*, and the relative pronoun *das* are neuter, whereas the personal pronoun can be feminine following semantic agreement: *Das Mädchen* (neut.) *arbeitet. Es* (neut.) / *Sie* (fem.) *hat viel zu tun* [The girl (neut.) is working. It (neut.) / She (fem.) has a lot to do]. The fact that 'semantic' agreement depends on the age of the girl denoted leads us to the next assignment level of referential gender. Braun & Haig (2010) found that girls aged 18 are more likely to be referred to by a feminine pronoun, whereas in the majority of cases referring to girls younger than 18, a neuter pronoun is used. This shows that gender is not controlled by lexical properties, but by the referent, in this case by the age of the girls denoted.

1.2 Referential gender

Referential gender depends on properties of the referent (cf. Dahl 2000). As proper names do not carry semantic information, but rather refer directly to a specific object, their gender assignment often depends on the object denoted: in German, names of ships and aircraft are feminine (*die Albert Einstein, die Landshut*), names of towns and states are neuter (*das schöne Heidelberg* [the (neut.) beautiful Heidelberg]), and names of mountains and cars are masculine (*der K2, der Corona*) (see Fahlbusch & Nübling 2014). In general, the last constituent of a word formation determines its gender. But fully proprialized names adopt a specific referential gender, which can differ from the gender of the corresponding common noun. Although the common noun *Stadt* [town] is feminine, city names are neuter even if they contain -*stadt* as their last constituent: *das schöne Darmstadt* [the (neut.) beautiful Darmstadt]. In the case of humans, unisex first names and also surnames do not have gender.

They are only gender-classified if the person's sex is known. If the German surname *Schmidt* denotes a man, it is given a masculine definite article and pronoun (*der Schmidt – er*), if it denotes a woman, the feminine is appropriate (*die Schmidt – sie*). The same holds for unisex (first) names (without nominal gender), as well as for gender-neutral nouns (with nominal gender) such as *Opfer* (neut.) [victim] or *Gast* (masc.) [guest]. The pronouns associated with them can reflect the referent's sex if it does not correspond to the grammatical gender of the noun. Thus, *das* (neut.) *Opfer* [the victim] may come with a feminine or masculine pronoun if the person behind the word is known. The same holds for the pronominal gender of *die* (fem.) *Person* [the person] or *der* (masc.) *Gast* [the guest] if the male or female referent, respectively, is known. This is not obligatory, however.

1.3 Sociopragmatic gender

Sociopragmatic gender has not been described so far as it only rarely occurs in a systematic way, as is the case in some German dialects. As far as we know, it exists for proper names referring to girls and women and only very rarely for those referring to men (Christen 1998; Nübling, Busley & Drenda 2013; Nübling 2015). Here, the relationship between speaker, addressee and (female) referent, together with the whole context of the conversation, governs the choice of gender. Roughly speaking, high familiarity between speaker and referent requires the use of neuter gender, whereas a distant relationship between speaker and referent requires feminine gender. In central and south German regions, first names come with an article indicating the gender of the name. Thus, the speaker's sister is referred to as *das* (neut.) *Anne* [the Anne], whereas the same speaker may refer to a good friend from the sports club whose family moved to the area from another village as *die* (fem.) *Lena* [the Lena]. In reality, the situation is far more complex, as further factors, sometimes referential, trigger gender selection, such as the age of the female, the age gap between speaker and the female denoted, her social status, biographical facts such as having left the village or not, whether the female referent speaks the local dialect or not, whether she is popular or not, whether the conversational situation is relaxed and familiar or not, whether the relationship between speaker and addressee as well as between addressee and referent is familiar, and so on (see Section 3). Most importantly, the choice of gender becomes optional: one and the same female may be denoted by a feminine or a neuter name or pronoun(s) depending, for example, on the conversational situation and/or the

addressee. Referring to one and the same woman, the speaker may use the feminine when speaking to his or her boss, but the neuter when speaking to an old school friend. What we have here is thus a de-grammaticalization of gender, as it has become optional and may be used for sociopragmatic purposes.

In some dialects and in Luxembourgish, the neuter has even become the unmarked gender for females (see area 1 in Section 3.1), in other dialects, the feminine is unmarked, and in still others neither of the two genders is preferred (areas 2 and 3, see Sections 3.2 and 3.3). In these cases, neuter and feminine gender are loaded with sociopragmatic information. They are not interchangeable and create a new functional opposition. Gender has become pragmaticalized. As we know, grammatical gender is strongly grammaticalized: each noun has just one fixed gender value. In contrast to the other two existing nominal categories, number (singular, plural) and case (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative), there is no paradigmatic choice for gender in German. The (present) function of gender is mainly to create grammatical agreement relations (cf. Corbett 1991:320–322). Beyond syntax, however, gender is considered to have no real function. With regard to sociopragmatic gender, it can be concluded that it has developed into a full grammatical category with functional load and paradigmatic variability (cf. Busley & Fritzinger 2021). Things become even more complicated if not only nominal but also pronominal gender is considered. Here, the gender of the female name does not have to be mirrored by the corresponding pronouns: a feminine name can be followed by a neuter pronoun and vice versa, which contradicts the definition of hybrid nouns. There is no mismatch between grammatical (syntactic) and semantic gender as described by Corbett (1991:2015). Instead, this kind of disagreement is used for sociopragmatic purposes (Busley & Fritzinger 2020). Thus, a mother talking about her daughter is likely to say: 'Das (neut.) Anna hat jetzt Abitur gemacht, sie (fem.) geht nach Mainz zum Studieren' [The Anna has now graduated from high school, she is going to study in Mainz]. By using neuter gender, she highlights her intimate relationship to her daughter. With the feminine pronoun she expresses some distance to her because her daughter is going to leave the village and go to university (i.e. a social rise).

Owing to the complexity of these dialectal systems and the fact that they had never been investigated in detail, but also because of the rapid decline of dialects, a group of three linguists started a tri-national project entitled '*Das Anna und ihr Hund* – Weibliche Rufnamen im Neutrum: Soziopragmatische vs. semantische Genuszuweisung in Dialekten des Deutschen und Luxem-

burgischen'. The participating countries with so-called 'femineuter' female names were Switzerland, Luxembourg and Germany. The project was conducted from 2015 to 2020 and funded by the German Research Foundation, the Swiss National Science Foundation and the Fonds National de la Recherche Luxembourg (D-A-CH procedure). It resulted in four doctoral theses and various articles in linguistics (Busley & Fritzinger 2018; 2020; Martin 2019; Klein & Nübling 2019; Baumgartner 2019; Baumgartner et al. 2020; Baumgartner & Christen 2021). The sections that follow offer a brief presentation of the most important findings.

This paper will show that the use of neuter gender for females varies greatly among dialects and differs in terms of frequency, functional load and grammatical properties.

2. Geographical distribution of female first names in the neuter

To investigate the geographical distribution of neuter gender assignment to female first names and pronouns, an online questionnaire was used. It was distributed in particular via social media and the press, enabling it to reach people from west central and southern Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Alsace and the Netherlands. In total, the project received around 5,750 completed questionnaires (about 1,300 for German dialects, 1,750 for Swiss German, and 2,700 for Luxembourgish).

The questionnaire consisted of several parts involving different tasks, which were intended to explore the gender of different agreement targets (definite articles, pronouns, possessive articles). It also contained metalinguistic questions on neuter gender assignment. Since a sociopragmatic phenomenon was being surveyed, strict attention had to be paid to the wording of the tasks. For each task, a fictitious situational context with different referents and conversational partners was predefined. From these contexts, the relationship to the persons involved and sometimes their age could also be derived. For example, the gender of onymic articles was investigated via tasks inviting a free response, e.g.: 'You met your mutual friend Maria for coffee yesterday. Today a friend asks you who you met. What is your answer?' The participants could answer according to their usage, e.g. *die Maria* or *das Maria*.

To investigate gender assignment in Luxembourgish, additional data from the language survey app 'Schnëssen'[1] was analysed. The users were asked to translate given sentences from German or French into Luxembourgish.

Turning to the question of areal distribution, neuter reference to females is found in a large area of western Germany, Luxembourg and parts of German-speaking Switzerland, as well as in Alsace and even parts of the Netherlands and Belgium. Our data comes from the dialect areas of West- and Eastphalian, Low Franconian, Thuringian, North and Central Hessian, Ripuarian, Limburgish, Moselle and Rhine Franconian, Alemannic and Luxembourgish. Findings from historical dialect dictionaries show that this phenomenon must have been considerably more widespread in the past. Today, the use of the female neuter is decreasing dramatically. In the north, it is disappearing along with the dialects, while in the south, younger dialect speakers are replacing it with the feminine. The neuter is most stable in Luxembourgish, where its use even appears to be expanding (cf. Martin 2019).

Figure 1 shows the current distribution of neuter pronouns referring to female persons by dialect area. It is based on the online questionnaire, covering a total of 4,879 data sets from about 1,800 locations. For the Netherlands and Germany, only questionnaires in which the participants indicated that they spoke dialect at least rarely were taken into account. The data comes from a multiple-choice task that was used to examine the pronominal gender when referring to one's own sister. The participants were instructed to imagine that someone was asking them about their sister's age. They could choose between answers with neuter and feminine pronouns, i.e. 'Ääs (neut.) is 54' or 'Se (fem.) is 54'. The proportion of neuter pronouns varies between 2% (High Alemannic) and 97% (Luxembourgish). For the periphery of this main area, the online survey did not provide sufficient data (≤ 10 records per area) to permit valid statements on frequency. It is important to note that the prevalence of neuter pronouns is greater than that of neuter onymic articles (not shown here), as articles do not occur with first names in the more northern dialect areas of Germany and Luxembourg. However, pronouns can be neuter in those areas.

Based on the frequency of neuter pronouns, the distribution area can be divided into three main areas. The neuter is most frequent in Luxembourgish, Moselle Franconian and Ripuarian (area 1, shaded orange in Figure 1).

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[1] Schnëssen is a research and documentation project of the Institute of Luxembourgish Linguistics and Literature (University of Luxembourg). For further information, see their website (https://infolux.uni.lu/schnessen).

Its frequency decreases towards the east and south. In Rhine Franconian dialects and parts of the Low Alemannic territory, the neuter is used more or less frequently depending on the local dialect (area 2, brown). In Switzerland, the lowest percentages of neuter pronouns are found (area 3, blue). We will base the following sections on this subdivision.
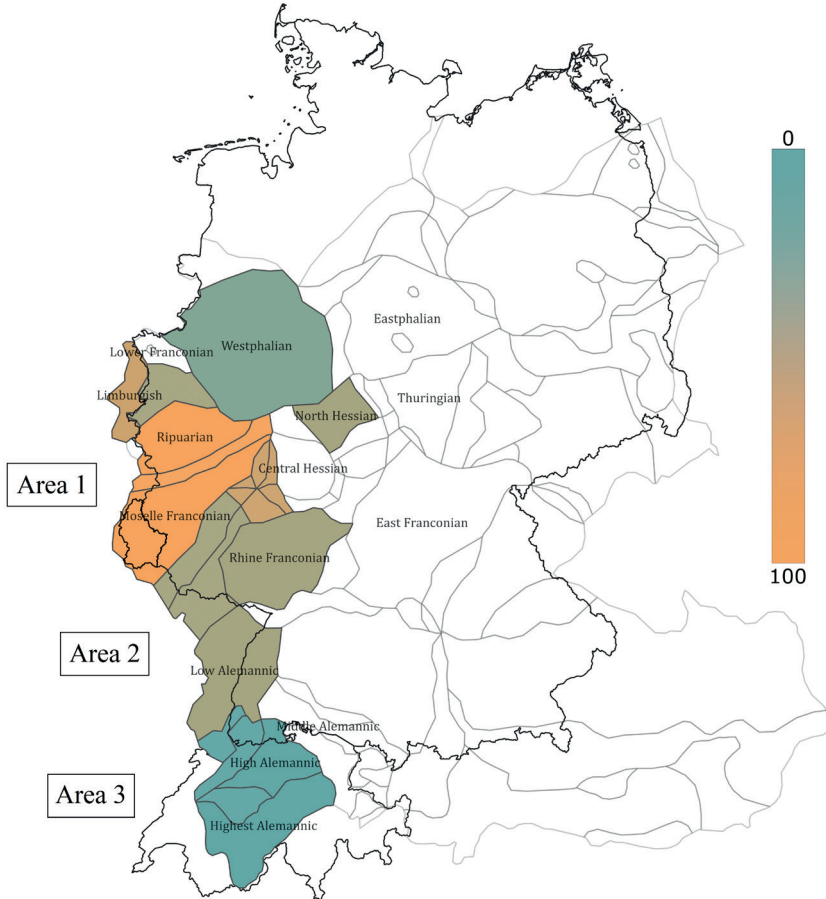

Figure 1: Percentage of neuter pronouns by dialect area (online questionnaire, multiple-choice task)[2]

3. Gender control: Sociopragmatic factors and dialectal differences

Owing to the considerable complexity of sociopragmatic gender assignment, field studies using different methods were indispensable. A total of approx. 240 dialect speakers were interviewed at 37 selected locations in Germany and Switzerland. The interviews were conducted in small groups with 2–3 participants. In Luxembourg, language data was collected from 16 native speakers and 9 Portuguese native speakers regardless of their place of residence. There are no regional differences in gender assignment in Luxembourgish, but it was of interest to see whether Portuguese as a native language has an influence on it.

In Germany and Luxembourg, cloze texts were used to survey the gender of definite articles, pronouns and possessive articles referring to different types of names (first names, surnames, first names in the diminutive), name combinations (first name + surname, kinship terms + first name), and other nouns denoting females (kinship terms, *Mädchen* [girl]). The participants were given 32 short texts in their dialect, each consisting of several sentences with a different number of gaps. These gaps were placeholders for the agreement targets, which were to be entered in writing by the participants. The short texts represented everyday conversations in which fictitious protagonists fulfilled various social parameters (age, relationship). The influence of sociopragmatic factors could thus be measured. These become clear from the context. The text in example 1 was used to examine gender assignment when referring to one's mother:

1) Die Mame mächt jetzt en Spanischkurs ah de Volkshochschol. ____ wollt doch schun immer mol noch Spanien. Senn mir ____ of Chrisdoog eh Res noch Madrid schenge?
[Mum is taking a Spanish course at the community college. ____ (intended: singular third-person pronoun in the nominative case) always wanted to visit Spain. Should we give ____ (intended: singular third-person pronoun in the dative case) a trip to Madrid for Christmas?]
(Example from the cloze text in the dialect of Mardorf, Central Hessian)

In Switzerland, a written questionnaire with different types of tasks was used instead. It contained cloze texts with hypocoristic names, which show a special gender assignment in Swiss German (see Section 3.3).

The field studies focused on oral methods. In one task, four short video sequences were shown to participants, who were asked to describe the characters' activities, e.g. drinking tea, cooking, working, going for a walk, playing

(video experiment). The main characters of these short films were a little girl (Emma, approx. 4 years old), a young student (Miriam, approx. 25 years old), a middle-aged woman (Annette, approx. 50 years old) and a senior (Maria, approx. 75 years old). Their first names were shown at the beginning of the video. In particular, the video experiment was used to examine the influence of the referents' age on pronominal gender assignment.

Moreover, the informants were asked to talk in small groups about photos of their family members and friends which they had brought along themselves (photo talk). This method collected the most natural language data. In contrast to the video experiment, the informants were talking about people they really knew personally. The method was particularly suitable for investigating the influence of personal relationships on gender assignment.

At the end of each survey, a semi-structured interview was conducted with each group, addressing questions about the use and connotations of neuter gender.

Based on these surveys, the following sections show that the regional differences identified in Section 2 are actually a symptom of different socio-pragmatic systems determining the gender of female first names.

3.1 Area 1: (Re-)grammaticalized neuter (and some sociopragmatic residues)

In the Ripuarian and Moselle Franconian dialects, neuter is the default gender of all female first names: not only the article, but also pro-forms such as personal pronouns and possessive articles referring to a female first name are neuter. Table 1 provides an overview of the gender assignment of articles and personal pronouns. The data are based on the cloze text method (cf. Section 2).

Table 1. Gender of articles and pronouns referring to female first names in Ripuarian, Moselle Franconian and the Ripuarian–Moselle Franconian transition area (cloze texts).

Dialect	Gender of articles		Gender of pronouns	
	F	N	F	N
Ripuarian	0.5% (1)	99.5% (223)	8.5% (34)	91.5% (367)
Moselle Franconian	3.3% (5)	96.7% (145)	17.3% (46)	82.7% (220)
Ripuarian–Moselle Franc. transition area	0% (0)	100% (55)	14.7% (14)	85.3% (81)

To focus first on the article, Table 1 shows that the proportion of neuter articles ranges between 96% and 100%. In these dialects, neuter gender assignment can be regarded as (re-)grammaticalized, which means that it is determined by the inherent sex information of the first name ('female' as a semantic feature). Thus, sociopragmatic factors now have almost no effect.

As Luxembourgish is based on Moselle Franconian dialects, there, too, the 'female neuter' is the unmarked case. The definite article in Luxembourgish is syncretic for gender and case, so *d'* as in *d'Anna* could be the singular nominative or accusative, in both feminine and neuter (cf. Nübling 2015:251–255). Thus, gender information only becomes overt when the proper name occurs in the dative. The gender of the article was therefore examined using a translation task involving possessive constructions, which require the dative. The results regarding the possessive dative and *von* periphrasis confirm the stability of the neuter article. Its use has a frequency of over 98% (possessive dative: 98.6% (6,544); *von* periphrasis: 98.7% (1,414)).

2) possessive dative:
dem	*Claudia*	*säi*	*Mann*
ART-DAT.SING.NEUT.	Claudia	POSS [NEUT]	husband

   [Claudia's husband]

3) *von* periphrasis:
de Petzi	*vom*	*Anna*
the teddy bear	of-ART.DAT.SING.NEUT.	Anna

   [Anna's teddy bear]

A further look at Table 1 shows that the pronouns also take neuter gender, but not as consistently as the article. They are more open to sociopragmatic influence. While in these dialects the neuter is the unmarked gender and can always be assigned to every agreement target of a first name, the feminine can be used to express special respect for the referent. Respect is closely linked to age: the feminine becomes more likely the older the woman referred to is, as shown by the data from the cloze texts (the approximate age of the referent could be derived from the context). For female referents up to 20 years old, the proportion of feminine pronouns is just 8%, for women between 20 and 60 years 13.7%, and for women over 60 years 20.9%. This is different in Luxembourgish: Martin (2019:584) shows using data from the online questionnaire that pronouns referring to female first

names (example: *Leonie*, no age information given in the task) are neuter with only a few exceptions (98.7%).

The age dependence of gender assignment can be explained as a residue of an earlier sociopragmatic system in which gender was controlled by age and the nature of the relationship to the referent. We assume that in the varieties of area 1, the gender of female first names used to vary between feminine and neuter and was controlled by sociopragmatic factors, as will be described in Section 3.2. Thus, here too, the gender of female first names was de-grammaticalized, leading to paradigmatic and syntagmatic gender variability. Later, however, owing to its frequent use, neuter gender was re-grammaticalized by being connected to female first names in general. In this process, the neuter lost its dependence on pragmatic contexts and at the same time its paradigmatic variability. The result is a binary gender system for first names, where 'male' corresponds to the masculine, 'female' to the neuter.

For North Frisian dialects (which were not part of our project), an even more radical development is described: here, neuter gender has completely replaced the feminine, even with common nouns (cf. Nübling 2017). These dialects show exceptional two-gender systems, with a masculine and a neuter gender. The underlying process started with female neuters.

To conclude, we can postulate the following rule: neuter gender is always used when the speaker is on a first-name basis with the female person. The first name does not have to have been mentioned earlier in the discourse. It is sufficient if the speaker considers it appropriate to address the female by her first name, as would usually be the case with (exophoric) reference to little girls or familiar women. As a result, a neuter pronoun may even refer to a feminine noun as in (4) (cf. Busley & Fritzinger 2020). Consequently, gender agreement is inconsistent. This tendency is particularly strong for female kinship terms referring to a relative of the same age – *Schwester* (fem.) [sister], *Cousine* (fem.) [cousin] – or to a younger relative – *Tochter* (fem.) [daughter] – who are regularly referred to using a neuter pronoun (see example 4).

4) un deshalb fuhr jo ming schweste (appellative, fem.) als die raiffeisen neu jebaut wurde fiehrt dat (pronoun, neut.) jo emmer von hönge mem rad dürsch die jass.
[And that's why when the Raiffeisen [= name of a bank branch] was rebuilt, my sister always rode her bike through the alley from behind.]
(Photo talk, Ripuarian, informant female, 50)

In cases where the antecedent is a kinship term or another noun apart from a first name – e.g. *Frau* [woman] – sociopragmatic factors (age, relationship, respect) control the gender of the pronoun. Nevertheless, the first name still plays a decisive role. Consequently, neuter pronouns are not allowed when referring to more senior female relatives (e.g. one's mother or grand-mother). Similarly, it is not appropriate to use their first name when referring to them. Instead, it is polite to use kinship terms to address and refer to them. Table 2 shows data from Luxembourgish (Schnëssen[3] and online questionnaire[4]) which demonstrate these reference-dependent differences in pronominal gender assignment (see also Baumgartner & Christen 2021).

Table 2. Gender of pronouns referring to female kinship terms, Luxembourgish (multiple-choice task, cloze texts).

	Feminine	Neuter
Boma [grandmother] *Colette*	99.2% (2,268)	0.8% (18)
Mamm [mother]	98.8% (2,240)	1.2% (27)
Cousine [cousin]	17.3% (58)	82.7% (277)
Schwëster [sister]	7% (88)	93% (1,165)

Note that the gender of the noun can always be displayed in the pronoun (as strict syntactic agreement), though the comparison between these cases shows that the pronominal gender is not primarily governed by feminine kinship terms, but rather by sociopragmatic factors. Moreover, dialect speakers even state that it would be wrong to use feminine anaphoric pronouns with *Tochter* [daughter] or *Schwester* [sister], as this would express too much distance. Conversely, using the neuter to refer to one's mother or a highly respected woman would be considered disparaging.

This influence of age and family role is also reflected in the data from the video experiment (Ripuarian, Moselle Franconian). The informants referred to certain protagonists by the kinship terms *Mutter* [mother] and *Tochter* [daughter], both belonging to the feminine class. The results are very clear: neuter pronouns predominate in the case of *Tochter* (neut. 69%, fem. 31%), feminine pronouns in the case of *Mutter* (neut. 21%, fem. 71%). The neuter pronouns referring to *Mutter* can be explained by the fact that for the same protagonist the first name was also used (*Annette*). In those

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[3] The data are taken from translations of a German (*Cousine*) or French sentence (*Schwëster*) into Luxembourgish.
[4] The data were collected with cloze texts (*Boma Colette*, *Mamm*).

cases, the pronouns were usually neuter (neut. 78%, fem. 22%). The pronominal gender depends on whether the woman in question is conceptualized as an acquaintance referred to by her first name, or as a mother.

Sociopragmatics also comes to the fore when a female first name is combined with a surname. Surnames usually indicate distance, especially in combination with a title such as German *Frau* [Ms] or Luxembourgish *Madame* [Ms]. Martin (2019:585) shows that, in Luxembourgish, pronouns referring to the combination title + family name (*Madame Thill*) are generally feminine (95%). However, the combination of first name and surname causes a conflict: the first name triggers the neuter, the surname the distancing feminine. Martin (2019:591) shows that the age of the referent determines the pronominal gender in these cases. However, neuter pronouns do not steadily decrease with the age of the referent; there must be a cut-off point somewhere between the ages of 20 and 40 at which the neuter shifts to the feminine. For a 20-year-old Julie Mancini, the percentage of neuter pronouns is about 95%, while for the 40-year-old Isabelle Weiler and the 70-year-old Germaine Donven it is about 60% in each case. Overall, the proportion of neuter pronouns is very high, even for the older females. In the other areas, the use of neuter reference is much more limited. This is the topic of the following sections.

3.2 Area 2: Sociopragmatic gender assignment

Area 2 is characterized by gender variability when speakers refer to females. On the one hand, the 'female neuter' is not used in the whole area; it is only a feature of certain local dialects. Thus, it can mainly be found in the western part of the Rhine Franconian dialect area, in Alsace and in the southern part of the Low Alemannic area. On the other hand, onymic gender is much more variable compared with area 1, on both the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic level (cf. Nübling 2015; Busley & Fritzinger 2020). Furthermore, local dialects have developed their own gender assignment systems for female first names. They differ with regard to the frequency of the neuter, its sociopragmatics and its target-specific assignment. Table 3 provides an overview, comparing dialects from the Moselle Franconian–Rhine Franconian transition area, Rhine Franconian and Alemannic dialects and the Central Hessian dialect of Mardorf, based on data from the cloze text method. The numbers refer to the totality of articles and pronouns used in the cloze texts with reference to female first names.

Table 3. Gender of articles and pronouns referring to female first names in Moselle Franconian–Rhine Franconian, Rhine Franconian and Low Alemannic dialects (cloze texts).

Dialect	Location	Gender of articles		Gender of pronouns	
		Fem.	Neut.	Fem.	Neut.
Moselle Franconian–Rhine Franconian transition area	Idar–Oberstein	19.1% (8)	80.9% (34)	43.5% (37)	56.5% (48)
	Gronig	12.1% (7)	87.9% (51)	11.9% (13)	88.1% (96)
Rhine Franconian	Armsheim	55.9% (33)	44.1% (26)	78.5% (91)	21.5% (25)
	Höringen	73.7% (70)	26.3% (25)	84.4% (151)	15.6% (28)
	Donsieders	53.6% (15)	46.4% (13)	66.7% (34)	33.3% (17)
Low Alemannic	Bischoffingen	76.5% (39)	23.5% (12)	85.7% (90)	14.3% (15)
	Kiechlinsbergen	6.7% (2)	93.3% (28)	65.3% (32)	34.7% (17)
	Königschaff–hausen	76.9% (30)	23.1% (9)	97% (64)	3% (2)
	Leiselheim	10.3% (6)	89.7% (52)	32.7% (32)	67.3% (66)
Central Hessian	Mardorf	100% (40)	0% (0)	23% (17)	77% (57)

Overall, the Moselle Franconian–Rhine Franconian transition area shows high percentages for the neuter. In Rhine Franconian, the gender of both articles and pronouns varies. In Low Alemannic, the neuter is only rarely documented. The dialect of Mardorf (Central Hessian)[5] behaves differently, in that the article can only be feminine and the neuter only surfaces in the use of the pronouns.

While in grammaticalized systems (area 1), the neuter correlates strongly with female first names, comments from the online questionnaire originating from area 2 show that, here, gender assignment is controlled by nuanced sociopragmatic factors:

5) Bei Frauen/Mädchen, die man kennt, sagt man meistens *äs/s* (neut.), bei Mädchen, die man nicht kennt, manchmal *äs/s* (neut.) oder *d/si* (fem.), bei fremden Frauen eher *d/si* (fem.).
[If you know a woman/girl you usually say *äs/s* (neut.), if you don't know a girl you sometimes say *äs/s* (neut.) or *d/si* (fem.), if you don't know a woman you say *d/si* (fem.).]
(Freiburg-Opfingen, Low Alemannic, informant male, 40–49)

6) Je mehr man einem Menschen vertraut und je näher man sich steht, desto mehr nutzt man das berühmte *es/das* (neut.). [...] ich mag es auch selbst

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[5] For Central Hessian, very little data is available from the online questionnaire. Therefore no very general statements can be made about sociopragmatically controlled gender assignment in this dialect area. However, the variable system of Mardorf fits the characteristics of area 2.

nicht besonders, wenn mich ein mir nicht sehr nahestehender Mensch mit *es* (neut.) *Lena* bezeichnet. Das täuscht dann doch irgendwie eine Vertrautheit vor, die man selbst nicht so empfindet.
[The more you trust a person and the closer you are, the more you use the famous *es/das* (neut.). [...] I don't like it very much myself when a person who is not very close to me refers to me as *es* (neut.) *Lena*. That somehow feigns a familiarity that you don't feel yourself.]
(Kusel, Rhine Franconian, informant female, 20-29)

Note that in area 1 a neuter first name would not suggest a very close relationship between speaker and referent, but simply that the referent is female. In area 2, the neuter may only be used to refer to a woman who is very close to oneself. Otherwise it will be perceived as intrusive, as stated in (6). In both comments, it is clear that the nature of the relationship plays a decisive role in gender assignment. In addition, the influence of the referent's age surfaces in comment (5). Whether the feminine or the neuter is chosen to refer to a female depends on the complex interplay of the following sociopragmatic factors (cf. Busley & Fritzinger 2020):

1. Characteristics of the referent (age),
2. relationship between speaker and referent,
3. relationship between speaker and addressee,
4. relationship between addressee and referent.

We can demonstrate the complexity of sociopragmatically controlled gender assignment using the example of the village of Donsieders. A comparison of the data from the video experiment and from the photo talk demonstrates the general influence of the factor 'relationship': neuter articles and pronouns for female first names were quite frequent in the photo interview, in which participants talked about females from their circle of acquaintances and female family members (articles: 69% (96) neuter, personal pronouns: 66% (40) neuter). In the video experiment with references to unknown female persons, neuter articles were only found in 7% of cases (2) and neuter pronouns occurred in 28% of cases (46).

In the dialects of area 2 (Table 3), the proportions of neuter articles and pronouns differ more or less strongly from each other. This indicates an inconsistency in the gender agreement of female first names. Neuter and feminine gender can switch within the same anaphoric chain, also depending on the sociopragmatic factors listed above.

An extract taken from the video experiment in Mardorf illustrates this. Here the speaker refers to the little girl Emma, alternating between feminine and neuter pronouns:

> 7) die (ART-FEM.NOM.SING) emma mim kängeru. […] ach, un do hot=s (PRON-NEUT.NOM.SING.) noch e schäfje […]. Freut se (PRON-FEM.NOM.SING.) sich. […] jetz trinkt=s (PRON-NEUT. NOM.SING.) erschtemo wasser. Hot se (PRON-FEM.NOM.SING.) doscht. […] dem (PRON-NEUT.DAT.SING.) schmeckts.
> [Emma with the kangaroo. […] Oh, and there she has got a lamb. […] She is happy. Now she is first drinking water. She is thirsty. She likes it.]
> (Mardorf, Central Hessian; informant female, 84)

As already mentioned, in Mardorf the article of female first names is always feminine. With regard to pronouns, inconsistent gender assignment can be explained by conflicting sociopragmatic factors: on the one hand Emma is a young girl, triggering the neuter, on the other hand she is unknown to the speaker, indicated by the use of feminine gender. Neither the neuter nor the feminine would be wrong in this case.

Gender conflicts also arise when the participants in the conversation have different relationships to the female referent. Here, the choice of gender not only depends on the relationship between speaker and referent, but also on the addressee's relationship to the referent – as well as to the speaker. The following excerpt from a photo talk situation demonstrates this. A married couple (S1 and S3) and an acquaintance of theirs (S2) are speaking about the daughter of S1 and S3 (who is called Sabine).

> 8) S1: dreiezwanzich johr is jo die (ART–FEM.NOM.SING) sabine schun in [place name], weil=s (PRON-NEUT.NOM.SING.) hot jo in [place name] gelernt. […]
> S2: un war se (PRON-FEM.NOM.SING.) dann – hat se (PRON-FEM.NOM.SING.) dann no de lehr glei – is se (PRON-FEM.NOM.SING.) dann glei no [place name], oder was?
> S3: die (PRON-FEM.NOM.SING.) hat erschd – nä, es (PRON-NEUT. NOM.SING.) hat doch e halb stell kriet in [place name], weil die hattn kä volli stell wie se (PRON–FEM.NOM.SING.) ausgelernt hot. Un hot enner gesaht: 'eija, e halb stell konnsche krieje'. Un do is des (PRON-NEUT.NOM.SING.) moins fortgefahr, war middas schun do, no hot=s (PRON-NEUT.NOM.SING.) gesaht: 'des hat jo kä wert'.
>
> [S1: Sabine has already been in [place name] for twenty-three years. Because she did her apprenticeship in [place name]. S2: And was she then – after the apprenticeship, has she then – did she move straight to [place name] or what? S3: First she got – no, she got half a job in [place name],

because they didn't have a full job when she had finished her apprentice-
ship. And then someone said, 'You can get half a job'. And then she left in
the morning, came back at noon, then she said: 'That's no use'.].
(Höringen, Rhine Franconian, informants: S1 = female, 75 years, S2 =
female, 25 years, S3 = male, 76 years)

In this exchange, the articles accompanying female first names are always
feminine, but some of the pronouns are neuter. In (8), the spouses S1 and
S3 are talking about their daughter Sabine. S1 starts with a neuter pronoun.
Their acquaintance S2 is not well acquainted with Sabine and is younger
than her. Therefore, she consistently uses feminine pronouns. Subsequently,
the reference chain produced by S3 shows several gender shifts: by using the
feminine, S3 adapts to the nature of S2's relationship to Sabine, whereas
neuter uses are triggered by the mother–daughter relationship.

   In the last two examples, the gender shifts resulted from the speaker
adapting ad hoc to the specific situation. However, gender shifts between
articles and pronouns can also be functionalized, which means that the syn-
tagmatic split is used to indicate the nature of a specific relationship. This
can be demonstrated by revisiting the dialect of Donsieders (see also Busley
& Fritzinger 2020:371–372). Table 4 summarizes the possible combinations
and their specific sociopragmatic functions.

**Table 4. Agreement types of female first names in the dialect of Donsieders
(Rhine Franconian).**

Type	Agreement pattern	Sociopragmatic parameters
a)	ART.F. – PRON.F.	strangers, highly respected women
b)	ART.N. – PRON.N.	female peers from one's inner circle
c)	ART.F. – PRON.N.	females from one's inner circle (locals, relatives), to whom there is some kind of distance (anti-pathy, great difference in age)

The all-feminine pattern of type (a) is used to refer to strangers or highly
respected women (e.g. one's mother-in-law). It is associated with any kind
of social distance, while the neuter pattern in type (b) refers to females from
one's inner circle (peers, relatives and locals of the same age) and is associ-
ated with familiarity. Particularly interesting is type (c) as a hybrid pattern
of feminine articles and neuter pronouns, which is used to refer to females
who fit the sociopragmatic parameters of both types (a) and (b). The com-
bination of feminine and neuter gender correlates with a crossing of para-
meters of types (a) and (b): the referent is always a woman or girl from the

inner circle of the speaker and therefore qualifies for the neuter. Certain factors, such as emotional distance, however, demand feminine gender. With pattern (c), the referent may be a female who actually belongs to the speaker's inner circle but who has a more reserved relationship to them or who is somewhat estranged (e.g. a cousin who moved away from the village quite some time ago). Referents in this category can include local women who the speaker has known all their life, but who the speaker dislikes. This is illustrated in the following example originating from the photo talk task, where the speaker talks disparagingly about a woman named Brigitte:

9) die (ART-FEM.NOM.SING) brigitte. Do gugg doch mol, jedes macht e normal gesicht, nur das (PRON.NEUT.NOM.SING) muss SO mache!
[Brigitte. Take a look. Everyone has a normal facial expression, but she has to have an expression like THAT.]
(Donsieders, Rhine Franconian, informant female, 50–59)

Pattern (c) also applies to younger female relatives. The fact that they are not referred to with a neuter article as in (b) could be due to the large age difference. Women of the younger generation represent a different type of woman. For the speakers, the neuter fits better with an outdated image of women (rural, domestic) and does not seem appropriate for a modern young female. An informant explains that the feminine article expresses 'appreciation' of younger people. On the other hand, it may be the result of an adaptation to the younger generation's dialect, in which – also related to the changing image of women – the neuter is about to disappear. The fact that the neuter is gradually being replaced by the feminine is also shown by the interviews in Donsieders: older dialect speakers refer to their daughters with a neuter article, but to their (great-)granddaughters with a feminine article, while the middle generation makes exclusive use of the feminine article when referring to their daughters and granddaughters (cf. Baumgartner et al. 2020).

Inconsistent agreement is also found in the pronominalization of feminine nouns such as kinship terms. Just as in area 1, the neuter is off-limits when referring to more senior relatives like mothers and grandmothers. In the case of kinship terms of the same age group or younger – e.g. *Schwester* [sister], *Tochter* [daughter] – the choice of neuter or feminine depends on other sociopragmatic factors, e.g. the relationship between addressee and referent.

3.3 Area 3: The feminine as default gender and the neuter as hypocoristic gender

Area 3 is comprised of Swiss German dialects. Here, neuter articles and pronouns occur in the High Alemannic dialects. Compared with area 2, the 'female neuter' is even more restricted in that it is only used to refer to females from the closest family circle. This is highlighted in the following comment taken from the online questionnaire:

10) Innerhalb der Familie wird bei Mädchennamen eher *s* (neut.) gebraucht als im Bekanntenkreis ausserhalb der Familie. [...] die Elterngeneration sagt immer noch *s* (neut.) *Martina*, *s* (neut.) *Anna*,... Ich selbst sage ausserhalb der Familie ausnahmslos *d* (fem.) *Martina*, *d* (fem.) *Anna*, passe mich innerhalb aber unbewusst an.
[Within the family, it is more common to use the article *s* with female first names than when referring to someone who is not part of the family. Our parents' generation still use *s* (neut.) *Martina*, *s* (neut.) *Anna*,... To refer to females who do not belong to the family, I always use *d* (fem.) *Martina*, *d* (fem.) *Anna*. But when I talk to my family, I unconsciously adapt to their pattern.]
(Aargau, High Alemannic, informant female, 30–39)

The following comment confirms the hypocoristic function of neuter names:

11) [W]enn min Vater mich bi bsundere Glägeheite mit *liebs* (neut.) *Helen* agredt hed, isch das für mich wien en Streicheleinheit gsi, also Koseform. Mini Tochter isch *s* (neut.) *Nathalie*, sie hasst die sächlichi Bezeichnig und loht sich die nur vo mir lo gfalle.
[When my father addressed me as *dear* (neut.) *Helen* on special occasions, it was like a caress, a pet name. My daughter is *s* (neut.) *Nathalie*, she detests it when the neuter is used with her name and she only accepts it when I do it.]
(Lucerne, High Alemannic, informant female, 60–69)

In Swiss German dialects, the 'female neuter' tends to be resisted, especially by the younger generations. In recent decades, women have played a more and more important role in public life, so the neuter, which is associated with privacy, domesticity and village life, is not compatible with a changed (self-)perception of women (Christen 1998:276). As a result, using the neuter together with a female name in public contexts has a pejorative, disparaging effect (Baumgartner 2019). In Switzerland, the 'female neuter' phenomenon has been the subject of feminist language criticism, whereas in Germany it was regarded until very recently as a marginal dialect phenomenon. Because of these developments in Switzerland, the Swiss Ger-

man neuter for females is increasingly limited to contexts expressing the most intimate relationships. In some parts, it is even about to die out.

Evidence of neuter (formerly) being the unmarked gender for females can be found in a grammar of Bernese German, according to which the feminine article was only used to refer to highly respected women (Marti 1985:81):

> [A]lle weiblichen Eigennamen [sind] grammatisch Neutra, und zwar in normaler wie in diminuierter Form: *ds Anna*, *ds Anni*, *ds Anneli* oder *Änneli*. Eine Ausnahme bilden ausgesprochene Respektspersonen [...]. Die neuere umgangssprachliche Entwicklung neigt dazu, das natürliche Geschlecht zu übernehmen: *d Katrin*, *d Helen*, *d Maria*.
> [All female proper names are grammatically neuter, both simplex forms and diminutives: *ds Anna*, *ds Anni*, *ds Anneli* or *Änneli*. An exception is persons who command exceptional respect [...]. The more recent tendency in colloquial language is to adopt the biological sex: *d Katrin*, *d Helen*, *d Maria*.]

Thus, the once highly respectful feminine is increasingly replacing the neuter in all contexts. The feminine is now the unmarked, default gender used to refer to females. This is reflected in the data from our field studies: the proportion of feminine gender assignment to articles and pronouns associated with female first names is significantly higher than the proportion of neuter gender assignment.

Data from the Swiss questionnaire shows that in nine out of eleven locations, the proportion of feminine articles ranges between 86% and 100% and that of feminine pronouns between 70% and 100%. The most notable exception is the village of Nunningen, with a 77.8% share of neuter articles, but exclusively feminine pronouns.[6] Note that a high proportion of feminine articles does not always correlate with a high proportion of feminine pronouns. In data from the villages of Saanen, Plaffeien and Visperterminen for example, the proportion of neuter pronouns is comparatively high (30−42%), despite the fact that the articles are mainly feminine.

Moreover, the data from the questionnaire indicates an influence of the referent's age on pronominal gender assignment: the proportion of the neuter is highest (33%) when speakers are referring to the youngest female, Nicole (daughter, 9 years). For Lena (sister, 45 years) it is 22% and for Erika (neighbour, retired) only 12%. Furthermore, in the video experiment,

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[6] The fact that no neuter pronouns were used for females is due to the methodology. Although they are not reflected in the data, these forms are basically possible in Nunningen and they do occur in our data acquired by other methods.

neuter articles are comparatively rarely documented for female first names (6%), whereas in the photo talk they occur more frequently (19%). This also suggests that the neuter is limited to intimate contexts.

The neuter is often associated with diminutives, since diminutive suffixes such as *-chen* and *-lein/-li* always trigger the neuter, both in standard German and in most dialects (see Section 1). In addition, diminutives have been used much more frequently for women than for men. The Swiss online questionnaire confirms this: when asked which first names ending in *-li* the participants knew from their circle of acquaintances, a majority of 85% (2,280) were female names (see also Baumgartner & Christen 2017).

Swiss German dialects, however, show some special features regarding diminutives. On the one hand, the suffix *-i* can also trigger the neuter, e.g. *ds* (neut.) *Anni*. In other German varieties, *-i* has the additional function of creating hypocoristic names in which the gender of the base is always preserved, e.g. *die* (fem.) *Anni*. On the other hand, Swiss German diminutives show sex–specific gender assignment. Male names in the diminutive are not only rarer, but their article is usually masculine (except in Highest Alemannic), e.g. *dr* (masc.) *Ruedi*, *dr* (masc.) *Hansjakobli* (cf. Baumgartner & Christen 2017). The 'female neuter' has thus retreated strongly in the face of morphological triggers which themselves express closeness and intimacy.

This striking sex–specific gender assignment can also be found with hypocoristic kinship terms such as *ds* (neut.) *Mami/Mueti* [the mummy] versus *dr/de* (masc.) *Papi/Vati* [the daddy]. They occur frequently in everyday language and nowadays even appear in Swiss standard language texts (see Christen 1998). Further examples of lexicalized neuter hypocoristics for female relatives are *Grosi* [granny], *Gotti* [godmother] and *Tanti* [aunty]. Data on *Mami* from the online questionnaire shows that the neuter article is the norm throughout Switzerland (cf. Baumgartner & Christen 2021), but in terms of pronominalization the feminine predominates: in a multiple–choice task, 75% of the participants preferred the combination of neuter article and feminine pronoun, while the combination of both neuter article and pronoun was only chosen by 23%. Feminine articles were selected in just a small number of cases (3%). In contrast, hypocoristic terms for the father (*Papi*, *Vati* or *Dädi*) nearly always take masculine articles (99%). Note that a reference to one's mother or grandmother in areas 1 and 2 can never be neuter, as that would violate the politeness rules. In Swiss varieties, morphology is a loophole through which the neuter is able to pass: it can also be used to refer to more senior female relatives, so that even neuter pronouns

are rare but possible. This again confirms the association between the neuter and the most intimate and familiar relationships in Swiss dialects.

4. Conclusion

In standard German, first names have only one gender, which is derived from semantics: male first names are always masculine, female first names always feminine. The source of gender is therefore lexical. Lexical gender is strongly grammaticalized and serves to indicate grammatical agreement between syntactic units. Hence, the gender of first names and their anaphoric elements always matches.

A closer look at some German-speaking areas has revealed 'female neuters', which are influenced by a variety of sociopragmatic factors. While in area 2 sociopragmatic parameters govern the use of the female neuter, it has become evident that in area 1 the neuter has developed to become the unmarked gender used for girls and women. It only indicates female sex and is not an expression of an intimate relationship. This is because neuter gender used to be and still very frequently is used together with female first names. In this area, feminine pronouns signalling social distance and advanced age are the last remnants of an earlier sociopragmatic system. Thus, a re-grammaticalization has taken place: today, female first names are closely linked to neuter gender. These findings are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Female first names in standard German and German dialects: status of grammaticalization and associated features.

Status of grammaticalization	Source of gender	Agreement	Default gender of female first names	Example	Variety
grammaticalized	lexical (female sex)	consistent	F	*die* (fem.) *Anna* – *sie* (fem.)	Standard German and most German dialects
de-grammaticalized	socio-pragmatic	variable	no default gender	*die* (fem.)/*das* (neut.) *Anna* – *sie* (fem.) / *es* (neut.)	Dialects of areas 2 and 3
re-grammaticalized	lexical (female sex)	(mostly) consistent	N	*et Anna* (neut.) – *et* (neut.), rarely *se* (fem.)	Dialects of area 1 and Luxembourgish

In the Swiss German area 3 we have observed another development, whereby the former neuters are associated with specific diminutive or hypo‐coristic endings. Apart from that, in this area we can observe a decrease in 'female neuters' partly owing to linguistic criticism. Here, the feminine is expanding again and replacing the earlier neuter.

As we have seen, the influence of sociopragmatic factors is extremely diverse, covering everything from the age of the female referent to the relationship of the interlocutors. This can best be explained by the histor‐ical development of the language, which is not the topic of this article. As pointed out by Busley & Fritzinger (2018), the original neuter–feminine choice was governed by the social status of the girl or woman denoted: unmarried, dependent women of low social status who belonged to the domain of a patriarch were usually assigned neuter gender, whereas mar‐ried women and mothers of high social status were assigned the feminine. Thus, the gender system represented vertical social deixis. Over the course of centuries, this vertical system was transformed into a horizontal one by way of pragmatic change, a process supported by currently valid factors such as relationship, familiarity, the conversational situation etc. The present‐day dialectal systems show different blendings of the old and new systems. The fact that, to this day, (grand)mothers mostly resist neuter gender assignment is a residue of the old vertical system. Conversely, young girls and unmarried young women are prototypically referred to using neuter gender.

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The (im)morality of disease names: COVID-19

Elwys De Stefani

> *Die gelehrte medizin liebt es neue benennungen einzuführen,*
> *welche die alten volksthümlichen, unverständlich*
> *gewordenen namen verdrängen, und den begriff*
> *jeder krankheit geradezu ausdrücken sollen.*
> (Pictet 1856:321[1])

Elwys De Stefani (KU Leuven). The (im)morality of disease names: COVID-19.

Abstract: This article offers a literature review of studies on disease names carried out by dialectologists and onomasticians. The analytical part focuses on the COVID-19 pandemic and discusses the names used for the pathogen (*SARS-CoV-2*) and the related disease (*COVID-19*). It homes in on a variety of names used in English for the virus (e.g. *Novel Coronavirus*, *Wuhan virus*, *2019-nCoV*) and for the disease (e.g. *China flu*, *Chinese flu*). It shows that toponymic names reflect a common pattern of naming pathogens and diseases. By analysing two excerpts in which Donald J. Trump uses such names, the article shows how these can be used in divisive and derogatory ways, for political purposes.

Keywords: nosonyms, pathogonyms, ideology, politics, interactional onomastics

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[1] 'Scholarly medicine loves to introduce new designations, which replace the old, popular names that have become incomprehensible, and which are supposed to express the concept of each disease directly.'

Elwys De Stefani

1. Introduction

Diseases and ailments are a universal experience of human existence. Their description and naming are closely related to the ways in which 'disease' (as opposed to 'health') is conceptualised. Hippocrates (5th–4th centuries BC) was one of the first physicians to describe diseases on the basis of clinical observation and a specific conceptualization of the human body, i.e. humoral theory, which introduced a revolutionary way of explaining why humans get ill (Jouanna 2012). Rather than relying on philosophical or religious considerations, Hippocrates sought to find the causes of disease in an imbalance of the four body humours (blood, yellow bile, black bile and phlegm), thereby influencing the way in which diseases and their treatment were perceived throughout the Middle Ages and beyond. Names given to diseases inevitably reflect aetiological models, as is evident, for example, in the case of *melancholy*, from Greek μελαγχολία 'black bile', first attested between 430 and 410 BC (Flashar 1966:21) and used for conditions of extreme sadness and gloom, attributed to an excess of black bile. The name also circulated in epic poetry in the Middle Ages, but was abandoned in the course of the 19th century in favour of other designations, such as *depression*.

As this example shows, by naming a health condition, physicians not only establish a conventional name to refer to 'that' disease, they also identify the condition on the basis of its semiosis and symptomology and hint at its possible aetiology. In other words, naming constructs a condition as a 'disease', while at the same time opening up the possibility of identifying other instances of the 'same' disease. Laypeople face a similar problem: they have available a set of names which they apply to health conditions that they experience or witness, but which from a medical point of view may be categorized differently. For instance, individuals may speak of *flu* to describe illnesses which from a medical perspective are distinct (such as conditions caused by the influenza virus vs a common cold, which is caused by a plethora of other viruses). Hence, by calling a specific symptomatology *the flu*, speakers categorize the condition as an instance of 'that' disease. These examples show, on the one hand, that names for the 'same' disease may vary. On the other hand, they demonstrate that disease names may convey the speakers' beliefs, ideas etc. with regard to the aetiology of the ailment. Moreover, and especially in the case of infectious diseases, names often contain toponymic or ethnic elements (*the Spanish flu*, *Ebola virus disease* etc.). These names are sometimes regarded as morally questionable, as

they are said to establish a direct link between a disease and a geographical area or a people, which may lead to stigmatization.

This article reflects on the relationship between names and diseases by analysing naming patterns observed in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic that hit the globe in 2020. It examines both the names assigned to the virus causing the infection, and those used for the ensuing disease. It offers an overview of studies on disease names carried out in linguistics (Section 2), especially in dialectology (2.1) and onomastics (2.2). It describes the emergence of medical disease terminology (Section 3) and its relevance to the practical work of physicians. The analytical part discusses the way in which the name *COVID-19* was bestowed on the virus by the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO) (Section 4), and then presents the different names assigned to the virus in the first descriptions of it (4.1). Finally, the article focuses on the ideological uses of these names (Section 5). It proposes an analysis, informed by conversation analysis, of the ways in which Donald J. Trump used some of these names in a press conference and during a political rally (5.1). The article extends recent research on the use of *COVID-19* and other related names in newspaper headlines (Prieto-Ramos et al. 2020). However, rather than assuming that disease names constructed with toponymic elements are intrinsically stigmatizing, it shows how their derogatory use emerges interactionally. The moral implications of such usage can be exploited to construct an opposition between a morally superior group of peers and a morally inferior group of opponents, which, in certain contexts, may serve a political agenda. The article thus contributes to an analysis of names from a discursive and interactional perspective. It exemplifies the procedures of interactional onomastics (De Stefani 2016) and describes the (im)morality of name usage.[2]

2. Names of diseases in linguistics

Linguists have addressed names of diseases (or *nosonyms*; from Greek νόσος 'disease') mainly from two perspectives, one more historical and dialectological, the other more theoretical and preoccupied with the onymic status of names. In the course of the 19th century and in accordance with philological ideals, researchers examined names of diseases from an etymological perspective. This line of research almost exclusively studied ordinary names

of diseases (*flu*, *gout*, *plague*), with the aim of providing an etymological explanation and describing the ways in which diseases were conceptualized, in terms of aetiology, in pre-scientific times. This approach partly overlaps with studies carried out by dialectologists, lexicologists, and literary scholars interested in examining the vernacularization of medical treatises written in Arabic, Greek and Latin and rendered in languages and varieties of medieval Europe (Crossgrove 2000). The main interest of these studies lay in describing the foundation of medical terminology in modern languages – with respect to the names not only of diseases, but also of parts of the body, organs, surgery etc. (see Goyens 2013 and Goyens & Dévière 2007).

Onomasticians have embraced a different perspective, focusing on the one hand on the status of disease names (as common or proper nouns), and on the other hand on comparative analyses of ordinary disease names and medical terminology (e.g. *shingles* vs *herpes zoster*). Names of pathogens (or *pathogonyms*, from Greek πάθος 'suffering' and γένεσις 'genesis'), however, have so far not attracted linguists' interest.

2.1 Etymology and dialectology

In the heyday of Indo-European studies, Pictet (1856) offered a comparative study of names of mental and skin diseases, as well as of common symptoms such as fever and cough, in a variety of Indo-European languages. By examining the etymological motivation behind ordinary disease names, the author aimed to describe a 'prehistoric nosology' ('vorhistorische nosologie', p. 322), while at the same time offering insights into how individuals accounted for the emergence of diseases and their causes. Many authors underscored that disease names were often rooted in people's beliefs in malefic and demonic powers, thought to transmit diseases through spells. Similar motivations were identified in dialectological studies, for instance by Jaberg (1951), who described names of common diseases of the fingers in Germanic, Romance and Slavic varieties from an onomasiological perspective. A supposedly malefic motivation does indeed appear in a variety of names, such as German *Hexenschuss* ('witch's shot') and Swedish *trollskott* ('troll's shot') for *lumbago*, and is also reflected in Lessiak's (1911) extensive etymological analysis of the German disease name *Gicht* ('gout'), which is related to Old German *jehan* ('to say, speak, avow'), with the disease believed to be inflicted by bewitchment. These examples show that popular disease names were often morally charged: speakers would identify putative agents (witches, trolls) as guilty of causing diseases.

Lessiak (1911), whose declared objective was 'to make etymologists aware of the very neglected domain of disease names' [die etymologen aufmerksam zu machen auf das sehr vernachlässigte gebiet der krankheitsnamen] (p. 181), referred in his article to an original 1899 publication by the German physician Max Höfler. In his preface to the *Deutsches Krankheitsnamen-Buch*, Höfler mentioned that having worked in both Upper Bavaria and northern Germany, he had noticed that his patients would use a variety of different names to describe their ailments (p. III). To remedy possible problems of communication between patients and physicians, Höfler offered a comprehensive dictionary of disease names (both of humans and of animals) totalling more than 900 pages, which remains an important reference to this day for anyone interested in the topic. It also testifies to the variety of disease names in everyday language, contrasting with medical terminology, which tends to reduce the profusion of names, for both diseases and pathogens.

In the second half of the 20th century, names of diseases were analysed from a variety of angles. Weimann (1953), for instance, examined the names used by an influential physician of the 16th century, Paracelsus. Working with the methods of linguistic geography, Hoffmann (1956) proposed an overview of names of diseases in varieties of German. Finally, Baumer (1962) wrote one of the first comprehensive lexicological studies of disease names carried out on a Romance langue, in his case Romansh.

2.2 Onomastics

From an onomastic point of view, nosonyms pose a set of challenging problems, both with respect to whether they should be seen as common or proper nouns, and with regard to their referential scope. Formally, many disease names show features of common nouns. For instance, some are used with a determiner (*the flu*) or are compound words (*lockjaw*, *headache*). Other names display characteristics of proper names, such as, in English and other languages, capitalization (*Lyme disease*, *Down syndrome*), or are derived from proper names (*Parkinson's disease*, *Isaacs' syndrome*). However, not many studies have addressed the status of disease names. Van Langendonck (2007:245–246) is one of the few authors to have offered a functional analysis of nosonyms. With respect to Dutch, he observed that 'names of diseases that are new, exotic and/or are to be taken seriously appear to be treated as genuine proper names; they are capitalized as well […, whereas] ordinary diseases are not capitalized' (p. 245). He also maintained that some

names of diseases tend to appear in apposition (e.g. Dutch *de ziekte Ebola* 'the Ebola disease'), which he regarded as contributing to their status as proper names, whereas others are not used in apposition (*de ziekte griep 'the flu disease'), which is why he treated them as common nouns. Drawing on this insight, Van Langendonck & Van de Velde (2016) concluded that it 'seems that words for ordinary or older diseases are rarely construed as names, but that new and exotic terms for illnesses can be given name status more easily' (p. 37). While these considerations were based on introspection rather than empirically attested data, Van Langendonck's theory possibly resonates with the intuition of many ordinary speakers and onomasticians. For instance, Bauer (1996) excluded from the category of proper names those names of diseases that he called 'native formations',[3] as well as compositionally transparent names, such as German *Lungenentzündung* ('pneumonia', literally 'lung inflammation'), *Blutvergiftung* ('blood poisoning') and others. He regarded names that cannot be pluralized and that are used without a determiner as more likely assignable to the category of proper names, and mentioned such cases as *Migräne* ('migraine'), *Mumps*, *Ziegenpeter* (both 'mumps'), and *Staupe* ('distemper'), but described them as 'appellatives that at most give the impression that they are proper names' [Appellative, die allenfalls den Anschein erwecken, Eigennamen zu sein] (Bauer 1996:1619). Interestingly, he regarded medical terminology in a similar fashion, since he took scientific names such as *Meningitis* ('meningitis') to be equivalent to commonly used names (*Hirnhautentzündung*, literally 'inflammation of the cerebral membrane'). Clearly, Bauer's (1996) take on disease names differs in many ways from Van Langendonck's (2007) understanding and classification. To my knowledge, a comprehensive account of nosonyms and pathogonyms from an onomastic perspective is still lacking (but see Debru & Sabbah 1998 on names of diseases in Greek and Latin antiquity). Having observed that disease names are absent in many overviews of onomastics (such as Nübling 2012), one must assume that the topic has hitherto been of only marginal interest to onomastic scholars.

3. Medical terminology

Medical terminology has been of central importance to physicians' understanding of their art ever since antiquity: Galen (2nd century AD) was one

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[3] 'Auch Krankheitsnamen sind, wenn es sich um muttersprachliche Bildungen handelt, keine Eigennamen' (Bauer 1996:1619).

of the first physicians to propose a classification of disease names, which he split up into eight categories, encompassing names that refer (a) to the affected part of the body, (b) to the main symptom, (c) to both the affected part of the body and the symptom, (d) to the likely cause of the disease, (e) to a resemblance with an external object, (f) neither to the affected part of the body nor to the cause, (g) to the names of those who first cured the disease, or (h) to the names of those who first suffered from the disease (Skoda 1988:81–83).

In modern times, the first *Nomenclature of Diseases*, authored by the Royal College of Physicians of London, was published in 1869. The medical relevance of this publication is evident from, among other things, the way in which the different disease names were organized. The work structured the names in a taxonomic (basically anatomical) way, by listing them in sections ranging from *general diseases* (pp. 5–28), affecting the whole body, to *local diseases* (pp. 29–174), affecting parts of the body (e.g. *diseases of the eye*, *diseases of the digestive system*), as well as *poisons*, *injuries*, *human parasites* etc. In other words, the practical need not only to uniformly *name* diseases, but also to *classify* them was visible in the structure of the book. Especially since the Enlightenment, several studies have been dedicated to the classification of diseases (see Moriyama et al. 2011). For linguists, it may be of interest to observe that *The Nomenclature of Diseases* provided the names of the conditions in five languages: Latin, English, French, German and Italian.

Ever since then, scientists have highlighted the relevance of using a potentially universally agreed nomenclature. In a note published in *The Lancet*, an anonymous author claimed that '[m]ultiplicity of names for one and the same disease must lead to confusion' and specified that '[t]he name of a disease should connote its etiology, its general or local site, its characteristic symptoms and physical signs, and the pathological effects which it produces in organs and tissues' (Anon. 1918:332). It is remarkable that this list of bases for naming is fairly similar to Galen's classification of disease names mentioned earlier. However, as the anonymous author also wrote, it appears that adopting a nomenclature that applies these rules will not always be possible, for example because the aetiology may remain unknown.

Modern medical names and taxonomies are published and regularly updated by the WHO, in agreement with its member states. The *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems* is currently available in its 11th revision (*ICD-11*), which should be adopted by member states on 1 January 2022. For mental disorders, the American Psychiatric Association has since 1952 published the *Diagnostic and Statis-*

tical Manual of Mental Disorders, which is currently available in its fifth edition (*DSM-5*), and which is largely compatible with the terminology that ICD–11 proposes for mental afflictions.

For medical professionals, naming a condition or a pathogen is of fundamental importance for its classification. A name constitutes a condition as a 'disease', as a 'syndrome' etc., and this may be consequential in many ways. This is shown in the following section, where I examine how the nosonym *COVID-19* and the pathogonym *SARS-CoV-2* were institutionally established as the official names of the related disease – while various other names were used at the same time by institutions and the media.

4. COVID–19

On 11 February 2020, during a press conference held in Geneva, WHO director general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus announced the name that the WHO had just assigned to the 'novel coronavirus'. These were his words:

Excerpt 1 (WHO press conference, Geneva; 04:55–05:24; WHO 2020a)[4]

```
01 DIR   now, (.) to coronavirus. (0.4) .h first of all, (0.6) we now
02       have (0.2) a name (0.8) for the disease. (1.6) a::nd (.) it is
03       covid, (0.5) nineteen. (0.3) and I will spell it. (0.6) cee:: (.)
04       o:: vee:: (.) i: dee:, (0.6) hyphen (0.3) one nine. (1.1) co:,
05       (0.3) cee o, (.) stands for corona as you know, (0.5) vee i,
06       (0.4) stands for virus (.) d for disease. so covid.
```

This short communication had a huge impact on the way we now speak and write about the disease. It is framed as an information delivery regarding 'coronavirus' (l. 01), for which a group not further specified ('we'; l. 01) has found a '<u>name</u>' (l. 02). That name is introduced with a copular construction ('it is'; l. 02) and then occurs as 'covid, (0.5) <u>nine</u>teen.' (l. 03). The director general accomplishes (at least) two consequential actions here: he first announces that the language material he is about to produce should be categorized as a '<u>name</u>' (l. 02), and he then produces that name in a prosodically segmented fashion as two units, i.e. 'covid,' (articulated with a continuing intonation) and '<u>nine</u>teen.'. He thereby offers a sample of how the name is to be pronounced. Subsequently, he provides an illustra-

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[4] All the excerpts have been transcribed following the conversation analytic conventions established by Jefferson (2004).

tion of how the name should be used in writing, by reference to graphemic (C – O – V – I – D; ll. 03–04), punctuational ('hyphen'; l. 04) and numerical ('one nine.') units. Finally, he provides the motivation for this name choice, explaining that CO 'stands for <u>co</u>rona' (l. 05), VI for 'virus' (l. 06), and D for '<u>di</u>sease.' (l. 06). The numerical part of the name, which refers to the year the virus was first observed, is not explained, however.

Media all over the world immediately picked up this name and used it in their coverage, mainly in the forms *COVID-19* and *Covid-19*. Clearly, the director general's announcement has been interpreted as an 'initial baptism' (Kripke 1972) of a newly observed condition, while at the same time establishing that condition as a new disease (rather than as a syndrome etc.), more specifically as a viral disease. While name bestowal is assumed to be a fundamental act of naming in many onomastic theories (see Coates 2006), we observe here how this is achieved in an institutional setting. Importantly, the excerpt shows that the category 'name' is of emic relevance, as it is used by the director general himself (l. 02). With this announcement, the director general overrules a situation report published on 30 January 2020, i.e. two weeks before the press conference from which the above excerpt is taken. In that report, the WHO recommended 'that the interim name of the disease […] should be "2019–nCoV acute respiratory disease" (where "n" is for novel and "CoV" for coronavirus)' (WHO 2020b). Of course, the wording *interim name* categorizes *2019-nCoV acute respiratory disease* as a name with a limited 'lifespan'. It also shows that in this institutional setting, 'naming' a new disease cannot be reduced to a single act of bestowal. Rather, it is a procedural undertaking that involves interactions between different individuals and institutions. However, while still in the process of finding a 'definitively' acceptable name, individuals and institutions need to be able to refer to 'that' disease for practical reasons. '2019–nCoV acute respiratory disease' meets that need, but does so with resources that are complex and in contradiction of the WHO's own guidelines on naming new infectious diseases (WHO 2015), which recommend that '[n]ames should be short […] and easy to pronounce' – in different languages, one might add.

At the same press conference, the director general explained the importance of having a unique name for the disease in the following words:

Excerpt 2 (WHO press conference, Geneva; 06:02–06:20; WHO 2020a)

```
01 DIR   having (.) a name (0.2) matters, (0.4) to prevent the use of
02       other names, (0.5) that can be (.) inaccurate, (0.4) o:r (.)
03       stigmatizing. (0.8) .h it also gives us, (0.4) a standard
04       format, (0.3) to use, (0.3) for any future (.) coronavirus
05       (0.4) outbreaks.
```

Here, the director general mentions several reasons for 'having (.) a name'. A name establishes uniqueness, thereby reducing the number of ('preventing') other names; it provides an accurate reference to 'that' specific disease; it avoids possibly 'stigmatizing.' names; and it offers a 'standard format,' for the description of future outbreaks caused by the same pathogen.

From a linguistic perspective, one could condense these explanations by observing that the name establishes monoreferentiality, avoids any connotations, and is precise and semantically transparent. These are the three dimensions that are often regarded as paramount for scientific nomenclature (Goyens 2013:43). While these conditions appear to be fulfilled for the name *COVID-19*, which is now the widely accepted name of the pandemic, it is more than questionable whether coming up with a name to be used in institutional settings 'prevents' the emergence of other names, which may be used in other settings or for specific purposes. Also, I argue that what counts as a 'stigmatizing' and therefore morally debatable name is generally not related to specific characteristics of the name, but rather to the way in which individuals and communities use and/or perceive specific names.

4.1 The discovery of the virus and first naming attempts

Before the name *COVID-19* was introduced by the WHO director general, the condition was generally referred to using the name of the pathogen that was believed to cause it. In a statement entitled 'Novel Coronavirus – China', released on 12 January 2020, the WHO (2020c) wrote about the disease outbreak observed in Wuhan: 'The cluster was initially reported on 31 December 2019 […]. The Chinese authorities identified a new type of coronavirus (novel coronavirus, nCoV), which was isolated on 7 January 2020'. This, however, was not the first time the compound name *Novel Coronavirus* had been used. In fact, it had appeared as early as 2003, in both scientific and press articles in several languages, such as English (*novel coronavirus*; Falsey & Walsh 2003), French (*nouveau coronavirus*; Benkimoun 2003), and German (*neuartiges Coronavirus*; Henn 2003). At that time, it

was used to refer to the pathogen that was later confirmed to be responsible for the SARS outbreak observed in multiple countries in 2003. The nosonym *SARS* was coined only a few weeks earlier. On 11 February 2003 the WHO reported an outbreak of 'acute respiratory syndrome' in China (WHO 2003a), and on 12 March 2003 another report described cases of 'severe, acute respiratory syndrome of unknown origin' in Hong Kong and Vietnam (WHO 2003b), while the wording *Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome* (*SARS*) was used in a report published on 16 March 2003 (WHO 2003c), and the label *SARS-CoV* (*SARS Coronavirus*) was subsequently used as a pathogonym (Rota et al. 2003). Because the pathogen causing COVID-19 is phylogenetically related to SARS-CoV, it has recently been named *SARS-CoV-2* by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses, replacing the label *2019-nCoV* (standing for '2019 Novel Coronavirus') previously used (Chen 2020; WHO 2020d).

Clearly, the label *Novel Coronavirus* does not serve the purpose of taxonomic classification. Its use is indexical, and it seems to refer to a virus that is identified as belonging to a specific family (in this case *Coronaviridae*), but whose specific taxonomic position has not yet been determined. In other words, while the *Novel Coronavirus* identified in 2003 is a different pathogen from the *Novel Coronavirus* that the media talked about in 2020, the same label is used. By calling a pathogen *Novel Coronavirus*, the infectious agent is thus constituted as 'new' and as 'so far unknown', but at the same time as 'in need of more research'. It is only once a name is announced (see Excerpt 1) that the pathogen becomes a distinctive entity assigned a specific position in the taxonomy of viral species.[5]

When having to decide on scientific names for pathogens and diseases, expert groups rely on different rationales. Because the names of pathogens and diseases serve dissimilar practical purposes, pathogonyms are not necessarily related to the names of the diseases they cause (Gorbalenya et al. 2020:537). In the case of pathogens, the name is based on the genomic features of the microorganism and is intended to convey its taxonomic classification. For diseases, according to current guidelines, names should be chosen in such a way as 'to minimize unnecessary negative impact of dis-

[5] Incidentally, the first attested use of the name *Coronavirus* dates back to 1968 and is found in a short report published in *Nature*, where the electron microscopic appearance of the newly identified virus was described as 'recalling the solar corona'' (Almeida et al. 1968). Hence, the name is derived from an astronomical term. The word *corona* (from Greek κορώνη 'garland') was used in antiquity for specific celestial phenomena.

ease names on trade, travel, tourism or animal welfare, and avoid causing offence to any cultural, social, national, regional, professional or ethnic groups' (WHO 2015:1). Those responsible for naming diseases are therefore advised to avoid, in nosonyms, references to geographical locations, populations and (industrial) occupations, as well as names of persons, animals and foods. Based on a quantitative assessment, Prieto-Ramos et al. (2020) examined the extent to which the WHO naming guidelines were respected in newspaper headlines on COVID-19 that appeared in January and February 2020, labelling as 'inappropriate' any uses not in line with those guidelines. In the following section I show that the (in)appropriateness of a name lies in the eye of the beholder. Stigma is not a property of names per se, but rather is established interactionally.

5. Disease names and the 'others'

Researchers have identified several coronavirus species that are pathogenic to humans, two of which have been assigned names relating to the place of the first observed outbreaks, i.e. the *New Haven coronavirus* (Esper et al. 2005) and the *Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus* (*MERS-CoV*), the latter being the name approved by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses and the WHO (de Groot et al. 2013). It thus appears that naming a pathogen after the site of its outbreaks has until recently been a common practice. And indeed, the official WHO list of pandemics and epidemic diseases (WHO 2020b) mentions a plethora of names referring to geographical areas, e.g. *Crimean–Congo haemorrhagic fever* (first used as *Crimean haemorrhagic fever–Congo virus* by Casals et al. 1970), *Lassa fever* (named after an outbreak in Lassa, a Nigerian municipality), *Marburg virus disease* (formerly called *Marburg haemorrhagic fever*, named after an outbreak in a laboratory in the German city of Marburg), *Nipah virus infection* (according to Lee et al. 1999 named after the Malaysian village of Kampung Sungei Nipah, which suffered a major outbreak in the 1990s), and, of course, *Ebola virus disease*, named after a river in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where an important outbreak was observed in 1976. Toponyms are also used in more well-known names of diseases and pathogens, such as *Lyme disease* (Lyme, Connecticut) and the *Coxsackie virus* (Coxsackie, New York) (Abel 2014). It should thus not come as a surprise that initial reports of the outbreak in Wuhan (China) named the pathogen with reference to the toponym, i.e. *Wuhan virus* (Phillips, Mallapaty & Cyranoski 2020). This

is in line with a a decades-long tradition of naming (infectious) diseases after the place of their first, or first significant, outbreak. However, simultaneously, a variety of other names began to be used in the media, such as (*New*) *China virus* (BBC 2020a), *China coronavirus* (BBC 2020b) and *Chinese virus* (Courthouse News Service 2020); see Prieto-Ramos et al. 2020. These forms, which all stem from January 2020, can hardly be described as proper names. They appear, at this stage, to be more like descriptive labels informing readers, by economically selected means as is typically the case with headlines, of the main topic of the related articles. Also, at that time, no official name had been established for the newly observed illness, and a first draft of the related pathogen's genome had just been published on 11 January 2020 (Zhang 2020) and was identified as *Wuhan-Hu-1* (i.e. *Wuhan-Human-1 coronavirus*). Another name for the virus that appeared in the literature was *Wuhan seafood market pneumonia virus* (Santoni & Vergni 2020), but this name was later abandoned after scientists had excluded any association of the disease with seafood.

It is understandable that scientists and journalists alike chose to refer to Wuhan when talking about the new disease and virus: reports had identified an illness of unknown aetiology and there was a practical need to label the condition and the related pathogen. Names such as *Wuhan virus* and *Wuhan flu* (Coughlin 2020) appear to have served two purposes. On the one hand, they managed to refer succinctly to an individualized referent (i.e. 'that' specific virus, and 'that' specific flu) by reference to the city that suffered the first major outbreak. On the other hand, they made it possible to present the related referents as different entities with respect to the popular and scientific taxonomy of diseases – as also reflected in the label *Novel Coronavirus*. Indeed, the name *Wuhan virus* suggests some sort of uniqueness (as it relates to a specific outbreak that has taken place in that municipality), and is therefore in line with other names of diseases and pathogens that include names of cities in their names (*Lyme disease*, *Coxsackie virus* etc.). The same does not seem to apply to the labels *China virus*, *China flu* and *Chinese virus*. Indeed, in contemporary medical nomenclature it is rare for names of larger areas, such as countries, and related adjectives to be used (*Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus* and *Crimean–Congo haemorrhagic fever* being among the few examples).

However, the use of adjectives relating to a nation or an ethnic group in nosonyms has been a well-known naming pattern across the centuries. An emblematic example is the variety of names given to syphilis, a disease reportedly first observed in Naples during the French invasion that

pitted Charles VIII of France against the Holy Roman Empire (1494–98). The disease was called *mal francese* 'the French evil' in Italian, *morbus gallicus* in Latin and *the Frenchman* in English, while in French it was called *le mal napolitain* 'the Neapolitan evil' (Abel 2018). Höfler (1899:721–724) lists a variety of names for *syphilis* that have one thing in common: they all refer to a geographical area (or an ethnic community) that relates the disease to 'others' – names like *Franzosenseuche* (German) 'the French plague' and *Spaansche pokken* (Dutch) 'Spanish pox', among many others. Another example is of course the influenza pandemic known as the *Spanish flu*, which claimed millions of victims between 1918 and 1920. Although the area of the first outbreaks has not been identified with certainty, it seems clear that it was not Spain. So why was the illness called the *Spanish flu*? The pandemic started in spring 1918, when World War I was still in progress. However, the media would not report its spread, presumably because such reports would have depicted the populations concerned as 'weak'. Spain, however, had chosen to remain neutral during the conflict, and the Spanish newspapers did not face such censorship. Hence, reports about the pandemic were circulated by the press in that country, and when the news broke that King Alfonso XIII of Spain had contracted the disease, the flu pandemic was more firmly associated with the label *Spanish* (Vasold 2009).[6]

As these examples show, the use of toponyms (either as nouns or as adjectival derivatives) in designations of diseases is a long-established practice, and the reasons for it seem to be twofold. Such names may relate to the area in which the first cases or important outbreaks of the disease were reportedly observed (or, in line with Galen, to the community of individuals who first suffered from it), but they have also been used to hold 'others' accountable for the existence and spread of disease. This Janus-faced feature of toponymic nosonyms and pathogonyms is at the centre of current discussions about the appropriateness of names such as *Wuhan virus* and *China/Chinese virus/flu* in recent media coverage, especially since ethnicity and nationality are traits of individuals that have been used recurrently in stigmatizing ways (Goffman 1963:4). A significant number of incidents of prejudice and xenophobia are reported to have occurred both within China, directed against inhabitants of Wuhan, and outside the country, against individuals assumed to be of Asian origin (see Wikipedia 2020). Many journalists have connected

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[6] However, older uses of terms equivalent to *Spanish flu* are also attested. Höfler (1899:470) reports that an influenza epidemic observed in Germany and northern Europe in 1580 was called *spanischer Pip(s)* 'Spanish cold', because it was believed to have been imported by Spanish soldiers.

such xenophobic incidents to the use of these names (e.g. Aratani 2020), and debates have emerged about whether *Wuhan virus* and *China/Chinese virus/ flu* were racist names per se, implying that using other names (i.e. with no toponymic or ethnic component) might have led to fewer incidents.

In the light of the discussion in the preceding paragraphs, it appears that the above-mentioned names are not intrinsically racist; they could indeed be used and heard as purely descriptive labels (as with so many other nosonyms and pathogonyms). However, evidence shows that *Wuhan virus*, *China/Chinese virus/flu* and other designations are actually *used* in morally charged ways that construct oppositions between communities.

5.1 *Divide et impera*

In this section I show how onymic designations such as *China/Chinese virus/ flu* are constructed as morally and ideologically charged terms. I analyse two short excerpts stemming from institutional settings, a press conference and a political rally, both involving the former US President Donald J. Trump, whose use of *China/Chinese virus/flu* had met with criticism. On the one hand, the analysis shows how interactants orient to the potentially racist import of these names. On the other hand, it unpicks how such names are used in ways that are not only derogatory, but also a means of constructing opposing parties in a political debate.

During a press conference held at the White House on 18 March 2020, ABC correspondent Cecilia Vega (VEG) asked Donald J. Trump (TRU) why he kept speaking of the 'Chinese virus' (l. 01):

Excerpt 3 (Press conference, The White House, 18 March 2020; 23:14–24:03; NBC News 2020)

```
01 VEG   okay. (.) why do you keep calling this the Chinese virus.
02       there ar:e reports of dozens of incidents of bi- bias against
03       Chinese-Americans in this country, .hh your own a:ide secretary
04       Azar says he does not use this term, he says ethnicity does not
05       cause the virus, (0.5) why do you keep using this.
06       [a lot of people say it's racist.
07 TRU   [cause it comes from China.
08       (0.4)
09 TRU   it's not racist at all no, (.) >not at all.< (0.3)
10       it comes from (0.3) China.
11       (0.5)
12 TRU   that's why. (0.3) comes from China. (.)
13       I [wanna be accurate.  ]
14 VEG    [you have no concerns] about
15       Chinese-[Americans in this coun]try [(    )] the aides behind&
16 TRU           [yeah    please   joh:n]    [please]
```

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17 VEG    &you [are y]ou [comfortable with this term?]
18 TRU        [uh:: ]   [I    have-   uh   great-  ] I have great love
19         uh (0.4) for: all of the people (.) from our country but,
20         .hh uh::m (.) as you know China (.) tried to say (0.4)
21         at one point, (0.5) maybe they stopped now, (0.5) that it was
22         caused by (.) American soldiers. (0.5) that can't happen.
23         (0.3) it's not gonna happen. (.) not as long as I'm president.
24         (0.3) uh: it comes from China.
```

At l. 01, the reporter utters what is formally describable as a question, and recognizable as such from the very beginning ('<u>why</u>'; l. 01). However, she does not stop her turn once the question is grammatically complete. In what follows (ll. 02–05), she appears to account for the question she has just asked by evoking episodes which she manifestly relates to this specific name, such as '<u>do</u>zens of incidents of bi- bias against Chinese-Americans' (ll. 02–03), and by referring to Trump's 'a:ide secretary Azar' who reportedly does not use 'this term' since 'ethnicity <u>does</u> not cause the virus,' (ll. 03–05). The way in which Vega accounts for her question is interesting not only because of the link she establishes between the use of the name *Chinese virus* and incidents of prejudice against what she represents as a community, i.e. Chinese-Americans. She also depicts the component *Chinese* as relating to 'ethnicity' (l. 04) – rather than, for instance, to geography. In other words, she treats *Chinese virus* as referring to 'the virus of the Chinese people', rather than, say, to 'the virus that was first observed in China'. By accounting for her question in this way, Vega shows that with her turn she is not 'just' asking a question, she is actually criticizing Trump's use of the name *China virus*. This is also visible in the turn expansion she utters at l. 06, when she adds that 'a lot of people say it's <u>ra</u>cist.' – where the accusation of being '<u>ra</u>cist' is presented as coming from 'a lot of people'. In overlap, Trump provides an answer ('cause it comes from China.'; l. 07) that promotes an understanding of the component *Chinese* as relating to the country, rather than to the people. He then rejects the categorization of the name as 'racist' (l. 09), after which he repeats his answer: 'it comes from (0.3) <u>Chi</u>na.' (l. 10). The formatting of this turn-constructional unit (TCU) (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974) is remarkably different from its first version at l. 07: indeed, Trump allows a 0.3-second pause to occur after 'it comes from'. This enables him to highlight the subsequent constituent '<u>Chi</u>na.', which is furthermore prosodically marked on the first syllable. By segmenting his turn in this way, he emphasises '<u>Chi</u>na.' as the 'reason' behind his naming practice. He subsequently accounts for his answer by saying 'I wanna be accurate.' (l. 13). While this turn is not taken up by Vega, who overlaps with a follow-up question on 'concerns about Chinese-

Americans in this country' (ll. 14–15), it is presented as a legitimate reason for choosing the label *Chinese virus*. 'Accuracy' can normatively be expected to be appreciated, certainly in institutional settings, but claims of accuracy have also been shown to be involved in ethnic stereotyping (Whitehead 2018). Trump's claim that *Chinese virus* is an 'accurate' (l. 13) name for COVID-19 is not challenged. Indeed, if, as Trump claims, *Chinese* has to be heard as 'coming from China,', then this assertion may not be factually wrong – although, given the timeline of the outbreaks referred to in Section 4, using a country name such as *China*, rather than the name of a city, in this case *Wuhan*, could have been treated as 'not sufficiently accurate'. However, in response to Vega's follow-up question (after an attempt to address another journalist; l. 16), Trump discloses a very different reason why he holds 'China' responsible for his way of naming the virus. By saying that 'China (.) tried to say […] that it was caused by (.) American soldiers.' (ll. 20–22), he assigns human agency to 'China' ('tried to say'), thereby using the proper name not as a merely geographical term, but with reference to not overtly mentioned (political) agents. By reporting that 'China' had allegedly attributed the virus to 'American soldiers', he depicts the name *Chinese virus* as a sort of response to what he displays as a claim that 'can't happen' (l. 22). What was, at first sight, presented as a mere geographical reference to the country that suffered the first COVID-19 outbreaks is now recognizable as a name intended to blame China, not only for being the country the virus 'comes from' (l. 12), but also for having claimed, allegedly, that 'American soldiers' had 'caused' (l. 22) it. This explanation, possibly motivated by geopolitical considerations, fosters a perception of 'Chinese virus' as a derogatory term, here directed at Chinese officials.

By using *Chinese virus* – in obvious opposition to the name *COVID-19* recommended by the WHO – Trump suggests the legitimacy of this alternative name. Consequently, individuals using *Chinese virus* can be seen as supporting Trump's ideas and politics. This is particularly visible in the subsequent excerpt. It is taken from a rally organized on 23 June 2020 in Phoenix, Arizona, for about 3,000 students. It was held three days after another rally (20 June in Tulsa, Oklahoma), at which Trump had used the names *Chinese virus* for *COVID-19* and *Kung flu* for the disease. The excerpt starts after Trump has talked about the wall his administration is building on the border with Mexico. He has just mentioned that the Mexican town south of San Diego is 'heavily infected with COVID' (not transcribed), and now addresses a question to the audience about whether anybody has seen his speech in Tulsa (l. 01):

Excerpt 4 (Trump rally, Phoenix, AZ, 23 June 2020; 34:07–35:14; Global
News 2020)

```
01 TRU   did anybody see my speech the other night on Saturday night?
02 AUD   [*cheering-------------------------------------5.5*]
03 TRU   [yeah. (1.1) so. (1.2) what I said the other night] there's
04       never been anything where they have so many names I could give
05       you::: nineteen or twenty names: °for that° right?
06       (0.5)
07 TRU   it's got a:ll different names. wu:ha::n, (.) .hhh
08 AUD   ((chuckling-1.6))
09 TRU   go- wuha:n's::- w'z catching o:n, .hh
10 AU1   ((shouts name?))
11 TRU   coronavirus:: right?
12 AU2   kung flu::
13 AU3   KUNG FLU::
14 AUD   ((multiple voices hearable))
15 TRU   kung flu: yeah,
16 AUD   [*cheering-9.1-->
17 TRU   [(0.9) (° °) (0.4) (°yeah°) (1.3) kung flu. (3.3) covid (0.3)
18       covid ninetee:n] covid.
19 AUD            -->*]
20       (0.5)
21 TRU   I say what's the ninetee:n covid nineteen some people can't
22       explain what the nineteen. give me the ke-
23 AUD   ((chuckling))
24 TRU   covid nineteen I said that's an odd name.
25 AU4   (wuha:n)
26 TRU   I could give you (a) many many names.
27       (2.4)
28 TRU   ((click)) (.) some people call it the Chinese flu:, the
29       China flu,
30       (0.9)
31 TRU   right? (0.2) they call it the (0.4) China (.) as opposed to
32       Chi- [the China, (2.0) I've never seen anything like it.]
33 AUD        [*cheering-3.9----------------------------------*]
33 TRU   (.) but here's the story. (1.0) we: (0.3) are going to be
34       stronger, (.) than ever before [and it's gonna be soon.
35 AUD                                  [*cheering-->>
```

At l. 02, the audience (AUD) responds with a loud cheer, which is heard
not only as a positive response ('yeah.'; l. 03), but also as an appraisal of
the speech he held on the occasion referred to. In his subsequent turn,
Trump relates what he said at his earlier rally about *COVID-19*, namely
that 'they have so many names … °for that°' (ll. 04–05). He assigns the
multiplicity of names to entities or individuals who are not further speci-
fied ('they'; l. 04). He then mentions one of the names 'they have,' namely
'wu:ha::n,' (l. 07), after which he momentarily halts his turn, giving the
audience the opportunity to respond. As l. 08 shows, a faint chuckling
can be heard from the audience as a response. At l. 09 Trump utters the
same name for the second time, claiming that 'wuha:n's::- w'z catching
o:n,' and again leaving an opportunity for the audience to respond. One

member of the audience (AU1) appears to shout a name at this point (l. 10), thereby displaying co-participation in Trump's listing of alternative names for COVID-19. Trump mentions 'coronavirus::' as the next name, which is followed by the tag 'right?' (l. 11). Significantly, at this point members of the audience (AU2) respond with another name, 'kung flu::' (l. 12), which someone (AU3) shouts out (l. 13). Trump ratifies this name at l. 15 with the words 'kung flu: yeah,'. What follows is extended and loud cheering from the audience (l. 16). Clearly, they are participating not only in establishing a list of names, but also in approving the use of one or other of them: whereas 'wu:ha::n,' (l. 07) was met with chuckling, 'coronavirus::' (l.11) was replaced by the audience with 'kung flu::' (ll. 12–15), which was then cheered at length.

Trump further extends his list of names while the cheering continues, mentioning again 'kung flu.', 'covid', and 'covid nineteen' (ll. 17–18). Again, these latter names do not meet with a particular response from the audience, as the pause at l. 20 shows. At ll. 21 to 24 Trump represents *COVID-19* not only as a somewhat difficult name ('some people can't explain what the nineteen.'; ll. 21–22), but also as 'an odd name.' (l. 24), thereby calling into question its legitimacy. He then introduces two more names, 'the Chinese flu:, the China flu,' (ll. 28–29), again relating this use to 'some people'. On this occasion, too, Trump offers the audience the opportunity to respond. He suspends his turn, as the continuing intonation on 'flu,' (l. 29) shows, but receives no response from the audience (l. 30). Trump then creates a second opportunity for a response, first with a tag ('right?'; l. 31), and then by stating again 'they call it the (0.4) Chi_na_'. Note how he allows a short pause to occur before pronouncing 'Chi_na_', which he utters with emphasis on the last syllable. He then expands his turn with the words 'as opposed to Chi- the Chi_na_,' (ll. 31–32) and now finally receives a loud cheer as an audience response (l. 33).

In this excerpt there is a strong orientation, both from the audience and from Trump, towards treating names such as *Kung flu* and *China flu* as 'cheerable' names, whereas names such as *Coronavirus* and *COVID(-19)* are met with less involvement. Clearly, in their interaction, Trump and his audience are not just determining which name(s) should be used, they are also establishing and displaying their complicity, their having the same views on the matter. That this short episode serves other purposes than just 'talking about names for COVID-19' is visible in the turn at ll. 33–34, which Trump formats as a sort of upshot of his previous talk ('but here's the story. (1.0)'; l. 33), although it appears to be only loosely connected to

talk about COVID-19. His words 'we: (0.3) are going to be stronger, (.) than ever before' (ll. 33–34) can be heard in many ways, given that the basis for comparison of 'stronger' is not mentioned,[7] but they clearly exhibit the political dimension of his talk. Hence, choosing to speak of the *China virus* etc. serves Trump's political agenda in different ways. It allows him to blame 'China' for the spread of the disease (thereby possibly downplaying his own responsibility for how the United States has dealt with the pandemic); it enables him to set names which in his view are 'accurate' (see Excerpt 3) against names that are 'odd' (l. 24); and it allows him to use that onymic opposition to foster a number of dichotomies such as 'they' (l. 04) and 'China' (l. 31) vs 'we' (l. 33), which may also be heard with reference to the opposition between the two main political parties in the US. Perhaps one of the most striking aspects of this excerpt is that, throughout it, Trump ascribes the use of 'so many names' (l. 03) for COVID-19 to others, namely, 'they' (l. 04) or 'some people' (l. 28), while at the same time exploiting that very multiplicity of names for his own political purposes.

6. Conclusion

In this article I have examined the naming patterns observed in connection with infectious diseases and their pathogens. The study has provided an overview of the literature on nosonyms and pathogonyms, which is still scarce (Section 2). In the medical domain, naming has been shown to be linked to considerations of classification, especially in the case of pathogens, which are organized in taxonomies (Section 3). In the case of COVID-19, name bestowal was found to have occurred in successive steps (Section 4), rather than in a 'single act' as is often described in the onomastic literature. I have shown that toponyms and derived forms of them are frequently used in the names both of diseases and of pathogens, and that in many cases they refer to the place in which important outbreaks were observed (Section 5). In line with this tradition, the virus responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic was initially named with reference to the city of Wuhan in China (Section 4). In many languages and countries worldwide, names such as *Wuhan flu*, *China flu* and *Chinese flu* have also been used, and have met

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[7] Given the sequential position in which this turn occurs, the most obvious candidates for the comparison are (stronger than) the virus or China. However, since this talk was produced as part of a political rally, it is not unlikely that it can also be heard as relating to Trump's political opponents, i.e. representatives of the Democratic Party.

with disapproval because they have been felt to be racist. While it appears difficult to affirm that a name is 'racist' per se, my analysis of how Donald J. Trump has used these names in interviews and rallies has shown the divisive drift of that usage (5.1). How patients deal with (new) diseases has been the subject of sociological studies, for example on how HIV and AIDS led to grassroots activism, which allowed patients 'to make politics out of retroviruses' (Latour 2005:23, n. 118). In this article, another way 'to make politics out of' a virus, this time a coronavirus, has been reported. By examining the ways in which nosonyms and pathogonyms are used, promoted, contested etc., I have shown that names themselves can be the locus of political debate. As such, they become a vector for creating and sustaining both inclusive and adverse groups in such a way as to engender a variety of opposing (albeit not overtly named) aggregations. The (im)morality of disease names resides precisely in the fact that ordinary and institutional agents can use them in ways that go beyond the merely referential designation of 'that' disease. In this respect, it is striking that the WHO still uses numerous names of diseases and pathogens that contain toponymic references, in blatant contradiction of the 2015 naming guidelines. While those guidelines recommend the avoidance of 'stigmatizing' names (in medical literature), this article has shown how ordinary stigma can be reintroduced by a morally and ideologically charged use of alternative names.

This article has demonstrated the benefit of analysing empirical data – stemming from newspaper articles, but also from institutional settings of interaction. It offers an illustration of how detailed analysis of interactional data can lead to new insights into the use of proper names, thereby contributing to the field of interactional onomastics.

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Socio(historical) onomastics through the language-philosophical lens, with reference to early New England titles of civility

Adrian Pablé

Adrian Pablé (University of Hong Kong). Socio(historical) onomastics through the language-philosophical lens, with reference to early New England titles of civility.

Abstract: This paper offers a number of semiological reflections on proper names. It contrasts the Saussurean approach to names with the related socio-onomastic (i.e. Labovian) approach and draws conclusions about their theoretical coherence and empirical viability. It further argues that an 'informationist' approach to names, which introduces a conception of the sign compatible with the cognitive sciences, does not advance our understanding of either semiology or onomastics, being fixated on a questionable analogy of the human mind/brain to the computer. Instead, the paper promotes an alternative approach to names based on an integrational semiology as developed by the linguist Roy Harris. The second part of the article revisits a study on colonial New England titles of civility and suggests that sociohistorical onomastics, like socio-onomastics, is founded on a dubious metaphysical assumption concerning the ontology of 'language'.

1. Preliminaries

In the introduction to the volume *Socio-onomastics: The pragmatics of names*, the editors Terhi Ainiala & Jan-Ola Östman (2017:1) declare the aim of their book to be the study of 'names as elements in language': not only in their function as 'identificatory or reference devices', but more importantly in terms of how they accomplish 'a variety of culturally, socially and inter-actionally relevant tasks'. The editors (2017:6) define socio-onomastics as the systematic study of 'the way speakers actually use proper names in their daily activities', i.e. how names become pragmatically (rather than semantic-ally) meaningful (2017:5). The sociopragmatic approach to proper names, as envisaged by Ainiala & Östman, seeks to integrate the analysis of proper names with analyses of language use in general (2017:6). At the same time, however, they insist that socio-onomastics is 'really a *different perspective* on communication' (2017:16), drawn from onomastic research – an independent disciplinary field, albeit with strong ties to general linguistics.

This paper wishes to introduce such a 'different perspective on com-munication', though not exactly in Ainiala & Östman's sense. It is a per-spective that also entails a different conception of the proper name itself. In the first part of the paper I shall invite the reader to engage in a theoretical reflection, which deals with questions in the philosophy of language, in par-ticular the relation between socio-onomastics and semiology. In the second part the focus will be on a *sociohistorical* onomastics, for which a previous study of mine will serve as the point of departure: the said study reconstructed how the use of early New England titles of civility was structured sociolinguisti-cally, as revealed by late seventeenth-century courtroom transcripts (Pablé 2009a). I shall argue that socio-onomastics as an empirical (i.e. sociolinguis-tic) discipline presupposes a certain language philosophy, which includes a broad conception of 'linguistic codes' and a 'telementational' understanding of verbal communication (the idea that communication serves the purpose of transferring concepts or ideas, from the speaker's mind to the hearer's). Socio-historical onomastics is founded on the same metatheoretical presuppositions as socio-onomastics, though their respective epistemological points of depar-ture are notably different: historical approaches to language cannot rely on the researcher's linguistic intuitions or on informants' linguistic experiences. Trust is placed in the researcher as a competent detached analyst and texts are assumed to play the same role as real-life informants: in fact, as Fleisch-man (2000:46) points out, the latter act as 'native speakers' of so-called 'text languages'.

I am not concerned here with typological disputes about what counts as a proper name and what not, but the focus on nominal titles (of address) in the second part of the paper requires touching upon the subject, however briefly. There has been a lack of consensus among onomasticians as to whether forms of address, titles and honorifics are 'proper names': given their 'lexical' nature and having a general meaning, they are different from proper names identifying individual persons or animals, individualized objects, particular places or events, etc. Their onymic character would seem less disputable when they occur together with a personal name, thereby becoming part of what is commonly referred to as a 'proper noun phrase' (Allerton 1996). For example, a chapter on forms of address and titles (Taavitsainen & Jucker 2016) was included in the recent *Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming* (Hough 2016). As in the case of ethnonyms (Koopman 2016), onomastics struggles with questions concerning disciplinary boundaries, among them the question about the nature of the entity designated by a proper name, i.e. do names identify as their designata entities considered collectively? In translation studies, proper names and titles of address are considered as a common category, namely 'linguistic realia' (Rühling 1993), and hence primarily as a 'language-specific' phenomenon (Zimmer 1981). For Saussureans, proper names are in fact specific to 'the language', while onomastic scholars influenced by structural (i.e. Labovian) sociolinguistics have preferred to assign names to a separate 'onomasticon', though with strong links to the lexicon. In turn, the pragmatist will remind us that as vocatives, titles of address fulfil the same communicative function as proper names, whether in conjunction with individual names or without them: that is, they address a particular person (or group of people) in a particular situation.

It is important to point out in the context of this contribution that I shall not be concerned with any traditional grammatical or typological distinctions – or with any ontological questions arising out of those very distinctions. In fact, I shall propose that the grammarians' nominal classification of proper names and common nouns is the result of a particular (ethnocentric) view of language and of the non-linguistic world, and how the two allegedly relate to one another, which the linguist Roy Harris has termed 'the Myth of Reference' (Harris 2009a): the belief that words identify entities in the real world in a stable one-to-one relation. Part of Harris's critique of this myth thus concerns the question of how proper names signify, the answer varying significantly depending on who provides it: structural linguists, philosophers, historians or neuroscientists.

However, irrespective of these mutually opposed semantic doctrines, my critical focus here will be on a particular conception of the sign common to all of them, namely a view of the sign as abstract and detachable from the sign-making individuals themselves. The abstract sign is the hallmark of all theoretical orientations labelled 'segregational' by Harris (1996). As a counter-perspective to the segregational approach, this paper will introduce Harris's 'integrational' conception of the sign (Harris 1981; 1996; 1998) and present a critical account of its empirical consequences. In fact, I shall argue that from an integrational perspective, there is no 'socio-onomastics', just as there is no 'sociolinguistics'. Integrational linguistics only acknowledges the first-person perspective and declares the third-person perspective – the foundation of empirical linguistics – to be a theoretical fiction. This radical position follows directly from accepting an integrational conception of the sign as 'indeterminate in both form and meaning' (Harris & Hutton 2007).

2. Onomastics and segregational semiologies: names as abstract signs

2.1 Saussurean vs Labovian notions of 'fixed code'

Socio-onomastics orients towards a Saussurean-inspired sociolinguistics and as such is based on three presuppositions, which Figueroa (1994) defines as being of a 'metatheoretical' nature, namely that (i) proper names are abstract linguistic signs, which is why they are shared by the members of a linguistic community, (ii) the use of proper names correlates with sociological variables of various kinds, which is why some names are used by some speakers and not by others, and (iii) the members of the community share the same evaluative norms concerning the use of these names. Socio-historical onomastics projects these presuppositions onto the past, based on the assumption that past linguistic usage is subject to the same constraints as present-day usage, as postulated by the 'uniformitarian principle' (Labov 1972). I consider sociohistorical onomastics (or historical socio-onomastics) to be a sub-discipline of sociohistorical linguistics (or historical sociolinguistics) – the sociolinguistic study of now extinct varieties of a language (Romaine 1982; Nevalainen & Raumolin Brunberg 2017) – applied to the special case of names.

    Saussure's posthumously published *Course in General Linguistics* (1983) was a revolutionary text in many ways, not least because of the author's radical conception of the linguistic sign as a purely mental unit consisting

of two inseparable parts: a signifier (sound pattern) and a signified (mental concept), whose value is determined holistically in relation to the other signs of the language system. Saussure considered proper names to be part of this system ('la langue'), i.e. he considered them to be linguistic signs, just like all other signs of the language. In fact, if they are not 'linguistic', it is not quite clear what kind of signs they would be. In other words, from a Saussurean perspective, proper names must be part of the linguistic system, i.e. they are bipartite signs (signifier–signified) like any other linguistic signs, regardless of how onymic meaning allegedly differs, referentially speaking, from appellative meaning. As part of a bold theoretical move, Saussure in fact rejected the nomenclaturist view of languages. By severing the linguistic sign from the non-linguistic world, Saussure ingeniously managed to explain how different people across different situations 'knew' the same linguistic signs and interpreted them identically. Meaning, for the Saussurean, is a matter of how a sign relates to the other signs within the system, rather than of linking a sign to something non-linguistic. From the point of view of Saussurean semiology, form and meaning are thus inseparable, which contrasts with what Harris (1996) has called the 'surrogational' perspective, whereby the sign is only the form (what in lay linguistic usage is commonly conceived as 'the word') and its meaning is a material thing in the external world or an idea formed in an individual's mind. Thus Saussure refuted the widely accepted surrogational nature of signs, i.e. the notion that a sign is something that stands for (is a surrogate for) something other than itself. At the same time Saussure did not want to deny that speakers do indeed ask questions like 'Of what is this a sign?' and that they do explicitly link words to things. By assigning such instances to the level of *parole*, i.e. actual linguistic usage, however, Saussure was able to safeguard the notion of 'a language' as something purely psychological, collective and self-contained. According to Saussure, the linguistic sign manifests itself in *parole* as a 'word' (through the activities of speaking and listening). What is uttered or heard, however different, must be relatable to the same linguistic abstraction in *langue* if speaker A and hearer B are to encode and decode the same sign. In turn, the structural sociolinguist William Labov, a semiologist and Saussurean (Figueroa 1994:75), introduced the notion of the *variable* so as to free Saussure's abstract linguistic sign from its confinement to *langue*. The abstraction of interest in Labov's theory is the variable underlying the different – semantically identical – variants used in spoken interactions with varying degrees of frequency depending on both extra-linguistic factors (speakers' sociological profiles, degree of formality) and

intralinguistic factors (e.g. phonotactic environment, syntactic environ-
ment). *Parole* thus became the true protagonist of post–Saussurean socio-
linguistics, though the aim of describing the language system remained,
however with the focus shifting to the various 'subsystems'.

Socio-onomastics has traditionally adopted a Labovian macrosocial
approach to society (Akselberg 2012), in which language use is taken
to reflect the social stratification characteristic of a speech community
(Cameron 1990). Onomasticians of a structuralist mindset (e.g. Walther
1971; Nicolaisen 1995) proposed that proper names exist as signs in a sepa-
rate collective system, named the *onomasticon*, which retains close ties with
another collective system, the lexicon. To them, Saussure's rigid notion
of *langue* as a fixed code containing all linguistic signs failed to take into
account that proper names are different from other words: they are not
shared by members of the community in the same way that members share
the lexicon. As Walther (1971:54) puts it: 'As regards name usage, the com-
munity is split up into infinitely many groups of name users, which differ
in both kind and number with every name' [Beim Namengebrauch ist die
Gemeinschaft [...] in unendlich viele, bei jedem Namen verschiedenartige
und verschieden grosse Namenbenutzergruppen aufgesplittert]. Nicolaisen
(1995:389) echoes Walther's proviso, adding 'competence' to 'use': '[A]part
from potential dialects and idiolects, the user of such onomastica will dis-
play different levels of competence in their onomastic range, their pre-
cision of usage, and in the act of naming'. Arguably, this is not only a
watered-down version of Saussurean linguistic theorizing, but also a view
hardly compatible with structural sociolinguistics, where the communal
fixed code turns out to be made up not only of 'social dialects' and 'style
lects', but of an infinite number of 'mini-codes' (shared by a minimum of
two speakers) and 'idiolects' (one-person codes). The notion of 'personal
fixed codes', as well as the notion of 'mini-codes', must be rejected by the
Saussurean and the Labovian alike, for in such a scenario no shared psycho-
logical reality can be established as regards speaker A and hearer B (two
members of the same linguistic community) and thus mutual understand-
ing between them can no longer be (theoretically) guaranteed. Ultimately
it would not even be clear where and how to draw the line between A's
idiolect and B's idiolect: do they belong to the same 'language' or to two
different 'languages'? Or does the notion of 'idiolect' render the notion of
'a language' redundant? As regards socio-onomastics, it could be argued
that these questions do not matter, the onomasticon not being part of 'the
language' in any strict sense. Such a view, however, presupposes that it

is always clear which sign belongs to which abstract system (onomasticon vs lexicon). As the aforementioned case of the ethnonym shows, however, there is no such clear position in theoretical onomastics. Or take the example of the proper noun phrase 'Monsieur Buche': are there two systems involved or only one, two intrapersonal idiolects (the idiolectal lexicon and the idiolectal onomasticon) or rather one? Explaining how it is possible for A and B to verbally communicate, however, is precisely what a linguistic theory interested in *parole* should, arguably, accomplish. Scholars like Walther and Nicolaisen disavowed Saussurean idealism, preferring to heed their own linguistic intuition, which suggested that no two people know the same number of proper names or possess the same knowledge of how to use (i.e. apply) those names. Little did it matter whether the 'multiple fixed-code' theory they adopted was theoretically coherent at all. For them, there was no contradiction in saying that the members of a linguistic community, while being speakers of the same language, do not share the same onomasticon. However, an analogous argument could be made as far as the lexicon is concerned: as Harris (2008) noted in his critique of Saussure's synchronic system known to all the members of the linguistic community: is there a real person who could claim to know *all* the words of the language at any given point in time?

As Saussure obviously realized, linguistic knowledge does not only encompass words 'in the language' (structurally speaking): at the level of *parole*, speakers would also encounter words that are not part 'of the language'. What kind of knowledge does knowing such words constitute? For the Saussurean, these cases do not involve *langue* in any way. On hearing speaker A utter 'moshpit', hearer B treats it as a word of the language (because uttered by A, a speaker of the same language). However, at quite a different level of reality, no mental signified and signifier are generated in B's brain on hearing 'moshpit'. Instead B might try to analyse the word semantically (e.g. 'mosh' + 'pit'), i.e. B treats it like an individually existing, semantically motivated word. In this scenario, the Saussurean would argue, *moshpit* is not structurally meaningful: it is a word but not a linguistic sign (though it might be one sometime in the future). Nonetheless, *moshpit* may already be recorded in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. However, the problem with dictionaries, from a Saussurean standpoint, is that they do not distinguish strictly between *langue* and *parole*. They treat word forms as separable from word meanings. A Saussurean linguist would thus disagree with the statement by the variationist sociolinguists Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg (2017:2) that 'it is only when an innovation has been adopted by

more than one speaker that we can talk about change in the linguistic system'. From a variationist (i.e. Labovian) point of view, in fact, *moshpit* could be a lexical innovation which is synchronically competing with an older, still predominant form. However, both A and B would have to be aware of the new form (and its social evaluation in the community) if uses of the two variants are to constitute 'social facts' (in which case they are of interest to the structural sociolinguist).

In conclusion we could thus say the following: the structuralist theorist faces a dilemma that involves deciding between Saussure's theoretically coherent yet empirically impracticable paradigm (insisting on the primacy of *langue* and taking it as one's starting point) and Labov's empirically viable yet theoretically incoherent paradigm (insisting that there are multiple – semantically invariable – fixed codes governing speech).

2.2 Structuralist vs surrogationalist onomastics

Both the Saussurean and the post-Saussurean take on proper names are thus riddled with theoretical muddles. Roy Harris is the linguist who has identified the muddle and described it most clearly (e.g. Harris 1996; 2003). As Harris (2003:70) puts it, 'the semantics of proper names is a notorious problem area for structuralist accounts of language', adding that 'from Saussure onwards, no theorist of structuralism has ever given a clear account of the status of proper names, or explained how we decide which names merit inclusion in a language's inventory of linguistic signs'. Harris goes on to state:

> For if it is true, as the structuralist holds, that all meanings are determined holistically by contrast with other signs in the system, it would follow that the meaning of names like *England*, *Hastings* and *William the Conqueror* must depend on what other names the language-system includes. Accordingly, in eighteenth-century English and twentieth-century English these names must have had different meanings. (Harris 2003:70)

This passage is in need of further clarification. Harris is referring here to Saussure's crucial concept of 'synchrony': if eighteenth-century English and twentieth-century English are two different 'languages', i.e. two different linguistic systems, we have to accommodate the fact that the latter contains linguistic elements that were not part of the former (and vice versa). If we were to assume (wrongly, from a Saussurean theoretical point of view) that proper names known collectively in both eighteenth-century

and twentieth-century English (e.g. *Cicero*) meant the same (were the same linguistic signs), then any names used in twentieth-century English but not in eighteenth-century English (e.g. *Charles Dickens*) could not have been part of *langue*, i.e. the names were used by speakers here and there (at the level of *parole*), but had not (yet) been accepted at the abstract level of the collectivity. However, this is an implausible stance to take: *Charles Dickens*, by Saussurean (i.e. purely theoretical) standards, must have been a proper name structurally accepted into twentieth-century English, i.e. a fact of *langue* (after all, the whole nation had read Dickens). Admitting a new name like *Charles Dickens* into the language structure is not simply a matter of addition: in fact, said structural expansion had repercussions on other linguistic signs belonging to the same system, i.e. it changed the meaning of other names, e.g. *William Shakespeare*. From a Saussurean perspective, the main question to ask as regards a proper name is 'What is the system-internal value of that name?' – not 'Who does the name refer to?' That is why the Saussurean will fundamentally disagree with the surrogationalist, who believes names to be stable identificatory devices: for the latter, in fact, the name *William Shakespeare* identified the very same English playwright in eighteenth-century English as it did in twentieth-century English.

The conundrum that Saussurean linguistic holism generates, if taken seriously, derives from the common (lay) surrogational assumption that a proper name identifies an individual person or an individual place, whose material existence is not a matter of 'language' (as a psychological reality). The surrogational thesis of how proper names get their meaning remains plausible until the communication theorist starts wondering how members of the same speech community manage to apply a proper name to the same referent on all occasions. In fact, this is what we have to assume if we take proper names to be identificatory devices for non-linguistic entities that exist prior to and independently of speakers applying a linguistic label. How do speakers of the same linguistic community achieve such communicational stability? One way of dealing with that question is to take a sceptical position on communication, as philosopher John Locke did. Locke still subscribed to a surrogationalist semantic doctrine, one however in which words were defined psychocentrically rather than reocentrically. According to the psychocentric thesis, words are surrogates for individuals' private ideas, whereas the reocentric thesis treats words as surrogates for things in the real world (Harris 2005). In Locke's semiotics, knowledge is thus always knowledge of private ideas and not knowledge of things, which cannot guarantee successful interpersonal communication in the absence

of the things themselves. The Saussurean definition of 'a language' as a communal fixed code dissolves Locke's argument that words are imperfect instruments for communication (at least on a theoretical level), as ideas are declared to be collectively shared rather than private. Moreover, there is no attempt on the Saussurean linguist's part to link words with things. The following example illustrates how the structuralist stance on names cannot possibly be reconciled with a reocentric surrogational stance: there are speakers of one language who identify a place called *Bellenz* and there are speakers of another who identify a place called *Bellinzona*, and according to the structuralist these are two separate and unrelated facts of language. The observation that *Bellenz* and *Bellinzona* actually identify one and the same location is not relevant from a structuralist point of view, as that observation is made from outside a language system and hence does not align with anybody's language qua psychological reality. The remark might catch the structural sociolinguist's attention, however, if it turns out that *Bellenz* and *Bellinzona* are signs belonging to the same language (or 'variety of language', as the sociolinguist prefers). Now we are dealing with 'two different ways of saying (referring to) the same thing': a case of sociolinguistic – rather than linguistic – variation. By positing that languages supply both form and meaning – and not only forms – the structuralist has an advantage over the surrogationalist when it comes to explaining how A and B manage to communicate with one another. However, when pressed by the reocentric surrogationalist about the material world and the various things that make up that world, the Saussurean linguist remains silent, for labelling 'things' in the external world has, strictly speaking, nothing to do with linguistic knowledge: it is not a 'collective' phenomenon in the structuralist sense and hence cannot occupy a place in Saussure's linguistics of *langue*. That is also why it does not make sense, from a strictly Saussurean point of view, to speak of science having 'its own language' (Pablé 2020). But if there is no 'language of science', how can science, in its orthodox (reocentric surrogationalist) conception, exist at all? It seems that theories of the linguistic sign developed within modern linguistics stand outside the reach of the empirical sciences, which have nothing to say about postulated collective linguistic systems. The problem, obviously, is that there are no languageless sciences (Harris 2005).

2.3 Names as non–surrogational, unilateral signs

A noteworthy critique of the proper name conceived as a bilateral sign, and of the Saussurean conception of signhood in general, was presented by Brendler (2005), who boldly proclaimed the 'death of the bilateral sign' based on recent developments in cognitive science, as propounded by the linguist Ernst Hansack (2000). Brendler's conception of signhood is marked by unilaterality: 'A name is a word' [Ein Name ist ein Wort] (2005:109). However, Brendler is not only a declared anti–Saussurean, but also an anti–surrogationalist (in the sense that he does not think names 'stand for' material objects): proper names, he tells the reader, have an 'information-relatedness' [Informationsbezug], not an 'object–relatedness' [Objektsbezug] (2005:106). As a consequence of his rejectionist stance against the Saussurean sign conception, Brendler does not subscribe to a 'telementational' model of communication: language, as Brendler (2005:102) tells the reader, does not 'transport' information, but merely transports 'access indices to information' [Zugriffindizes auf Informationen] and instructions on how to connect them. Thus communication, according to Brendler (2005:102), is the exchange of those 'indices' that allow speaker and hearer to access quantities of information [Informationsmengen]. The data (or contents) are stored in the individuals' brains and do not leave them. In this model, mutual understanding is not guaranteed, *pace* Saussure, but depends on whether the storage addresses [Speicheradressen] on which the sender is relying are equally available to the receiver. On the receiver's end, abstracted images saved in the memory addresses as prototypes (what Brendler calls 'Bedeutungen') under the corresponding sound pattern [Wortlaut] are projected into his/her conscious awareness in the form of expressions [Begriffe]. The latter are the concrete, contextualized realizations occurring in the speech acts. As Brendler (2005:103) declares, the sole purpose of the sign is 'the indexing of a quantity of information' [die Indizierung einer Informationsmenge]. He adds to this: 'A linguistic sign indexes a prototype meaning. However, under no circumstances can we say that the linguistic sign *has*, *carries*, *transports* or *contains* meaning' [Ein sprachliches Zeichen indiziert eine Bedeutung im Gehirn. Keinesfalls kann jedoch gesagt werden: Es *hat*, *trägt*, *transportiert* oder *enthält* eine Bedeutung] (2005:103, italics added), which is why Brendler considers the Saussurean bilateral sign model to be outdated. He also advises against formulating the sign conception derived from contemporary cognitive science bilaterally (as some name scholars might be tempted to do), hence unifying the signifier with the conscious projection. This, however, would imply precisely that one property of the sign

is to 'transfer' meaning (the telementational view of communication). For Brendler, both proper names and appellatives are thus such 'access indices', the difference being that the sign *indexes* 'a meaning relative to a class of single elements' [eine (Einelementklassen–)Bedeutung] and 'a meaning relative to a class of plural elements' [eine (Mehrelementklassen–)Bedeutung] (2005:104–105), respectively, but both index a class (since a single element is said to already constitute a class). In this way, Brendler argues, there is no need to distinguish onymic objects from appellative objects: something gets named onymically not because nature constitutes it as a unique 'thing', but because we make this distinction linguistically.

It is evident that Brendler, in announcing the death of the proper name as a bilateral sign, was not too worried about the future of socio-onomastics. His proposal (Brendler 2005:100) for a conception of the sign as unilateral still presupposes a communal fixed code in place – otherwise his distinction between 'onomastics' as the language-specific study of names, as opposed to 'onomastic theory', which explores 'the essence and nature of the name' [das Wesen des Namens] in a more general spirit, would not make sense. Thus members of the linguistic community still share the linguistic signs, now conceived as word forms (or signifiers). Meaning (what Saussure called the *signified*) is no longer part of the abstract sign, but may vary between speakers, and is neurologically much more complex than a mental concept triggered directly in the brain. As Brendler makes clear, the mental representations, or images, that are saved as prototypes in the individual's brain [Bedeutungen] need not correspond between one speaker and another, which is why variant forms can no longer be presupposed to be 'alternative ways of saying the same thing': *langue*, in Brendler's proposal, does not guarantee semantic stability within the linguistic community. Brendler rejects the 'contractualist' notion of a language already in place and available as the same language across generations of speakers, as a result of joining the language contract as (involuntary) signatories. This rejection, *nota bene*, is 'scientifically' grounded. Questions about semiology, according to Brendler, can now be answered by the brain sciences. About the history of semiology/semiotics, Brendler (2005:99) concludes that our theories have been based on hypotheses and models rather than scientifically derived knowledge, and hence disagrees with Rudi Keller's statement that everything about the linguistic sign, which Keller views as a language-philosophical issue, has been said in the past two thousand years and that nothing new is to be discovered (Keller 1995). But what exactly is 'scientific' about Brendler's (or Hansack's) theory of the sign? Brendler's alternative to

Saussurean semiology – and indirectly to Saussure's model of communication – is still committed to what Harris (1996) calls 'segregationism' (like Saussure's theory of *langue*), i.e. the assumption that 'language' is something detachable from the rest of human activities. The neuroscientific approach to language makes grand claims that sound all the more impressive through the use of terminology borrowed from the computer sciences: 'quantities of information', 'access indices', 'memory addresses', 'stored data', 'linking templates' and the like. As regards the purpose of language, Brendler authoritatively declares: 'The real purpose of language is to program the brain' [Der eigentliche Zweck von Sprache ist es, das Gehirn zu programmieren] (2005:102). In the end, the reader might wonder how exactly cognitive onomastics is supposed to be any more 'scientific' than Saussure's postulation of the 'synchronic method', i.e. taking a perspective that corresponds to a collective psychological reality. Saussure, too, claimed that his linguistics was 'science', i.e. it belonged to the social psychological sciences, but he did not claim that there was a scientific method able to validate his synchronic linguistics: 'The method is itself the instrument by which the linguistic object is created' (Harris 2005:93). The method consists in adopting a psychological perspective, namely the language users' internalized knowledge. In turn, with the advent of the neurosciences in the late twentieth century, the conviction grew that 'language' can be shown to be 'there' in the human brain (at the same time it was declared that the mind, a Cartesian dualist concept, did not exist). When Brendler (2005:102) cites Hansack's (2000:187) definition of language as 'an inventory of signs with linking templates, which is employed in brains as a system of notation to manipulate data' [ein Zeicheninventar mit Verknüpfungsschablonen, die als Notationssystem für die Datenmanipulation in Gehirnen eingesetzt wird], the reader must be awestricken by the rhetoric: surely, disagreeing with this definition would be irrational given that it is presented as a 'scientific' one. After all, this is no longer mere language-philosophical speculation presented as reality. Every word in Hansack's definition is reocentrically defined, *pace* Brendler's anti-surrogational stance, i.e. the words 'stand for' what they are. They are not supposed to be interpreted metaphorically – in fact, as Brendler (2005:103) argues: 'Metaphors do not do justice to the requirement of precise phrasing in linguistic theory' [Metaphern [entsprechen nicht] dem Erfordernis einer präzisen Ausdrucksweise in der Sprachtheorie].

Segregational theories of language require abstract signs, be they unilateral or bilateral. This is the logical consequence of focusing on 'language'

as something separate and separable from the rest of (time-bound) human activities. Brendler is right when insisting that we have not explored the (linguistic) sign sufficiently, but he fails to see that the 'sciences' have nothing to say about the sign. In turn I will argue that the most reliable source of knowledge when it comes to theorizing the sign is our own lay expertise as daily communicators. Signs, according to this view, can only have a personal epistemological source, which in turn (perhaps somewhat surprisingly) allows for a general theory of the sign, but one which does not rely on scientific (i.e. reocentric surrogational) definitions.

3. Onomastics and integrational semiology: names as contextualized signs

The most important theorist of a non-segregational approach to language was the Oxford linguist Roy Harris (Harris 1996; 1998), who developed an 'integrational linguistics' in the late 1970s. The integrational linguist treats signs as 'made' (created *ex nihilo*) and rejects the metaphysical assumption that they exist as abstractions. According to Harris, signs are spontaneous constructions of the human mind that serve communicational functions here and now. They do not, however, exist as mentally isolated phenomena, as signs do not serve 'language' in any exclusive way: they serve communication, which consists in the continuous integration of cotemporal activities (some linguistic, some non-linguistic). Communication, from an integrational point of view, is the only human reality, and 'language' is but one mode that is integrated with other human activities. Thus from an integrational point of view, 'language' (or 'languaging' for those who prefer this recent sociolinguistic coinage) is a first-order activity, while 'languages' (the objects of study of linguistics) are 'second-order concepts' (Love 2017) – the result of reflecting upon, and abstracting from, the continuous sign-making processes that characterize our integrated activities. Integrationists acknowledge first-order activities (languaging) as the only communicational reality. By adopting an integrational semiology, which treats signs as concomitant products of communication rather than its prerequisites, the language-philosophical questions that have preoccupied the minds of philosophers regarding the difference between proper name and common noun are relegated to second-order reflections on decontextualized (i.e. abstract) linguistic signs. The question that the integrationist asks about a sign (and thus about its identity and meaning) is: 'What integra-

tional purpose does it serve?' The answer to this question will obviously vary with every situation in which signs are created. Drawing on our personal linguistic experience we could think of many different (macrosocially defined) scenarios in which a 'proper name' integrates the ongoing activities (between people) differently. For example, *Shakespeare* could be a code name that integrates the activities ensuing from someone's wish to enter the premises of a secret society (say, knocking on the door three times followed by the utterance 'Shakespeare') and the resolution by another person to allow that person to enter the premises. Any word, e.g. *rhubarb*, could be substituted for *Shakespeare* as a code name, for what matters in the first place is its integrational function with respect to the aforementioned activities. The name could thus be either 'onymic' or 'appellative' in nature. This is not to claim that *Shakespeare* and *rhubarb* are intersubstitutable words in any general sense: we would not expect someone to tell us that 'rhubarb was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564', even though *rhubarb* could indeed be a nickname used by some people to refer to the English playwright. The point that the integrationist wishes to make here is that the Saussurean type of fixed code is not helpful in accounting for the use of *Shakespeare* as a code name.

The socio-onomastician, in turn, would argue that the code name *Shakespeare* is shared by a small group of people who have certain macrosocially defined interests in common. Following this idea of the Labovian sociolect, these 'mini-codes' can be multiplied by the thousands across any language community. The result of such a scenario amounts to the kind of sociolinguistic situation depicted by the name scholars Walther and Nicolaisen: for every name there are indefinite numbers of groups of name-users (and name-knowers), not counting those names that perhaps only single individuals passively know of, or actively use. The Saussurean fixed code is limited to the speakers born into the native speech community – it is not something that outsiders can acquire (however proficient they become in the language), whereas sociolects admit in principle of new speakers (whether voluntarily or involuntarily). New members of the secret society, for example, will be introduced to the code name *Shakespeare*, or spies may learn about it without the members of the society knowing that others have acquired the code. Fixed-code theorists of different orientations will in fact disagree about how to define a linguistic code, i.e. it will depend on the theoretical stance one wishes to take: the Saussurean linguist, for one, will not be convinced that 'open fixed codes' make any sense for language-theoretical purposes.

By rejecting the notion of an abstract sign altogether, the integrationist will theoretically accommodate the example of *Shakespeare* as a code name based on the insight that knowing the meaning of a word is to 'know what to do with it' (Harris 1998:63): in other words, what matters from an integrational semiological perspective is to be able to explain how a sign integrates one activity (or kind of activity) with another. However, only the sign-makers themselves can provide such an explanation. If the explanation is offered by a disinterested observer or analyst, it is important to keep in mind that the explanation is the analyst's: he/she will have drawn on personal linguistic experience, remembered or anticipated, in order to say something meaningful about a number of activities construed as being connected for the interactants under observation. The meaningfulness of the analysis consists in (the reader) being able to relate to the analyst's explanation. It is not, however, an explanation of what the sign meant for the sign-maker. There can be no such insight.

Integrationally speaking, names are contextualized signs like any other signs, i.e. they are made by someone for a communicational purpose. Signs can be recontextualized (repeated, taken up, reconstructed, reanalyzed, etc.) at any time by anybody, but these signs are always new signs for whoever integrates them here and now (Duncker 2019). Integrationists do not distinguish in any strict sense between 'speaker' and 'hearer' to explain communication processes. Instead they speak of 'sign-makers'. The unique, integrated sign has an exclusively temporal existence: a sign only exists for as long as it integrates activities of various kinds, without which the activities, taken separately, would remain unintegrated (merely knocking on the door three times will not grant you access to the secret society's premises). So what exactly is the person intending to be granted access *integrating*? He/she is integrating the present situation with past experience and future experience, i.e. the here-and-now only makes sense to sign-makers because they have a personal immediate past and future. Once the secret society is dissolved and there are no active members still alive, the code name loses its (potential) integrational function (because presumably there is no one around any more who would assign that particular semiological function to the name *Shakespeare*), although it may be reactivated by someone in the future who, say, discovers an extant manuscript describing the secret language of that society. In principle, anybody may encounter any name at any time. Whether it is a meaningful sign for that particular person under the given circumstances, i.e. whether the sign-maker knows what to do with

it, is not predictable in any sociolinguistic (Labovian) sense: what a sign 'means' is not an empirical question.

As I have argued in a previous integrationist contribution to socio-onomastics (Pablé 2009b), knowing the name of something is not a 'competence' that exists in a communicational vacuum: knowledge always depends on the activity/activities involved. What those activities are is not a scientific question: for example, suggesting that the reader of this article must be currently engaged in the activity of 'reading' in order to make any sense of it is a lay insight which will likely not be regarded as controversial. Being a lay linguistic concept, the notion of 'activity' is an open one, i.e. it will not always be obvious that something is recognized as an activity by everybody concerned, or that activities are 'labelled' in the same way. In my own fieldwork, the activity involved a non-local person (myself) seeking to get the locals (people I randomly stopped in the streets) to identify a landmark and provide directions to it. This activity was itself comprised of an indefinite number of activities on both sides. The task my informants were confronted with involved matching a name of little diffusion (which I presented them with) with some object in the locality (which I pretended was unknown to me). The activities that constituted these various encounters were of a very different nature compared to the activity of collecting data as part of a research project in socio-onomastics. Only the latter kind of activity attempts to find systematic patterns by treating knowledge as decontextualized (relating to types of speakers rather than individuals), i.e. by treating the signs as if they could be detached from the ongoing activities in which they occur, whereas the former kind of activity allows the researcher to experience a particular kind of sign-making (identifying a landmark) as embedded in an ongoing activity. The situation created for my fieldwork was a familiar one, involving a non-local (myself) who was supposed to meet a local (imaginary) friend, who had given me an appointment at a particular place but who could presently not be reached on his phone for further directions. Stopping someone in the street to ask for the whereabouts of a street or building is a very common thing to do (and as such hardly surprising). However, the story that my informants were confronted with put them in a rather unusual position: in fact, although they were supposed to be the ones with local knowledge, they also had to take into account the expertise of my (physically non-present) local friend when venturing their guesses where to direct me to. After all, this friend had told me to meet him at a place identified by a name, and thus supposedly a real place. One way to interpret these encounters is to say that the notion of the

'sociolect' corresponds to no reality once we cease to postulate that words are somehow 'shared' (as abstractions) between specific group members. What transpired from the various encounters was rather that names are made sense of, or contextualized, by the individual sign-makers in relation to the very specific situations they find themselves in. And although I told my informants more or less the same story, every situation was indeed a completely different one. This is not per se a deep insight – it is part of our lay experience – but it is so obvious that linguistic theorists have never attributed much importance to it. I am not claiming that there are no 'patterns' one could see emerging on analysing the transcriptions we made of the encounters after they had taken place, but 'seeing' them is itself a semiological process: it presupposes a certain communicational purpose behind it, as the very activity of doing so is macrosocially, i.e. institutionally, conditioned.

4. The continuously integrated world vs the given world

The integrationist worldview is human-centred: human beings exist separately from the external world which they inhabit (a world made up of all sorts of other living beings and non-living entities). In other words, the external world does not exist, humanly speaking, independently of our continuous sign-making activities. Thus scientists reocentrically label the external world, but by doing so they have already 'humanized' it, i.e. integrated it by means of their sensory faculties (and with the aid of artificial extensions). The thing we call a *flower* is not a 'flower' to the bee: it is whatever it is to the bee. There are no neutral, contextless linguistic labels because there are no species-neutral interpretations of anything. Modern science is a complex of connected institutionalized human activities integrated by an overarching human view of the natural world, which relies on a reocentric surrogational semantic doctrine of how language relates to the non-linguistic world (Harris 2005). If there are intelligent life forms in the universe, we may be confident that they would not have 'science' as we – languaging beings – know it. All human beings share the same 'communicational infrastructure' (Harris 1996), and all human beings are constrained in their communication by factors of three kinds: biomechanical, circumstantial and macrosocial (Harris 1998). The macrosocial constraints vary significantly across cultures, which is why different peoples possess very different 'cosmovisions' and ways of thinking about what 'language' is, and whether it is a uniquely human prerogative

(Pennycook & Makoni 2019). At the same time the integrationist argues that no two individuals ever make the same signs (whether within the same culture or across cultures): the reason being that the three aforementioned factors operate interdependently in every moment of our lives, though we often focus on a single factor to explain a communicational constraint. For instance, I cannot *tell* someone else the name of a certain place if (i) I do not speak the other person's language (a macrosocial condition), any more than I can *show* him/her where the place bearing that name is if (ii) the other person is presently not visible to me (a circumstantial condition), or if (iii) he/she is blind (a biomechanical condition). The signs, for the integrationist, are 'radically indeterminate' (Harris & Hutton 2007), which is another way of saying that there is no third-person perspective on signs. The sign means something to someone in a given circumstance. However, the sign, for the integrationist, is not the form, whose meaning is indeterminate. 'Radical indeterminacy' concerns meaning as much as form. As Orman (2017) argues, integrational linguistics is the only 'linguistics' to subscribe to the thesis of *indeterminacy of form*. In fact, to say that signs are 'made' (in the integrationist sense) is to claim that there is no underlying word form that the sign-maker draws on. Any word uttered or any word encountered is so 'for the first time' because every situation is unique.

If something is meaningful to me, I do not assume that someone else present interprets this 'something' in the same way. In fact, what I do assume is that he/she interprets it in their own way. We may possess the same (already integrated) sensoria, but that does not mean that any two individuals experience anything identically, even if one were to stand where the other is standing (thus assuming the 'same' point of view). If I (as a completely detached observer) were to observe Mr Ulvin open the door right after Mr Stevens rang the doorbell, I would still not know what the sign meant for Mr Ulvin. Why? Because I am not Mr Ulvin. Perhaps Mr Ulvin made no such sign as I suppose he did – even if, from an outsider's perspective, he behaved exactly as one would expect. Perhaps, in fact, Mr Ulvin is deaf and just happened to open the door to step out of the house right after Mr Stevens rang the doorbell. Conversely, if he did not open the door after Mr Stevens rang the bell, this does not mean that Mr Ulvin did not make the expected sign: i.e. construe one activity as an 'initiative' requiring an 'integrated sequel' (Harris 1996:63). Perhaps he heard the ringing but decided to ignore the fact that someone was standing at his door, for whatever reasons (maybe he suspected it to be Mr Stevens, from whom he had borrowed money). We will not know the 'facts' of the matter unless we ask Mr Ulvin

himself, but him telling us is a very different integrational activity than him doing – or not doing – what he did.

If signs are not prerequisites for communication, as the integrationist argues, there is no communicational stability as Aristotle conceived it. Aristotle thought that reality is the same for everyone, just as every speaker of Greek shared the words used to refer to the things in that shared reality. According to an Aristotelian (reocentric) semantics, words 'stand for' the static (photographic) impressions gained from perceiving the things that make up reality (Harris 2005). A Harrisian semiology cannot reach any such facile conclusions concerning human integrated experience. Instead Harris (2006) argues that our conviction that there are natural (and man-made) units (classes of things), which can be considered as particular things, is the result of species-specific integrated activities on a biomechanical level. It is because we are biomechanically made the way we are that the apple appears to us as a unit (we can pick it from the tree, hold it in our hands and put it into a basket). As Harris further argues, for the mockingbird sitting on the tree, the apple is something quite different. The integrationist treats human life as a continuum of communication processes to which contextualized signs of various kinds contribute by integrating time-bound activities with one another, whereby the material entities that human activities involve only exist (a semiologically bound existence) to serve those activities. The integrationist worldview is thus anti-reocentric (words are not identificatory labels attached to independently existing things), but neither does it endorse any form of linguistic determinism, given its rejection of 'languages' as abstract sets of conventionalized signs.

5. The early New England titles *Goodman* and *Goodwife*: segregational and integrational considerations

Suppose that a linguistic theorist were to accept the Harrisian position on what constitutes a sign. Being lay-oriented, it is a position one might be willing to endorse even though only few theorists actually do. When it comes to saying something about the (distant) past, however, it would be tempting for the very same theorist to conclude that only by adopting a segregational semiology can one learn anything about the linguistic past, however partial the results may be. In other words, if linguistic signs are not treated as having an underlying abstraction for the corpus-based analysis of writings from the past, what is there to say of sociolinguistic rel-

evance about them? Studies in sociohistorical linguistics (e.g. Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg 2017) allegedly show that we can *explain* socio-linguistically motivated variation and change by systematically correlating linguistic variables with sociological variables, though Bergs (2012) rightly warns of the danger of committing anachronistic errors in our interpretations of sociological variables.

Sociohistorical linguistics has to rely on written forms in its reconstruction of oral forms. This, it would seem, comes close to a category mistake in Saussurean thinking, since the *Course* tells us that the linguistic sign (as a psychological phenomenon) concerns *spoken* linguistic communication only. However, in a rather surprising move, Saussure (1983:15) claimed that 'writing can fix [linguistic signs] in conventional images', whereby every sound pattern (signifier) 'can be represented by one constant visual image'. Evidently, Saussure wanted to safeguard the idea that it is possible to provide accurate descriptions of dead languages (that is, of their linguistic structures) based on written attestations and reconstructions. From a sociolinguistic point of view, the more important question is to what extent the scribes or writers, in reproducing spoken language, have been influenced by their levels of literacy. Therefore, when a scribe rendered the spoken discourse of others in written form, how much of what we read is the speakers' and how much is due to scribal intervention? These are certainly interesting questions for philologists, but philology cannot solve language-theoretical problems. The theoretical muddle that historical sociolinguistics creates for itself has to do with its conception of 'a language', which is broadly Saussurean, at the same time as it studies speech variation exclusively through written forms. In fact, the formality spectrum in historical sociolinguistics comprises both writing assessed as closer to written language and that considered closer to spoken language.

As argued before, the Saussurean and Labovian accounts are incompatible, while paradoxically the latter would not make sense without the former. Thus a Labovian is at the same time a Saussurean (Figueroa 1994), whereas a Labovian cannot be a Harrisian (Harris 1998:126–129). A Harrisian, in turn, has no grounds to turn Labovian, given their incompatible views on what constitutes the linguistic past.

5.1 A segregational reconstruction

In a sociohistorical study on early New England titles of civility (Pablé 2009a), I committed the same mistake as the aforementioned (imagined)

theorist. Although I was already an integrationist, I still wanted to hold on to the idea that it must be possible to say something meaningful about language usage in the past based on in-depth historical research. I started from the (Labovian) assumption that I first needed to understand the sociological reality of a speech community in order to study how language use reflected the social stratification of the community. My earlier interest in (post)colonial New England and its dialectal peculiarities prompted me to reconstruct the sociolinguistics and pragmatics of a feature typically associated with Puritan New England: the (now obsolete) titles of respect *Goodman* and *Goodwife* (and the contracted form of the latter, *Goody*). The assumption on my part was that, though these titles had originated in England, their sociolinguistic meaning in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Puritan colonies differed from that found in the motherland. For my corpus I relied on metalinguistic and metapragmatic commentaries by contemporary New Englanders and a collection of court records known as the *Salem Witchcraft Papers* (Boyer & Nissenbaum 1977), featuring transcriptions of trials and hearings held at Salem Village and neighbouring villages in the early 1690s. The focus of my study necessitated taking into account other titles and honorifics with which *Goodman* and *Goodwife* contrasted structurally and pragmatically, in particular the (vocative) prefixes *Mister (Mr.)* and *Mistress (Mrs./Mis(t).)*, as well as the (non-vocative) postfixes *yeoman* and *husbandman*. I do not wish to discuss all the details of the article here. Instead I shall briefly outline its most important insights, followed by a critical integrationist reflection in the next section.

From the sociopragmatic point of view I adopted at the time, the question that I sought to illuminate was the following: given that the titles of civility *Goodman* and *Goodwife* were described by contemporaries as well as by historians and lexicographers as markers of colonial New England culture, these titles must presumably have been part of the linguistic community code, i.e. they were abstract linguistic signs of *langue*. However, as pragmatic markers, members of the New England communities must have known how to use them not only in a general sense, but also in concrete situations towards concrete individuals, who were either addressed (in the case of male members) as 'Goodman so-and-so' or 'Mr. so-and-so', or by other linguistic means (including using no title at all). In other words, the titles served *parole*-related functions similar to those of proper names. The strictly Saussurean framework thus needed to be complemented by a Labovian one, as knowing the sociolinguistic value of the pragmatic markers was tantamount to being granted an insight into the reasons why in court-

room situations speaker A addresses hearer B with a certain title (rather than another), or refers to someone else (present in the courtroom or not) using a certain title (rather than another). What a description of the Saussurean *langue* fails to do, in fact, is to account, at the level of *parole*, for the speaker's intentions implicit in his/her choice of a title, which the hearer, in turn, is supposed to recognize. In fact, if A and B are speakers of the same language, the Labovian theorist argues, they will share the same norms of use (i.e. they are aware of how the linguistic variants are evaluated in their community), and are therefore able to communicate successfully with one another (i.e. recognize the intentions behind the words). Thus if A addresses B as 'Goodman B' (rather than 'Mister B'), there is a reason why A does so and B (and/or an overhearer C) is supposed to recognize that intention.

On scrutinizing the manuscripts of the *Salem Witchcraft Papers* featuring occurrences of *Goodman* or *Goodwife*, and comparing them with occurrences of *Mr.* and *Mrs.*, I determined that occupation did not seem to play any role as far as the choice of the male titles was concerned. Instead the relevant sociological variables favouring the title of *Mr.* seem to have been related to the person's degree of civic worth and economic prosperity. At the same time it was clear that neither *Goodman* nor *Goodwife* was negatively connoted in the New England colonies, i.e. their stigmatization occurred earlier in England than in New England. Still, it transpires from the records that male Salemites who held an office of dignity and/or a high military rank, or had accumulated considerable wealth through their business and/or owned considerable estates, were commonly referred to and addressed as *Mr./Mister* – and not as *Goodman*. When it came to landowning farmers, the distinction seems to have been between those identified in the legal records as *yeoman* (for whom only the title *Mister* appears in speech-related texts) and those identified as *husbandman* (for whom the title *Goodman* preponderantly appears). To cite one example: Mr. John Putnam and Goodman Robert Pease were both weavers by profession, but John Putnam was the constable of Salem and an affluent landowner who employed labourers (i.e. had authority over others). Addressing Putnam as *Goodman Putnam*, it might be conjectured, would have been socially inappropriate, especially in formal situations. The female titles seem to have depended on the social status of the husband: thus, as the records attest, Mr. Putnam's wife is referred to as *Mrs. (Ann) Putnam*, whereas Goodman Pease's wife is mentioned as *Goodwife (Sarah) Pease*. On the other hand, it has been suggested that the titles *Goodman* and *Goodwife* were associated (positively) with church membership in Puritan New England (i.e. being admitted to the communion

table). While this was probably true for most Salemites (in fact many of the 'goodmen' and 'goodwives' were church members with an impeccable reputation), there are nevertheless examples suggesting that female villagers held in very low esteem might also have been addressed as 'Goody so-and-so'. A case in point was Sarah Good, who was divorced and had to beg for food together with her two destitute children. Some of the courtroom interactions as rendered by the town clerks, however, suggest that the use of these titles must have been governed by much more complex factors than the sociological variable analysis reveals. For example, it was found that the servant girl Mary Warren referred to her employer, *Goodwife Elisabeth Proctor*, as 'Mistress Proctor'. She is also reported as having addressed John Proctor – a *husbandman* according to the records – as 'Master' and referring to him as 'my master Proctor'. The servant girl Mercy Lewis on the other hand, who worked in the Putnam household, refers to *Mrs. Ann Putnam*, one of the richest women in Salem, as 'Goody Putnam'. The scattered counter-examples found in the *Salem Papers* must remind any sociopragmatically oriented researcher that (quite naturally) these titles occurred in infinitely many situations in infinitely many constellations of people, so that no collection of records, however extensive, could possibly cope with this kind of variety.

5.2 Integrational reservations

A sociolinguistic study in any orthodox sense can only be done 'segregationally', i.e. by taking a third-person perspective on linguistic signs. Strictly speaking, there is no 'sociolinguistics' from an integrational point of view. To conclude, as I did in the study, that *Goodman* and *Goodwife* encoded information on a male or female villager's economic and civic standing is already to decontextualize communication as the ongoing process that it is and instead treat the two linguistic signs as being *the 'same' signs* across different situations. This is the metaphysical price that the empirical (i.e. Labovian) linguist must pay when segregating language from communication. Or as Harris (1996:9) puts it, there can be no 'amicable division of labour' between segregational and integrational studies of language.

It is reasonable to assume that not many contemporary anglophones are familiar with the appellations of civility *Goodman*, *Goodwife* and *Goody*. As far as I can tell, they are no longer used in modern (American) English, though such a statement obviously does not rely on any empirical 'truth': it is on a par with claiming that contemporary anglophones no longer say

doth or *hath*, which does not mean that these forms are never said or written by anybody any more. As far as I am concerned, my linguistic experience now includes acquaintance with the two titles of civility, namely as a result of my research activities. They turn out to be part of my communicational biography whenever I remember or encounter them. Others will certainly know about them as well: for example, any expert on Nathaniel Hawthorne knows that *Goodman*, *Goodwife* and *Goody* were titles conferred on colonial New Englanders, as the title of Hawthorne's short story, *Young Goodman Brown*, indicates. Now you, as readers of the present article, have learnt about the titles and how they were (allegedly) used in a late seventeenth-century New England context. The point is that anybody could encounter these titles at any point in time and make sense of them, i.e. try to find out 'what to do with them' as circumstantially required for the communicational purposes at hand. The activity of reconstructing how the titles were used sociopragmatically is one such way of making communicational sense of them. It is an activity guided by the conviction that there are 'linguistic facts' that the sociohistorical linguist can establish, provided that sufficient relevant data become available. This activity is thus macrosocially conditioned by the assumption that *Goodman* and *Goodwife* possess their own (socio)linguistic history. When does the research end? When the researcher has discovered (sometime in the future) as much as can possibly be known about these titles. *Knowledge for the sake of knowledge*. How might that differ from a contemporary college student of English reading Hawthorne's *Young Goodman Brown*, and finding him/herself with an edition that does not gloss *Goodman*? When does his/her research into the meaning of *Goodman* end? As soon as he/she has found out enough to satisfy the communicational requirements here and now. It is doubtful whether any such student would look for a more detailed linguistic account of the titles: the definitions given by the dictionary are sufficient for the purpose of reading and understanding the short story. From the point of view of an integrational epistemology, 'knowing what to do (and how)' takes priority over 'knowing that' (Harris 2009b).

What kind of experience do I lack when it comes to knowing 'what to do' with colonial titles of civility? The answer is: everyday lived experience. I know what to do with contemporary honorifics like *Sir, Madam, Miss, Mrs, Mr* – in the sense that I know from personal experience that I have used them and so have others who have communicated with me. My use of these honorifics and my understanding of how they are used by others are macrosocially conditioned. If I claim to know how *Goodman*

and *Goodwife* were macrosocially conditioned in Puritan New England, it is clear that my knowledge on that score is of a very different order. Having done extensive research, I could claim to know that Ann Putnam was entitled to be addressed as *Mistress Putnam* for socio-economic reasons, but I have absolutely no idea who in Salem would call her *Mrs. Putnam* and who *Goody Putnam* and how consistently they would do so. Neither do I know how Ann Putnam herself felt about being called 'Goodwife' rather than 'Mistress'. Perhaps she did not mind when it came to some people, but would have minded when it came to others. Perhaps some villagers rarely used titles outside of the courtroom (towards her, or even in general), addressing her simply as 'Ann', or referring to her as 'Ann Putnam'. The segregationist would object that my study at least suggests ways in which the use of competing titles of civility, i.e. *Goodman–Mister* and *Goodwife–Goody–Mistress*, may have been macrosocially conditioned in colonial New England. However, the integrationist would disagree: while individuals may be subject to the same biomechanical and circumstantial constraints – neither speaker A, B nor C is able to physically communicate with hearer D in the latter's absence – individuals are never identically conditioned by macrosocial factors. Even though hearer A, B or C, being speakers of English, cannot understand speaker D, who only speaks French, it is not the case that A, B and C will all hear the 'same' or that they will all automatically understand nothing. How they will integrate D's utterance (construed by them to be 'French', if at all) will vary individually depending on their communicational biographies. For the integrationist, there are no single macrosocial factors that one can artificially isolate as an analyst (e.g. socio-economic factors like wealth, offices held, military rank or church membership) in order to 'explain' the occurrence of one linguistic variant rather than another. While in our lay analyses of communication we do indeed focus on specific constraints at the expense of others, these explanations lay no claim to being 'scientific'. The question that arises given the integrationist's rejection of segregational linguistics is whether historical sociolinguistics can still be viewed as having a legitimate place, and on what basis. For example, it is because historical sociolinguistics isolates macrosocial factors and treats them as timeless abstractions that its studies may become community resources, outside the strictly academic context. Thus a recent historical novel set in early New England (Youmans 2020) refers in its glossary to my study on New England titles of civility in order to legitimate the author's heavy reliance on 'Goodman', 'Goodwife' and 'Goody'. Moreover, sociohistorical studies on lexical variation may con-

tribute to the making of historical dictionaries, or may provide updated information for new editions. In the *Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles* (Craigie & Hulbert 1938–44:1145), for example, the entry for *Goodman* reads:

> *Goodman.* 'New England'. An appellation of civility prefixed to names of persons under the rank of gentlemen; similar to 'Mister'. *Obsolete.*

While this gloss does not directly contradict anything that my study revealed, one could propose to modify it somewhat:

> *Goodman.* 'New England'. A colonial appellation of civility prefixed to names of persons of any profession, who did not as a rule hold important offices or military ranks; husbandmen, who did not employ their own labourers; contrasted with 'Mister' (typically affluent yeomen and persons with high social prestige in the community). *Obsolete.*

Even though the second gloss might arguably be too detailed for lexicographical purposes, the example illustrates how historical sociolinguistics can be employed in the service of lexicography. Both, in fact, deal in linguistic abstractions, which is also the reason why there can be no dictionary founded on integrational principles. From an integrational point of view, the dictionary is a communicational tool which aims to reduce semantic indeterminacy for specific purposes (Harris 1998). However, it is not a compendium containing the semantic 'truth' about words.

6. Concluding remarks: the linguistic past

Integrationists do not deny the past, i.e. they do not subscribe to some radical form of idealism, but they do not think the past is something that can be studied in a communicational vacuum – as something hermetically sealed from present (communicational) circumstances. The past, for the integrationist, is a product of the present. The same is true for the 'linguistic' past. Whatever it is I encounter in an extant written document from the (distant) past is not meaningful by itself. The graphic marks by themselves are not signs, but they may become signs for whoever tries to decipher and transcribe the manuscript. Whatever it is that we 'see' when we scrutinize and compare various extant records from the past, the regularities and patterns are not 'there' already. They have to be 'made'. This is not to say that the

linguistic past is whatever someone says it was. Crucially, however, there is nobody around to personally remember the distant linguist past. A written document can be interpreted in many ways, depending on the signs that one identifies. *Pace* Labov, there are no independent linguistic facts (Harris 1998). But if several philologists conclude independently that certain graphic marks are the word *Goodman*, the historical sociolinguist may assume the same unless he/she has reasons to believe otherwise. By identifying the word *Goodman*, however, we have not identified a word magically 'teleported' from the past: we have created a word here and now, to which we assign a semiological value as part of a certain programme of activities. Macrosocially speaking, that programme may be discursively constructed as having as its goal the reconstruction of a past variety 'as it was spoken'. However, as the integrationist would point out, no sign can exist separately from the activities in and for which it was created. This, it would seem, is the Harrisian 'uniformitarian principle'.[1]

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Signals of onomastic capital: From transhistorical roots to the contemporary globalized trend of sponsored names

Guy Puzey, Jani Vuolteenaho & Matthias Wolny

Guy Puzey (University of Edinburgh), Jani Vuolteenaho (University of Helsinki) & Matthias Wolny (Heidelberg University). Signals of onomastic capital: From transhistorical roots to the contemporary globalized trend of sponsored names

Abstract: Proposing and elaborating upon the concept of *onomastic capital* as a multidisciplinary lens for socio-onomastic research, this article considers some of the historical underpinnings that contribute to onomastic capital, before focusing specifically on the recent dramatic growth in the phenomenon of selling naming rights to (semi-)public spaces. This marketization of names has been especially visible in sports and entertainment venues. To examine emerging naming patterns and practices resulting from such name sponsorship activity, the article explores a database of onomastic material from a variety of European contexts: England and Wales, Finland, Germany, Italy, Norway and Scotland.

Keywords: onomastic capital, naming rights, commodification, sponsorship, philanthropy, commemorative naming, onomastic theory, football stadiums, indoor arenas

1. Introduction

1.1 Sponsored place names

Over the last three decades, a global boom in sales of naming rights to event venues, transportation infrastructure and other elements of the urban environment has shown that the names of these places – in addition to

conveying symbolic, social, political and psychological meanings or val–
ues – can also be directly used to generate economic capital. Colossal signs
evoking corporate or other brands on the facades of such facilities bear
witness to the willingness of the business sector to pay for an opportunity
to capitalize on names used by wide groups of people and various media
(see Figures 1 and 2). With sports and entertainment venues, in particular,
it is striking that the main purpose of these places, for the spectators who
form the majority of visitors, is to provide joy, spectacle and strong emo-
tional responses. Accordingly, sponsors buying into the naming of these
structures may expect to buy into the enjoyable experiences that take place
there, which have themselves been transformed into acts of consumption.

Figure 1: The Tony Macaroni Arena, Livingston, Scotland. This football stadium has
had six official names since it was opened in 1995, including five different sponsored
names (see Section 4.2). Photograph by Guy Puzey, June 2017.

The marketing scholar John Fortunato (2013:66) argues that 'certainly no
signage opportunity is as significant as the naming rights to a stadium or
arena'. While the globalized name sponsorship trend as we know it today
is a form of advertising, it is also, at its core, a form of naming. It is the act
of exchanging money, or the promise of money, for the right to determine

Figure 2: Anti-capitalist protests at the opening of what was then called *O2 World* in Friedrichshain, Berlin, Germany. This indoor arena was known as the *Berlin National Arena* during initial planning, but had already taken on its first sponsored name by the time the foundation stone was laid in 2006. It was later increasingly referred to as *O2 World Berlin* to differentiate it from a similarly named venue in Hamburg. After a new sponsorship deal in 2015, it became the *Mercedes-Benz Arena* (see Section 4.3). Photograph by Kinra, 10 September 2008. Wikimedia Commons, CC–BY–SA–3.0.

or influence a choice of name, whether the name of a new referent – for instance, a newly built stadium – or a modified or additional name for an existing referent. As an act of naming, it is conditioned to some degree by established naming conventions in the society in question, although sponsored names often break traditional patterns, typically by tapping into more 'global' lexemes, or by using a distinctive syntactic structure. By comparing onomastic material relating to 339 spectator sports and entertainment venues in European contexts, this article will consider onomastic patterns that have emerged from this sponsorship trend, what these patterns indicate about name use and capital in society, and the attitudes that such names may inspire.

In a previous study, we analysed an earlier version of this data set (Vuolteenaho, Wolny & Puzey 2019). In that article, our approach was firmly in line with the definitions of the naming rights boom by geographers, political scientists and others within critical toponymic scholarship

as a manifestation of the corporate sector's enhanced influence in naming matters in contemporary neo-liberal cities (Rose-Redwood, Vuolteenaho, Young & Light 2019; see also Vuolteenaho & Berg 2009). For property owners or tenants, name sponsorship is a novel contract-based practice of converting the symbolic capital embedded in places and their names into economic capital, while, vice versa, for sponsors it means investing economic capital in return for enhanced symbolic capital through an onomastic connection with a place (Giraut & Houssay-Holzschuch 2016:9–10; Rose-Redwood, Sotoudehnia & Tretter 2019:849–851; Vuolteenaho forthcoming; see also Bourdieu 1986). Due to its social–scientific emphasis, that previous article did not focus heavily on the transformation of onomastic patterns from a linguistic point of view.

Most sponsored names contain an embedded commercial name as a specific element. Indeed, since sports and entertainment venues are increasingly marketed as destinations in their own right, their names could also be considered commercial names.[1] In many places, stadiums or indoor sports halls are municipally owned property intended to benefit the common good, and not necessarily to generate profit. There is thus a paradox in categorizing the names of many such venues under a commercial banner, but this is a consequence of the monetization of names, and in recent years naming rights have been sold in relation to numerous publicly owned properties. As a confluence of commercial naming and place naming, sponsored names need to be looked at from multidisciplinary perspectives.

The structure of sponsored names, typically with an embedded name-within-a-name, often resembles that of commemorative names, but the major distinction between these two types of naming lies in the rationale underpinning the naming process. Commemorative place names express recognition for people, events, organizations or other places, and typically stem from efforts to memorialize and immortalize, or indeed to create 'a putative narrative' (Azaryahu 2009:66) that may or may not have organic cultural and historical roots (Vuolteenaho & Puzey 2018:92). Name sponsorship, on the other hand, implies a transaction involving the explicit right to choose a name or to heavily influence naming decisions. A financial benefactor such as an individual or company could also be the subject of commemorative naming acts distinct from name sponsorship per se, and

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[1] The names of these venues could be categorized as *ergonyms*, alongside names of shops, companies and various other organizations or communal objects, but that terminology is problematic, especially since it does not differentiate between the concrete and the abstract, as noted by Sjöblom (2016:454–455).

sometimes the distinction is blurred (see 2.3 and 4.2 below). Specifically, the focus here on agency, motivations and processes is key to studying names as components of ideological and social structures (Vuolteenaho & Puzey 2018:79).

1.2 Onomastic capital

To enhance the breadth of toponymic analysis, in the present article we aim to show that distinctive forms of *onomastic capital* are also at play in the ongoing name sponsorship trend. We propose to apply this term in a dual sense: firstly to imply the capacity or potential for any existing or future nameable referent to be commodified or mobilized through naming acts or processes for conversion into some (other) form of capital, and secondly to encompass the implicit perceived properties inherent in an existing or emergent name that may increase its value in capital terms. These properties may include, for example, symbolic power, fame, recognition, heritage, toponymic attachment value, and socioculturally derived connotations of components within the name (e.g. as an index for tradition, modernity, fashion or prestige). All these factors are particularly conditioned by cultural and linguistic capital and linguistic habitus (see Bourdieu 1986; 1991). In this article, the emphasis is on the naming of specific categories of places, but the notion of onomastic capital can also be applied to other types of names, including personal names (Schmitt 2019), and even names in literature (White 2002:224).

The focus of onomastic capital is on the value of names themselves, not on the value of their referents as land or buildings. At the same time, however, the value of property in terms of its location, size, architectural merits, or sociocultural attributes associated with it may have an impact on onomastic capital. In the case of newer buildings, for instance, the financial outlay of construction is often a key motivating factor in the sale of naming rights. In the context of sports and entertainment facilities, the performance of resident sports teams or the calibre of entertainment acts that venues are able to attract may be more relevant for onomastic capital than the monetary value of the land or buildings themselves.

This article's objective is, therefore, to expand on the European naming rights data, using it to analyse the following questions in relation to onomastic capital:

- How transparent is the sponsored nature of names when observing onomastic patterns in general, and generic and specific elements in sports and entertainment venue toponymy in particular?
- To what extent do sponsored venue names reflect linguistic context and local naming traditions, and do the structures of sponsored venue names follow similar patterns to more traditional venue names in the cultures in question, or are entirely new structures emerging?
- What are the consequences of the mobilization of onomastic capital for popular attitudes to sponsored names?

The analytic approach to answering these questions with the European venue name data comprises three perspectives (see Section 3 below). The first perspective looks at broad patterns and structures in the sponsored and non-sponsored venue toponomasticon. Is the very act of non-conformity with traditional patterns, which could be seen as 'rule-breaking', a signal that onomastic capital has been mobilized? Delving further into these patterns, the second perspective focuses on semantic and functional aspects of naming elements, while the third reflects on naming practices, including the reception of names, colloquial use, and unofficial variant names, that might shed light on popular naming attitudes. Each of the selected European contexts will then be discussed in turn, comparing data sets of sponsored and non-sponsored names to explore ways in which onomastic capital has been mobilized.

As already noted, the specific element in sponsored venue names is often the name of the sponsor, so it may in itself be a fairly transparent signal that onomastic capital has been mobilized, but what about other components of these names? A cornerstone of our analysis lies in the discussion of *function-related generic elements* (see Section 3 below). We will consider whether certain elements might be used in sponsored names precisely due to those elements' implicit onomastic capital. As we argue that much of that capital is derived from path-dependent characteristics that are historically transmitted through political, ideological, economic, cultural and linguistic processes, we will first trace some of the roots of onomastic capital through two critical junctures in history that are of particular relevance.

2. Historical roots and applications of onomastic capital in the Roman Empire and the Second Industrial Revolution

Before analysing this article's corpus of present-day sports and entertainment venues in European countries, it is useful to investigate cases from onomastic history that form part of the background to current developments: firstly naming processes associated with archetypal event venues in the ancient world, and secondly the link between naming and philanthropy in the Industrial Age. These select insights from two influential phases in the history of building and naming public-use infrastructure are valuable for our analysis due to the similarities and differences they exhibit in relation to contemporary practices of venue naming, including the present-day mobilization of onomastic capital through the selling of naming rights. Furthermore, the historical periods to be discussed here were of major significance for the general development of the built environment in the European context and are of ongoing significance in terms of onomastic capital. Via these historical illuminations, we will in this section elaborate definitions for name sponsorship as analysed in this article.

2.1 Ancient event venues, their modern counterparts, and onomastic capital

Amphitheatrum Flavium incorporates the name of the gens *Flavia*, the family of the rulers who commissioned, inaugurated and completed this building best known in English by the later name *Colosseum*. This archetype of grand constructions built for public spectacle was a venue for the violent part of the *panem et circenses* central to the populistic display of power in ancient Rome, and was also intended as a symbol of power and wealth in itself due to its monumental scale and connection with colonial exploitation and imperial plunder. Unlike its forerunner, Pompeii's *spectacula*, which was funded by two local civil servants, Rome's amphitheatre was a quintessentially imperial project. There are, however, no contemporary sources that prove the people of Rome actually used the full name *Amphitheatrum Flavium* as early as the period it was constructed (Elkins 2019:22). Instead, a short-form dedicatory inscription, as reconstructed from dowel holes in a marble block, suggests that bronze lettering on the marble originally spelt out: ɪᴍᴘ·ᴄᴀᴇꜱ·ᴠᴇꜱᴘᴀꜱɪᴀɴᴜꜱ·ᴀᴜɢ | ᴀᴍᴘʜɪᴛʜᴇᴀᴛʀᴜᴍ·ɴᴏᴠᴜᴍ | ᴇx·ᴍᴀɴᴜʙɪ̀ꜱ […] ꜰɪᴇʀɪ·ɪᴜꜱꜱɪᴛ [Emperor Caesar Vespasian Augustus had this new amphitheatre erected with the spoils of war] (Alföldy 1995:212). Apart from the

less specific name of the 'new amphitheatre' – if indeed it can be considered a name in this form – this proposed reconstruction of the inscription is significant as, if accurate, it underlines that the construction was financed by booty from the sack of Jerusalem in 70 CE (Claridge 1998:278). Moreover, holes on the same marble block suggest an extra letter and interpunct were inserted at a later stage so the first line would read: IMP·T·CAES·VESPASIANUS·AUG (Alföldy 1995: 210). This attributed control of the building work specifically to Titus over his father Vespasian, under whose reign the construction had begun. As it was the only building of its kind in Rome when it was built, it is quite likely that citizens at that time merely referred to the building as *amphitheatrum* (Elkins 2019:22), so this may not be a case of naming per se. Still, that one added letter suggests the intention of an emperor, of a sycophantic architect, or potentially of enslaved metalworkers to associate Titus more closely with the structure.

The name *Amphitheatrum Flavium* eventually emerged and can be seen as an accumulation of onomastic capital for its founding emperors, albeit a name that has been eclipsed by *Colosseum* (in Italian: *Colosseo*). The more popular name most likely referred to its location near the colossal statue originally dedicated to Emperor Nero and rededicated by Vespasian to the deity Sol (*Colossus Neronis* then *Colossus Solis*). This name came to be widely used in all contexts for the amphitheatre by around the year 1000 CE (Richardson 1992:7), but quite possibly several centuries earlier as a nickname (Colagrossi 1913:138). Classical historians have remarked on the irony of this onomastic transformation:

> The irony is, then, that the standard modern name for Vespasian's great amphitheatre is one that makes it more of a memorial to Nero than to the dynasty that replaced him. […] For us the Colosseum must offer more than a political message about the Roman people's stake in the city and its empire. It embodies an important lesson in the ambiguities of memory, obliteration and amnesia. Wiping an emperor out of the landscape was more difficult than it may seem; as always, the harder you try, the more you risk drawing the attention of history to what you are trying to remove. (Hopkins & Beard 2005:35.)

The implications of this lesson for politically motivated commemorative naming – or indeed commercially motivated sponsored naming – are clear, and similar ironies can be found in place naming in our own times.

There are certain aspects in common between Rome's most famous amphitheatre and the modern sports and entertainment venues that will be

the focus of this study. Factors such as the connotations of the spectacular, the size of venues, opportunities for ostentatious displays of status, and possibilities for popular outreach – and populist exploitation – are now driving companies, organizations or individuals to seek closer associations with modern event facilities by adding their own names or brands to the venue name through name sponsorship deals. The impact of mass media and the potentially global reach of the modern sports and entertainment industries incentivize this to an even greater degree as the scope for visibility increases far beyond the reach of *in situ* signage.

Today's practices of name sponsorship do, however, feature ingredients that make them different from the naming of the Amphitheatrum Flavium, as well as earlier modern event venues. As distinct from more conventional forms of commemorating owners or sponsors in venue names, the selling of spatial naming rights is typically based on two-party contracts that create legally binding reciprocal responsibilities for both parties (Madden 2019; Vuolteenaho forthcoming). Through such contractual acts of usually fixed-term name allocation, a toponym is explicitly put at the centre of a formal market relationship, in which the seller garners additional income from its property and the purchaser gains publicity or other related benefits. This institutionalized and essentially commercialized logic of rendering toponyms as tradeable items is a recent invention (Rose-Redwood, Sotoudehnia & Tretter 2019; Vuolteenaho forthcoming). The earliest pure occurrences of explicit contractual sales of naming rights in this sense came in the latter half of the twentieth century, although venue names have undergone revisions in much earlier periods, as shown by the example above.

2.2 Capitalizing on classical name heritage in venue name generics

In transhistorical terms, a salient aspect in the mobilization of onomastic capital concerns the continuing use of classical naming elements in modern venue toponymy, both in Europe and elsewhere. To paraphrase Wilbur Zelinsky (1967:463), the lasting currency of ancient Greek and Roman naming elements in venues for spectator sports and entertainment springs from the 'pursuit of things classical that began in the Renaissance and has not fully subsided even now'. The event spaces of antiquity – still connoting spectacle, drama and grandeur – have inspired countless sports and entertainment venues up to the present day, not only in terms of their architecture, but also onomastically. Generics of ancient, especially Greek origin (very often with a detour via Latin) are still productive today in the

naming of publicly used venues in general, and spectator sports facilities in particular. The following, non-exhaustive examples of such generics are of particular relevance for the categories of venue discussed in this paper.

Colosseum, as discussed above, can be viewed as a transferred simplex name, and together with its alternative spelling *Coliseum*, it represents a case of a name deproprialized into a generic over the centuries. One definition of its most modern sense in English reads: 'A large public building or arena; [especially] a theatre, exhibition hall, or sports stadium. Now chiefly U.S.', supplemented by a note: 'Frequently in the names of such places' (*Oxford English Dictionary* 2011).[2] Indeed, although they lie outwith this study, the many venues in the United States using *coliseum* show that the onomastic capital associated with the nickname of the largest amphitheatre of the ancient world has anything but worn thin, even though the most iconic of these, the *Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum*, first opened in 1923, took on the controversial sponsored name *United Airlines Field at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum* in 2019. In its modern use as a generic, *coliseum* is also used for indoor venues like the *Arizona Veterans Memorial Coliseum* in Phoenix, Arizona, inaugurated in 1965.[3]

Of even older origin are two very common generics in our data: *stadium* (with the special case of *Olympic stadium*) and *arena*, together with their different linguistic forms such as *stadio*, *Stadion*, *stadion*, *stadiwm* and *areena*.

The generic *stadium*, with its analogous forms in the languages included in our corpus, seems to be an enduring, relatively non-marked generic for outdoor sports venues. Derived from the Greek *στάδιον*, originally a measure of distance equal to the length of track, the Latin form *stadium* has been especially productive and found its way into many languages, sometimes via intermediary languages. In fact, while the word for this type of structure and its use as a generic date back to the Hellenistic period, the architectural form was later transferred to imperial Rome, where its functions and forms were adapted to the Roman style of spectacle (Schweizer 2006). In modern times, the generic became popular especially with the emergence of the Olympic movement. With a further transformation into the default

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[2] The definition as cited here was a modernization of this sense as defined in the second edition: 'Frequently given as a name to theatres or other large places of amusement or resort' (*Oxford English Dictionary* 1989).

[3] The venues in Los Angeles and Phoenix were effectively named as war memorials or in honour of veterans, which may also have influenced the choice of generic, in keeping with the original Roman amphitheatre's martial background. In fact, they are not merely *coliseums*, but *memorial coliseums*, of which there are many more in the United States, alongside *memorial fields*, *memorial gymnasiums* and *memorial stadiums*.

generic for larger football venues in many, but not all, countries, the basic architectural design has often moved away from the oval, athletic-inspired form to the rectangular shape of the football pitch. *Olympic stadiums* are a special case, since their function in commemorating a specific edition of the modern Olympic Games effectively elevates them to a distinct category of generic for a particular, exclusive subcategory of venues. These venues' heritage connecting them to the classical Greek Olympic tradition, as well as to the modern Olympics, is expressed in part through their names, and Olympic stadiums, sites and monuments are significant signals of symbolic, architectural, cultural and onomastic capital in many former host cities. Often this combination of material heritage in the built environment and highly valued onomastic capital has prevented such venues from being renamed after corporate sponsors, at least for the time being (Vuolteenaho, Wolny & Puzey 2019).

The generic *arena*, together with some orthographically adapted or compound forms, is the second major generic to be found in our corpus. Etymologically, *arena* comes from a Latin word for sand, in turn likely to be a loanword from Etruscan, which came to describe the sandy combat space in an amphitheatre (Valpy 1828:31). Now it has certainly acquired quite an extended meaning, ranging from the building that houses the competition space as a *pars pro toto* to its broadest metaphorically derived meaning in English, which equates to 'any sphere of public or energetic action' (*Oxford English Dictionary* 1989). As will be seen below, it may be acquiring a new sub-sense in connection with name sponsorship.

The tendency to use classically inspired generics in the naming of modern sports venues, and in connection with sponsored names, draws on the onomastic capital of these naming elements themselves.[4] The historical prestige of these generics, with their origins in antiquity and centuries of use, conceivably gives them connotations of pedigree and permanence, not to mention the aforementioned links with ancient notions of glory that echo in their modern-day use. However, the tendency to use loanwords as generics for such venues is not purely a modern-day phenomenon; all of the Latin generics mentioned above are in turn loanwords or adaptations from Greek or Etruscan.

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[4] A hybrid example from our data of a modern generic drawing on inspiration from antiquity is *velodrome*, a loan construction from the French *vélodrome*, combining the short form of *vélocipède* 'bicycle' and the second element of the classical Greek ἱππόδρομος 'racecourse for horses and chariots', wherein –δρόμος signifies 'course'.

Finally, the presence of pseudo-Latin/pseudo-Greek names, or Greek/Latin-derived elements in compound names, shows that onomastic capital is not limited to generics actually used in antiquity, but seems to be perceived as residing in the Greek and Latin languages themselves. Both within and beyond this article's data set, suffix-based Latinate venue names testify that the onomastic capital associated with such time-honoured evocations is still present in the contemporary world. Built and named before the naming rights trend began in Europe, for instance, the major multipurpose indoor arena in Gothenburg called *Scandinavium* is associated on its website with the aforementioned monument: 'Rom har sitt Colosseum – vi har vårt Scandinavium' [Rome has its Colosseum – we have our Scandinavium] (Got Event 2020).

2.3 Philanthropism and naming in the Industrial Age: The Carnegie case

As Rose-Redwood, Vuolteenaho, Young & Light (2019:748) argue, two realms that grew in prominence from relatively early in the Industrial Age paved the way to the selling of naming rights for urban landmarks: the commercialization of professional sports and the rise of philanthropic gifting. As regards the latter, 'there is a long history of naming places after wealthy philanthropists as a symbolic gesture of gratitude for a significant gift or donation' (Rose-Redwood, Sotouhdenia & Tretter 2019:848). In some cases, these acts of naming or renaming may have been a choice offered to patrons or benefactors, or indeed a condition of the funding, while other times it may have been the decision of beneficiaries, or a posthumous commemoration, potentially many years later.

Particularly since around the turn of the twentieth century, increasing numbers of industrialists and associated companies began to be commemorated in the names of institutions, buildings, halls of residence, and also sports-related event spaces (Burton 2008). In Europe, for instance, *Philips Sportpark* in Eindhoven, opened in 1910 as a sports facility for the electrical company's employees, bore witness to this trend. In the US context, the renaming of Chicago's *Cubs Park* (home of the Chicago Cubs baseball team) to *Wrigley Field* (after the chewing gum producer William Wrigley Jr as the team's and its ballpark's owner) in 1926 is held by many scholars to be a close forerunner if not the kick-off to the current naming rights phenomenon (Bezold 2013:122; Fortunato 2013:67). This name change did not, however, involve a contract-based monetary transaction between a venue

owner and an unrelated sponsor. It also remains unclear whether Wrigley's exact motive at that time was to name the park after himself or after his company (Voigt 2004:328). In this subsection, we turn to the earlier pursuits of Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919) as a lens into the (dis)similarities between philanthropy-related commemorative naming and naming rights deals in their present-day guise.

Carnegie was one of the most prolific philanthropists of all time, with his trusts funding the building of 2,811 public libraries around the world, among many other projects (Tweedale 2012). This Scottish-American industrialist's donations led to onomastic commemoration of multiple kinds, including at many of the libraries he founded, educational institutions, concert halls, museums, and an artificial lake made for recreational purposes (*Princeton Weekly Bulletin* 2006), in addition to inspiring less directly connected street names and settlement names. Even the commemorative naming of the dinosaur species *Diplodocus carnegii* secured the presence of Carnegie's name in many museums around the world. The sheer scale of Carnegie's donations made an enormous contribution to culture, education, and even efforts for world peace in the prelude to the First World War, with the Peace Palace he funded in The Hague now constituting the seat of the International Court of Justice.

Through such vast donations for the public benefit, Carnegie called on the rich to use their wealth to improve society, and he succeeded in stimulating a wave of philanthropy. In his 'Gospel of Wealth', Carnegie (1900:33) commented specifically on the possibility of commemorative naming as a consequence of philanthropy, seeing that the community cannot 'pay a more graceful tribute to the citizen who presents [a park] than to give his name to the gift'. Unlike with name sponsorship deals, this exemplifies how in more traditional acts of philanthropy, any associated naming or renaming acts are typically seen as a tribute to the donor – as expressed by Carnegie – instead of constituting the central motive for making the donation, even though naming may cross the minds of many philanthropists, as it did for Carnegie.

However laudable Carnegie's donations were, during his own lifetime there were nevertheless challenges about his motives, especially after the violently suppressed strike at the Homestead Steel Works in Pennsylvania (Gangewere 2011:10). His proclaimed high-minded values and desires as a donor were not always compatible with the ways in which he earned his fortune, becoming for a time the wealthiest individual in the United States. The role of naming in philanthropy did not escape contemporary satirists.

As the Chicagoan writer Finley Peter Dunne's fictitious bartender character Mr Dooley stated in his distinctive variety of Irish-American dialect:

> A Carnaygie libry is a large, brown-stone, impenethrible buildin' with th' name iv th' maker blown on th' dure. […] Th' most cillybrated dead authors will be honored be havin' their names painted on th' wall in distinguished comp'y, as thus: Andhrew Carnaygie, Shakespeare; Andhrew Carnaygie, Bobby Burns; Andhrew Carnaygie, an' so on. […]
>
> I r-read [Carnaygie's] speech th' other day, whin he laid th' corner-stone iv th' libry at Pianola, Ioway. […] 'Th' way to abolish poverty an' bust crime is to put up a brown-stone buildin' in ivry town in th' counthry with me name over it. […] All I ask iv a city in rayturn f'r a fifty-thousan'-dollar libry is that it shall raise wan million dollars to maintain th' buildin' an' keep me name shiny […].' ([Dunne] 1906:178–180)

In this case, Dunne was evidently lampooning the prominence of the donor's name in many of the projects he supported (see more examples of satire in relation to sponsored names for instance in 4.2 and 4.5 below). More broadly, commemorative names arising from donations can be a source of controversy if a person, company or other organization recognized through the name falls into disrepute or is re-evaluated in a light that is incompatible with the prestige implied by the act of naming.

Philanthropy constantly 'raises fundamental questions about the nature of society, of its sustaining moral values, and of the role of government and every citizen in seeing to the welfare of all' (Paterson 2018:236). If such questions are raised by philanthropy, inevitably similar questions are raised by modern commercial sponsorship of publicly used infrastructure, where the benefits to the sponsor are openly acknowledged alongside the benefits to the sponsored party. In the latter context, partly reminiscent considerations have regarded the concept of 'sponsorship fit'. The essence of this concept is a congruence of values between the name-leasing sponsor and the entity that is selling the naming rights: a good 'functional', 'image-based' or 'geographic' sponsorship fit is more likely to generate mutual benefits and positive associations in the eyes of sports fans or other target audiences (Gillooly et al. 2020; see also Woisetschläger, Haselhoff & Backhaus 2014). By contrast, if the values of name sponsorship partners appear to clash, if the public perceives efforts at image laundering embedded in sponsorship, or if 'one of the parties gets in financial or image trouble', there are negative effects for the other party as well, as was the case with the Enron scandal that led to the Houston Astros baseball team buying back the naming rights

for their stadium (Voigt 2004:330). Alongside lengthy technical specifications for the use and visibility of a sponsored venue name, controlling such potential reputational damage has fed into a tendency for naming rights contracts to contain termination clauses, enabling a party to 'exit an agreement in cases of financial, reputational, or performance problems of the other' (Voigt 2004:331).

The above notions concerning philanthropic pursuits and associated place-naming acts illustrate how, in many societies, benefactors funding or making donations to institutions such as libraries, universities and religious institutions have long been recognized in the names of the structures themselves, of spaces within them or of outdoor areas nearby. Naming rights agreements of the sort that has developed in connection with the deepening commercialization of professional sports should not, though, be seen as a simple continuation of commemorating donors like Carnegie through naming. Carnegie's secretary, James Bertram, ensured local governments made financial commitments to the ongoing running and annual maintenance of sponsored libraries (Van Slyck 1995:23). This procedure was, however, very different from naming rights deals that render toponyms in themselves subject to contractual, and most often time-limited, market relationships.

Name sponsorship is now a phenomenon in its own right, with an open focus on the goal of influencing name choices in exchange for funds, and with names themselves commodified (Light & Young 2015; Rose-Redwood, Vuolteenaho, Young & Light 2019). Moreover, names that have been the subject of modern name sponsorship deals are frequently more ephemeral than those that emerged through traditional philanthropy. Name sponsorship is contributing to fundamental shifts in perceptions of capital, property, and public vs private spaces. It is today being carried out in different parts of the world by corporate entities, property owners, custodians and public authorities. Acts of name sponsorship entail mobilizing onomastic capital to monetize the names of spaces such as parks, paths, schools, transportation facilities and university buildings, as well as sports and entertainment venues. It is in the last two categories that this trend towards the marketization of names has been particularly visible in society at large, hence the selection of these locations for the onomastic material to be studied in this article.

3. Data set and analytic approach

Underpinning the empirical research in this article is a database of the current and former names of football grounds and indoor arenas in six European contexts. The data is drawn from England and Wales, Finland, Germany, Italy, Norway and Scotland.[5] These cases allow us to consider a mixture of different societal circumstances, such as language, population, economic situations, public finances and, crucially, different timelines and political–ideological tendencies in terms of marketization more generally, not to mention variations in the types of venue that exist, and which sports dominate. There are also disparities in approaches to property ownership and to the relationship between these facilities and the public or private sectors. In many cases, local authorities have a role in maintaining some sports facilities, but this varies considerably.

Specifically, our data set includes the home football grounds of the clubs in the top two national leagues in the three seasons spanning 2016–19 (or the three summer seasons from 2017 to 2019 in Finland and Norway), plus the national football stadium, where applicable. This is then supplemented with the twenty largest indoor arenas by spectator capacity in each context (or in Scotland the top fifteen, due to a relative lack of such venues), counting those with a permanently defined seating capacity that are at least occasionally used for sporting events. Therefore, the analysis to follow covers 339 venues (224 football grounds and 115 indoor arenas). Names of the venues continue to change in line with new sponsorship deals, so for consistency the statistics given are based on venues' names as of June 2019, although qualitative analysis will include some more recent developments.

Building on an earlier social–scientific analysis of the chronological and geographical diffusion of name sponsorship (Vuolteenaho, Wolny & Puzey 2019), this study seeks to delve more deeply into an onomastic analysis of the spread of venue naming rights in the same European countries by taking into account linguistic context and national naming traditions. In order to explore how onomastic capital is generated (drawing on other forms of, for example, linguistic capital), activated, mobilized, utilized or transformed into other forms of capital, we will analyse sponsored and non-sponsored venue names' structural and semantic features, as well as their varying pop-

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[5] The countries of England and Wales are considered together for this study due to their partially integrated top football leagues, but of the football grounds in the sample, only two are actually in Wales, while only one of the twenty indoor arenas in the study is in Wales.

ular reception. Specifically, we will be interpreting the data from three analytic perspectives.

Firstly, our country-specific readings concentrate on the onomastic structures, from occurrences of simplex names (with or without a definite article, as with *The O2* or *Olympia*, both in London) to varyingly complex compound names that range from standard two-part toponymic constructs (usually a 'specific + generic' structure in most of the cases to be considered here, or in Italy 'generic + specific') to more idiosyncratic multi-part onomastic structures. This level of analysis may also identify cases where sponsored names deviate from more established local conventions regarding the structure of names of this kind.

Secondly, we focus on the semantic and functional aspects of naming elements, with a particular emphasis on generic elements, especially what we have termed *function-related generic elements*. These are those generics that are intended to be key indications of a referent's class and/or characteristics as a given type of event venue, typically indicating the main use of the venue or the type of activities carried out there. Function-related generics are a characteristic traditionally shared by the types of facility in the corpus, and this term is important to distinguish from generics that no longer refer to the actual present-day function of the venue in question. This can be illustrated with some examples from Sweden, which lies outwith the current data set. If we were to look at the home ground of Uppsala-based IK Sirius Fotboll, *Studenternas idrottsplats*, we would count *idrottsplats* 'sports ground' as the function-related generic. Meanwhile, if we were to consider the main football stadium in Gothenburg, *Gamla Ullevi*, we would say it has no function-related generic. *Ullevi* does mean a holy place of the Norse god Ullr, and it contains the generic element *-vi*, but we would not see this as a function-related generic for a stadium. As will be seen, when function-related generics exist in the names of these venues, they are overt and transparent in their meaning, belonging to the category of lexemes that Van Langendonck calls *classifiers* (2007:206). This perspective is at the core of much of the discussion to follow, since it covers ways in which sponsored naming may be reinforcing or modifying the implicit onomastic capital of pre-existing generic elements.

Within this semantic and functional perspective we also consider the use of specific elements in venue names. These are an important structure aspect of sponsored names, as they are characteristically used as a dedication to the sponsor and may, therefore, be the most obvious signal that the name is sponsored. We are also interested in investigating whether corporate sig-

nifiers related to sponsoring brands are simply added to existing names, or whether they replace the latter in the case of renaming existing venues. The way that these specific elements are used may also differ from more conventional types of commemoration in names.

Finally, as the third level of analysis, we reflect upon the popular reception of names, colloquial use, and variants of sponsored and non-sponsored venue names. With sponsorship-based renaming, in particular, we identify stances and associated nicknames related to the ways in which name changes have been challenged and accepted by the local population. The range of data that could be gathered on this aspect is too vast to cover in full detail in this article, but we will, for instance, comment on examples of widespread colloquial naming practice in relation to these categories of names, and we will reflect on causes of resistance to the explicit mobilization of onomastic capital for sponsorship purposes.

At all three levels of analysis, an integral part of the article's methodological approach is to compare how the onomastic patterns yielded by the recent name sponsorship boom differ from the more conventional or traditional venue toponymy in the national contexts in question. For instance, we will consider whether novel structures are being employed in sponsored names, or whether there are particular generics that are more likely to be used for sponsored venues; trends that might be accounted for in terms of onomastic capital. If certain structures or generics have been more frequently used in sponsored names compared to traditional venue names in the contexts to be considered here, that may suggest they operate as effective signals of onomastic capital in sponsored names.

4. Onomastic analysis

The six contexts will be analysed in three geographical sets, starting with the 'insular' cases from England and Wales (4.1) and from Scotland (4.2), followed by the large continental cases from Germany (4.3) and Italy (4.4), and finally the Nordic cases from Finland (4.5) and Norway (4.6).

In our previous study based on the same countries, we explored the diffusion of name sponsorship (Vuolteenaho, Wolny & Puzey 2019). Of the 308 venues considered in that study, 38.0% had at some point carried the name of a sponsor. The trend for sponsorship was strongest in Germany, followed by Finland, and then by England and Wales. In terms of the chronological development of this phenomenon in the types of venue in

question, the earliest example in our database was found in Finland (see 4.5 below), while there was a conspicuous peak in naming rights deals in Germany in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The latter was largely connected with the construction of many new venues for the 2006 FIFA World Cup, which gave sponsors the opportunity to attach their brand to completely new facilities, strengthening the bond between the stadium and the brand, and providing ongoing income for these expensive structures.

It was also clear in that previous study that the figures for Italy, Norway and Scotland were far below the average. Hardly any Italian football grounds are named after a sponsor, for a variety of reasons, including the relative lack of newer venues that might require sponsorship, the prevalence of stadium-based incidents of violence that might deter potential sponsors concerned about tainting their brands, and organized fans strongly influencing clubs' decisions. In Norway, the comparative health of public finances may suggest there is less need for sponsorship, but at the same time the existing sponsors there do include several public-sector bodies.[6] In Scotland, meanwhile, the larger stadiums are quite old, and hence the toponymic attachment factor comes into play, as will be discussed below, although a number of smaller venues have entered into sponsorship deals.

4.1 England and Wales

In the sample from England and Wales, non-sponsored major football grounds (n = 35) have a variety of generics, but more than half of those in our sample (18/35) are *stadiums*.[7] The remainder is made up of *parks* (6/35), one *ground*, and a relatively high number (10/35) that have no function-related generics at all, typically because they are well-established venues, many over a century old. Names such as *Old Trafford* in Manchester, or *Stamford Bridge* in London, carry enough onomastic capital that their function as football grounds barely needs to be spelt out with a sports-related generic element. This category of names most frequently entails a secondary use of a street name or a local area, as in *Anfield*, which as a local place name in

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[6] One example is the home ground of Norwegian football club Odds BK, in Skien, where power company Skagerak Energi AS, partly owned by the local municipality, reportedly paid NOK 60 million to name the stadium *Skagerak Arena* for ten years (Hagen & Røkeberg 2006). In 2017, the deal was renewed for another five years, at a cost of NOK 4 million per year (Omnes 2017).

[7] One non-sponsored football ground, *Cardiff City Stadium*, also has a Welsh name (*Stadiwm Dinas Caerdydd*), but only the English name is used on the venue's main entrance sign and monolingual website, although there are many other bilingual signs at the stadium.

Liverpool actually commemorates a place in Ireland named *Annefield* (Ò Muirithe 2010; Townlands.ie 2016). Among this group there is also a case of a football ground where a non-function-related generic has been proprialized to form a simplex name: Millwall's home ground *The Den*, partly a reference to the club's symbol of a lion (Jägerskiöld Nilsson 2018:42).

As for the sponsored football grounds in the English and Welsh sample (n = 14), they are all referred to as *stadiums*.[8] Among these is Bolton Wanderers' home ground, which since 2018 has been known as the *University of Bolton Stadium* in a deal described by the university's president and vice-chancellor as 'incredibly exciting' (cited in Bolton Wanderers FC 2018). The local university is already the third sponsor to apply its name to that particular venue, after sportswear companies Reebok (1997–2014) and Macron (2014–18).

When it comes to the twenty largest indoor venues in England and Wales, those with sponsored names (n = 11) are most commonly called *arenas*, except for two cases. One is the *Ericsson Exhibition Hall* in Coventry (formerly the *Jaguar Exhibition Hall*), while the other is *The O2* in London (alternatively styled as *The O₂*), which was originally known as the *Millennium Dome*. This is a particularly unusual example, as the name of the sponsor has become the name of the venue, with just the addition of a definite article to help it stand out. *The O2* is technically the name of the whole complex, while the indoor arena itself is called *The O2 Arena*, but there is some overlap between the use of the two names, with *Arena* often being omitted, as an implied generic. This process is possibly encouraged by the non-standard lower-case initial letter of *arena*, as used in the venue's own branding and communications, which typically style it as *The O2 arena*, or alternatively *The O₂ arena*.

Among the more complicated sponsored names was the temporary, vehemently opposed moniker *sportsdirect.com @ St James' Park Stadium*, given in 2009 to the historic home ground of Newcastle United FC, which after a period as *Sports Direct Arena* (2011–12) reverted to the original *St James' Park* when loan company Wonga.com bought the naming rights. The *American Express Community Stadium* (also known as the *Falmer Stadium* due to its location in the eponymous village) is the home ground of Brighton and Hove Albion FC, and its name has been more successful, even

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[8] The home ground of Swansea City AFC bears the sponsored name *Liberty Stadium* in English and *Stadiwm Liberty* in Welsh. The venue's bilingual logo reads *Stadiwm Liberty Stadium*, and the logo is also used as the main entrance sign, but the predominantly monolingual websites of the stadium and its key tenants refer to it using the English name only.

though sponsorship consultants claim that long names impede marketing communication (see, for example, SponsorPitch 2011). Despite the stadium's globally operating sponsor and the length of its name, several coinciding factors seem to have paved the way for its acceptance. In addition to the local football club's improved performances on the pitch, American Express is a major local employer in Brighton. As the *Community* element insinuates, the sponsor has also invested in community projects within the locality, enhancing the believability of the 'sponsorship fit' (see 2.3 above). Furthermore, the stadium is semi–officially and colloquially also known as the *Amex* or the *Amex Stadium* after the sponsor's abbreviated name, which has helped to circumvent the problem of an excessively convoluted onomastic structure in this case.

4.2 Scotland

There are fewer indoor arenas as a whole in Scotland compared to the other contexts in this study, but those in the sample that are sponsored (n = 3) are called *arenas*, with one notable exception. The largest arena in Glasgow is called *The SSE Hydro*, reflecting sponsorship by the energy company SSE (formerly Scottish and Southern Energy), which also sponsors *The SSE Arena, Wembley* and *The SSE Arena, Belfast*. When the Glasgow deal was signed, the plan was to call it the *Scottish Hydro Arena* (Clyde Waterfront 2011), after the Scottish Hydro brand the company was using to sell electricity in Scotland. The company stopped using that brand, in favour of SSE, but decided to keep the *Hydro* in the arena's name, while also dropping the generic *Arena*. This was apparently intended to incentivize the public to make stronger associations with the brand. As SSE's branding consultants noted, 'Glaswegians have a propensity to give a nick name [*sic*] to everything' (Material_UK et al. 2014). But dropping *Arena* made sure that the shortest form of the name would be *The Hydro*. It made some sense topographically, as the venue is adjacent to the River Clyde, but *hydro* is also in limited use in Scotland as a short-form generic, referring to hydropathic hotels developed for water cures during the nineteenth century (Durie 2006). There are a handful of these hotels left, and they have connotations of relaxation and slightly old-fashioned luxury. Now *The SSE Hydro* may be drawing slightly on that history and onomastic capital to build new brand loyalties.

The Scottish data set is unique in this study in that the most common generic for football grounds overall is not some form of *stadium*; instead the

most common and traditional generic for non-sponsored football grounds in the Scottish sample is *park* (12/18). As well as in Scotland, *park* is a typical generic for early football grounds in England, Wales, Ireland and Northern Ireland, particularly for those that originated as a more general recreation area. Its continued visibility in Scotland attests to the long history of many grounds, but it is also a generic that has been productive into more recent times compared with the examples in the English and Welsh data set. The most recently opened *park* in the English and Welsh sample is *Selhurst Park* (1924), while the most recent ones in the Scottish sample are *New Douglas Park* in Hamilton (2001) and *St Mirren Park* in Paisley (2009), although both have since been known by several sponsored names, all of which used the generics *stadium* or *arena*. This shows a preference in these sponsorship deals for generics that, at least in this cultural context, point more to the edifices around the football pitch than to the pitch itself, and that may be imbued with greater onomastic capital by association with other venues on an international level.[9] Indeed, the sponsored football grounds in our sample typically use *stadium* (5/8) or *arena* (2/8), with one using a combination of *stadium* and *park* (see 5.3 below).

   Some of the smaller venues in Scotland have had exceptionally many short deals, such as the home of Livingston FC, which was built in 1995 and has had six official names since then, including five sponsored names. Its current name is the *Tony Macaroni Arena*, after a chain of Scottish-Italian restaurants (see Figure 1). It is occasionally nicknamed the *Pasta Bowl*, mainly by fans of other teams. Another of the stadium's nicknames was, however, officially recognized in the 2019–20 season, through its use in hashtag form on the back of the team's shirts: *#Spaghettihad*, an ironic reference to the sponsored name of the English Premier League club Manchester City's *Etihad Stadium*.[10] Within our European data set, Scotland also has the venue with the most naming deals with different sponsors. The home of Dumbarton FC, with its capacity of 2,020 spectators, has had six name sponsorship deals since it was opened in 2000. Among its many and varied

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[9] *New Douglas Park* first had the sponsored name *Ballast Stadium* (2001–03) – although it was still known unofficially by its non-sponsored name throughout that period – and later became the *SuperSeal Stadium* (2016–18), *Hope CBD Stadium* (2018–19) and *Fountain of Youth Stadium* (2019–). Meanwhile, *St Mirren Park* has also been known as the *Paisley 2021 Stadium* (2015–17), in order to promote Paisley's ultimately unsuccessful bid to become UK City of Culture in 2021, and the *Simple Digital Arena* (2018–).

[10] The team itself once bore the name of an engineering company, having been founded in 1943 as the factory team *Ferranti Amateurs*, later becoming *Ferranti Thistle* in 1948, and then actually being forced to change its name to *Meadowbank Thistle* in 1974, due to Scottish Football League rules against sponsorship, before later moving location to Livingston (Clark 2015:126).

names was *Dumbarton Football Stadium sponsored by DL Cameron*, in memory of one of the club's late directors, who had been intending to arrange stop-gap sponsorship for the ground (Findlay 2012). Due to its commemorative role, this particular name was a borderline case for categorization, but the fact the name incorporated the words *sponsored by* determined that it should be seen as a sponsored as well as a commemorative name.

An early case in Scotland that was also difficult to categorize was the home of Perth-based St Johnstone FC, *McDiarmid Park*, which was named after local farmer Bruce McDiarmid, who donated the land for the stadium, opened in 1989 (Currie 1999). Since *McDiarmid* was the surname of an individual, not a company name, and was not directly tied to a sponsorship deal, we decided to view this as a commemorative and not a sponsored name: although it could be seen as a borderline case, it is closer to the philanthropic notions of Carnegie (see 2.3 above) than to name sponsorship. These borderline cases highlight the potential for future studies to explore notions of onomastic capital and commemorative naming further in terms of gift culture.

4.3 Germany

Compared to the often relatively short-term nature of name sponsorship in Scotland, many venues in Germany are at the opposite end of the spectrum, with strategic deals characteristically lasting a decade or longer. The non-sponsored football grounds in our German sample (n = 12) all officially use the generic *Stadion*, but as in the other countries, the generics are not always used in everyday language. This is especially the case with stadiums where the name refers to external toponyms, such as *Millerntor-Stadion* (or simply *Millerntor*) in Hamburg, or *Wildparkstadion* (or simply *Wildpark*) in Karlsruhe.[11]

Among the sponsored football grounds (n = 28), there are some with *Stadion* (6/28) or *Sportpark* (2/28), and one *Park* (*Signal Iduna Park* in Dortmund), but the vast majority use *Arena* (19/28). One noteworthy example is the monumental *Allianz Arena* in Munich, which is one of the venues built in the run-up to the 2006 World Cup. Since FIFA guarantees exclusivity to its own sponsors, and demands venues clean of sponsored names, the stadium was temporarily referred to by the non-sponsored name *FIFA*

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[11] In the case of some newly built venues in Germany, especially sponsored ones, the specific element is occasionally dropped instead. For instance, Munich's *Allianz Arena* is sometimes referred to merely as *die Arena*.

WM-Stadion München (*FIFA World Cup Stadium, Munich*) and the logo was removed. In total, seven stadiums had to change their names during the 2006 World Cup. When the Allianz Arena hosts the massively followed UEFA games, such as Champions League matches, the logo is covered and the stadium is called *Fußball-Arena München* (*Football Arena Munich*), or sometimes just *Arena München*. Such temporary 'de-sponsoring' is commonplace during internationally broadcast tournaments (see also 4.6 below).

A further case of interest is the high-profile home of football club Bayer 04 Leverkusen, the *BayArena*. The team was founded by the pharmaceutical company Bayer, and this is reflected in the portmanteau form of the name, which otherwise appears slightly incongruous to an English-speaking audience, for example, which might expect a very different topographical situation than the inland plains of North Rhine-Westphalia. Although the sponsored nature of this name is not as obvious as with the Allianz Arena, it had to change during the 2011 Women's World Cup, when it became the *FIFA Frauen-WM-Stadion Leverkusen*. In fact, the links between modern industry and naming are implicit in the name of the city itself, bestowed by its founder, the industrial chemist Carl Leverkus (1804–89), whose business was later acquired by Bayer (Schumacher 1985:390).

Historically, we find the unusual use, via English, of the Latinate generic *Stadium* for the main stadium in Nuremberg (originally the *Städtisches Stadion* and today the *Max-Morlock-Stadion*), which was known as *Victory Stadium* while used by the US Army in 1945–61. A similar course of events was witnessed in Stuttgart, where what was originally the *Adolf-Hitler-Kampfbahn* became *Century Stadium* in 1945–49, and most recently (since 2008) the *Mercedes-Benz Arena*.[12] The old generic *Kampfbahn* 'competition/battle stadium', as once seen in Stuttgart, is no longer productive in new names, and the same applies to *Sportplatz* 'sports ground/field'.

Most of the sponsored indoor venues in the German sample use *Arena* (10/12), with one *Dome* and one *Stadion*. The use of *Arena* for more modern, typically sponsor-named venues is made especially clear when we consider that *Halle* is the prevailing generic for non-sponsored indoor venues (5/8). Only one of the latter uses the name *Arena*, and that name has a non-traditional construction for German: *Arena Leipzig*, with the generic first, followed by the specific element, being the name of the city. This name's structure almost suggests an invitation to potential sponsors who may wish to add their company or brand name in front of the existing name.

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[12] This new name is also used for two indoor arenas: one in Berlin and the other in Shanghai.

As discussed in Section 4.1 above, the Telefónica-owned telecommunications brand O2 had already set a precedent for unusual naming patterns in relation to London's entertainment complex *The O2*. Its former sponsorship of two indoor arenas in Germany took a different but still idiosyncratic approach, with *O2 World Berlin* (2006–15) and *O2 World Hamburg* (2010–15) both using the generic *World* (see Figure 2).[13] In a metaphorical sense, this may imply a sphere of existence with distinct experiences compared to the rest of the planet, although its use in two cities suggests these are parallel worlds. Crucially, it also ties in with the widespread global use of this generic for amusement parks as diverse as the *Walt Disney World Resort* in Florida, the now closed aircraft-carrier-themed *Minsk World* (Chinese: Míng sī kè hángmǔ shìjiè 明思克航母世界) in Shenzhen, *uShaka Marine World* in Durban, or *Moominworld* in Naantali (Finnish: *Muumimaailma*; Swedish: *Muminvärlden*). This evidently expands the possible associations of the generic considerably to include enjoyment and fascination, as well as highlighting the multipurpose function of these venues. Although the venues in Berlin and Hamburg now have different names, these cases demonstrate that the impact of onomastic capital can readily cross over between different sectors of human activity, here inspiring the use of generics that may be less immediately descriptive of a location's primary function but that may entail other connotations and be redolent of prestige in other ways.

4.4 Italy

In our Italian sample, all non-sponsored football grounds (n = 41) use the generic *stadio*. This includes the unusual case of *Stadio Arena Garibaldi-Romeo Anconetani* in Pisa, where *Stadio* is the main function-related generic, while the *Arena* is an embedded traditional generic referring to the site's former life as the *Arena Federighi*, an open-air amphitheatre long before it became a football ground. It is very common in Italy for the names of public buildings and streets to commemorate specific individuals, and this name is also part of that trend. Commemorative naming can be redolent of the dedication of churches to the memory of saints, and there is something almost hagiographic about this name. The fact that it also commemorates two separate individu-

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[13] Both these facilities are owned by the US-based Anschutz Entertainment Group, as is *The O2* in London, and they also employed the same alternative typesetting of the company name (see 4.1 above). In 2015, the Berlin venue became the *Mercedes-Benz Arena*, and the Hamburg venue (originally the *Color Line Arena*) became the *Barclaycard Arena*.

als – Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–82), hero of the Risorgimento, and Romeo Anconetani (1922–99), former chair of the resident football club – is also reminiscent of churches, which may be dedicated to more than one saint: see for instance the *Basilica dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo* in Venice, contracted to (*San*) *Zanipolo* in the Venetian dialect.

In colloquial use, as in Germany and elsewhere, the names are often simplified without the generic *stadio*, and if there are multiple specifics, one is often seen as the primary one. For instance, commentators or fans might say informally: '*Ci vediamo al Via del mare*' [See you at the Via del mare], referring to the home ground of Lecce. The stadium's full name, *Stadio comunale Ettore Giardiniero-Via del mare*, references ownership by the municipality, commemoration of former mayor Ettore Giardiniero, and the stadium's location on the main road leading from Lecce to the Adriatic Sea. Nevertheless, the abbreviated stadium name (*il*) *Via del mare* keeps the masculine gender of the implied generic (*stadio*) and does not take the feminine gender of the colloquial street name (*la*) *Via del mare*.

There are only four sponsored football grounds in the Italian sample, but all of them use other generics than the usual *stadio*. One uses *arena*, while three use the generic *stadium*, which originated via Latin (see 2.2 above) and has now returned to its homeland. These four are the *Dacia Arena* in Udine, the *Mapei Stadium-Città del Tricolore* in Reggio Emilia, the *Orogel Stadium-Dino Manuzzi* in Cesena, and the *Allianz Stadium* in Turin. The latter was built for Juventus in 2011 and was originally known as *Juventus Stadium*, so it used the 'international' generic *Stadium* before it was even sponsored, again perhaps as a signal to potential sponsors and in order to stress the aspect of being the new benchmark for Italian football venues (Wolny 2016:199).[14] The generics of these sponsored names are unusual for the Italian context, but it is also worth noting that the traditional structure of a stadium name in Italian starts with the generic, followed by one or more specific elements. In the case of these names, though, the order is reversed, with the sponsor specific coming first, followed by the generic. This may make the names stand out as cosmopolitan, international and new, but it also gives the sponsor pride of place before even announcing what type of venue it is. From the sponsor's perspective, this might be particularly important in cases where there are multiple dedications within a name that

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[14] In this case, either the specific or the generic can be used on its own as a nickname of sorts, as shown in these phrases from the same paragraph of a news report: '*Lo Stadium riapre dopo quasi 90 giorni e sembra passata una vita. […] Sarri dividerà i suoi giocatori in due squadre sul prato dell'Allianz*' [The Stadium reopens after almost 90 days, which seems like a lifetime. […] Sarri will split his players into two teams on the pitch at the Allianz] (Bianchin 2020).

would otherwise dilute the sponsor's prominence, such as the commemoration of club chair Dino Manuzzi in Cesena, or of Reggio Emilia's status as the birthplace of the Italian flag.

The main generic used for indoor arenas is *pala* (in 9 of the total of 20 sponsored and non-sponsored venues). This generic is an abbreviation of *palazzo/palazzetto*, which is to be found in more extensive generic constructions such as *palazzo dello sport* (literally 'palace/large building of sport') or *palazzetto dello sport* (for a smaller venue, hence the diminutive suffix). The intermediate step in the shortening process is often the form *palasport*, which dates back to 1961 (*Lo Zingarelli* 2020) and is to be understood as a typical modern-sounding word from that era, full perhaps of optimism for the future. The full-length terms achieved prominence with the construction of two arenas for the 1960 Summer Olympic Games in Rome, named simply *Palazzo dello Sport* (which bore the sponsored name *PalaLottomatica* in 2003–18) and *Palazzetto dello Sport*. Together with the abbreviations *pala* and *palasport*, these are part and parcel of the post-war economic boom in Italy, when many of these indoor arenas were constructed. As name sponsorship deals have emerged in more recent decades, we see *pala* also being used as a generic for sponsored names of indoor venues (2/8), although it is now marginally eclipsed by *arena* (3/8).

Some particularly exotic generics have also been used in Italy. One more recent instance of a name that conjures up futuristic images is an indoor venue in Bologna, now called the *Unipol Arena*, which was known in 2008–11 as the *Futurshow Station*, with *Futurshow* being the name of a technology fair that used to be held in the city. The *Station* generic for what is an indoor arena appears even more unconventional, considering that the railway station serving the venue is called *Casalecchio Palasport*, referring to the part of the Metropolitan City of Bologna where the venue is located and using a more standard generic for indoor venues.

4.5 Finland

In Finland, non-sponsored football grounds in our sample use a variety of mainly prosaic function-related generics, such as *keskuskenttä* ('central ground', 4/17) and *urheilupuisto* ('sports park', 2/17). By contrast, the venues that are sponsored use only *stadion* (4/8), *areena* (3/8) or *arena* (1/8). There is only one non-sponsored football ground that uses the generic *areena*, named after a footballing legend, the *Arto Tolsa Areena*. This latter commemoration is also a relatively recent coinage, from 2000, replacing *Kotkan*

urheilukeskus [Kotka Sports Centre], originally opened for the 1952 Summer Olympic Games.

Ice hockey is a more popular spectator sport than football in Finland, a fact reflected in naming rights deals for indoor venues, which are more common than for the country's football grounds. Of the 13 sponsored indoor venues in our Finnish data set, almost all use *areena* (11/13) or *arena* (1/13), the only exception being the *Gatorade Center* in Turku. Most of the non-sponsored indoor venues include the prosaic description *jäähalli* ('ice rink', 4/7), which is entirely absent from the sponsored names.

In a similar way to Scotland, Finnish evidence suggests that there is a strong tendency for name sponsorship deals to last considerably shorter periods in peripheral or semi-peripheral geographical settings with smaller venues, lower-ranked sports clubs, less affluent local economies and less media attention. In smaller Finnish localities, naming rights contracts typically only last for a couple of years. Even at the upper end of the spectrum, strategic contracts allocated for a decade or longer have been rare in Finland. For instance, since its completion, Helsinki's second-biggest football venue has experienced four consecutive name revisions by separate domestic or Nordic corporate sponsors, being first *Finnair Stadium* (2000–10), then *Sonera Stadium* (2010–17), *Telia 5G Areena* (2017–20), and most recently *Bolt Arena* (2020–), notably also a return to the international spelling of the generic element *arena* instead of its Finnish variant *areena*.

Resistance to the proliferation of venue name sponsorship has not been particularly vocal in Finland, but there have been exceptions. In newspapers and online forums, both enthusiasm and scepticism have been expressed. These varied stances are illustrated by popular responses to the series of corporate or brand names associated with the aforementioned *Gatorade Center* (2016–). This is the venue with the earliest name sponsorship deal in our European data set and, prior to its current name, it has also been known since its opening as *Typhoon* (after the regional bank Turun Työväen Säästöpankki, abbreviated as TYP; 1990–94), *Elysée Arena* (after a sparkling wine brand; 1994–2006), *HK Areena* (after a meat-based food manufacturer; 2010–16), and as *Turkuhalli* in periods without sponsorship. While popular with some, each of these names has also been ridiculed, a case in point being the colloquial moniker *Nakkikattila* [Sausage Kettle], which was once a widely used nickname for the *HK Areena* (Vuolteenaho forthcoming). The mainly latent cultural and institutional resistance to suggestions to rename the country's most iconic and by far biggest event facility, *Helsingin olympiastadion* (*Helsinki Olympic Stadium*), appears to be even stronger.

With an existing name harking back to the grandest international event ever organized on Finnish soil, and embodying classically associated onomastic capital, speculations about lucrative name sponsorship in connection with a recent costly renovation of this national landmark did not carry the day (see, for example, Sjöblom 2017).

4.6 Norway

Similarly to Finland, more prosaic or unostentatious generics were once widespread at Norwegian football grounds, but they have now almost disappeared from top-flight grounds, with the exceptions of the non-sponsored *Myrdal gress* (*gress* meaning 'grass' or, by extension, 'pitch'), the sponsored *OBOS Idrettspark Nordre Åsen* (where *idrettspark* is 'sports park'), and the non-sponsored (semi-)simplex name of *Idrettsparken* [The Sports Park] in Notodden (which bore the sponsored name *Tinfos Arena* in 2007–08). The slightly more elaborate *stadion* is by far the most typical generic used for non-sponsored football grounds (18/25), while the arguably more dramatic *arena* is very uncommon in the non-sponsored group (2/25), but is definitely the most used generic for sponsored football grounds (8/14).[15] The use of both these classically inspired generics demonstrates tapping into onomastic capital, especially in the case of *arena*.

Not all sponsored names are instantly recognizable as such, as with an example from Kristiansand, where the bank Sparebanken Sør bought the naming rights to the new stadium built for IK Start. A public competition was held to suggest a name, and the name chosen by the bank's CEO was *Sør Arena* [South Arena] (Sandvik 2006). Although this name did use part of the bank's name, it also referred to Kristiansand's location near the southernmost tip of the Norwegian mainland, and suggested ambitions to be an arena with a wider macro-regional catchment area. This case shows how corporations may sometimes purchase naming rights, but not make use of the right to name the property after themselves in an obvious way, instead using the opportunity to market their brands less directly. Even so, the use of the generic *arena* instead of the more common *stadion* hinted at a newly

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[15] The dictionary *Bokmålsordboka* (2020) defines *stadion* as 'idrettsanlegg (med tribuner)' [sports facility (with stands)], while it gives *arena* two senses: 'stridsplass i et romersk amfiteater eller spansk tyrefekterstadion' [combat area in a Roman amphitheatre or Spanish bullring], and the figurative meaning: 'stridsplass, skueplass' [combat area, stage]. *Det Norske Akademis ordbok* (2020, s.v. 'arena'), meanwhile, gives the meanings of *arena* as 'idrettsanlegg' [sports facility] and, figuratively, 'sted eller miljø hvor noe (interessant) utspiller seg' [place or setting where something (interesting) happens].

coined name. IK Start had severe financial problems, and the bank deepened its involvement, taking on ownership of the club and its stadium, and later selling both for the token sum of NOK 2 (Sørgjerd 2009, *E24* 2010). Nevertheless, its involvement continued, and with a new sponsorship deal in March 2014 the name was changed to the less ambiguous *Sparebanken Sør Arena* (Holtet 2014). Meanwhile, UEFA refers to the stadium merely as *Kristiansand Arena* (see 4.3 above for further examples of such temporary or context-specific 'de-sponsoring').

In Norway, as elsewhere, *arena* is the most typical generic for sponsored indoor venues (3/4), with only one sponsored use of *amfi* (an abbreviation of *amfiteater*), at *CC Amfi*, the home ice of Storhamar Hockey in Hamar. The latter is among the most curious cases, as the name is disputed by the local authority. The venue was opened in 1992, in the run-up to the 1994 Winter Olympic Games, when the rink hosted short-track and figure skating. The building belongs to the municipally owned company Hamar Olympiske Anlegg and was originally known as *Hamar Olympiske Amfi* [Hamar Olympic Amphitheatre], also acquiring the poetic alternative name *Nordlyshallen* [The Northern Lights Hall]. In 2015, CC Gruppen, a company owning various shopping centres and other property in Norway, agreed with the ice hockey club to pay NOK 6 million over ten years for the naming rights to the venue (Steen Hansen 2015). Nevertheless, the municipal arena owners do not use the sponsored name on their website and have stated that they were not asked about the naming deal (Kristiansen 2015). In light of the extraordinary onomastic capital of venues associated with the Olympic Games, this is an unusual instance of an Olympic name being abandoned, although using the word 'Olympic' directly together with the sponsored name would almost certainly constitute trademark infringement. The disputed status of the name allows the municipality to continue utilizing the onomastic capital of the Olympics. Meanwhile, the ice hockey club has essentially activated the latent onomastic capital of the venue as if it were a blank slate, making economic capital out of the transaction. As for the sponsor, it has transformed economic capital into symbolic and social capital through the act of renaming, with potential for further economic capital to accrue.

The most common generic for non-sponsored indoor venues in the Norwegian sample is *hall* 'hall' (7/16), with the compounds *fjellhall* 'mountain hall' and *idrettshall* 'sports hall' making up another two, but there are several others, including *spektrum* (3/16) and *arena* (2/16). One of the non-sponsored indoor venues, again in Hamar, has no function-related generic at

all: *Vikingskipet* means 'the Viking ship' and refers to the shape of its roof. Its original official name was *Hamar olympiahall* [Hamar Olympic Hall], but the more poetic name has been officially adopted too, and is apparently the main name used by the venue's owner and operator. Such official use of two names for the same venue – a more common practice among sponsored venue names in our European data – indicates that valuations of onomastic capital vary in context-specific ways over time or depending on register, and further, that venue owners are often reluctant to abandon established names altogether, as they may still carry important meanings for people. Likewise, as in this case, names used colloquially may catch on to the extent that they are preferred to the official name, even in official contexts.

5. Discussion and conclusions

Backed by historical insights, and scrutinizing the present–day sponsored and non-sponsored venue toponomasticon, this article has investigated the mobilization of onomastic capital, as well as associated linguistic and cultural variations, in a variety of European contexts. In commodified spectator sports and entertainment, the interplay between economic and onomastic capital (and associated symbolic, social, political and psychological meanings conveyed by venue names) has dramatically intensified and grown in salience, especially in the wake of selling facilities' names to corporate sponsors. Even many historic football stadiums such as *St James' Park* in Newcastle (see 4.1 above), or the *Estadio Santiago Bernabéu* in Madrid (Friend 2018), have been under pressure to sell naming rights in order to bolster revenue streams or cover renovation costs (Vuolteenaho forthcoming). Nevertheless, a substantial proportion of venues in Europe are still not named after a sponsor, and institutional and popular resistance to the name sponsorship phenomenon has surfaced in many local contexts. This has offered an intriguing framework for comparing these processes of capital formation from onomastic perspectives. In this final section, we summarize the article's key answers to the onomastically focused research questions presented in the introduction and suggest avenues for future research in this area.

5.1 Generics as signals of onomastic capital in sponsored names

Traditionally, there have been considerable national variations in the use of generics in venue toponymies, but a slight trend towards transnational commonalities was observable in our data, especially but not only in connection with the naming rights trend. A case in point is our observation that the onomastic capital associated with *arena* has been on the rise irrespective of national context; indeed, the general popularity of the generic *arena* for sponsored venues of all kinds, especially for indoor venues, is clear at a European level. The etymology and current definitions of *arena* are accounted for in 2.2 above, but as an internationally recognized naming element it now appears to describe a place of energetic or exciting action, often with naming rights sold or for sale, and is thus functioning increasingly as a transparent signal of the mobilization of onomastic capital. Among football grounds, out of our currently non-sponsored examples only 2.0% (3/148) use *arena/areena*, while 44.7% of the currently sponsored football grounds (34/76) use these generics. As for indoor venues, 25.0% (16/64) of the ones that are non-sponsored at present use *arena/areena* in some form (including several *ice arenas* and one *climbing arena*). The figure among the currently sponsored indoor venues, meanwhile, is 76.5% (39/51). Indeed, *arena/areena* is the most widespread generic for sponsored indoor venues in each of the contexts considered here. With indoor venues, this frequency is partly due to the types of venue that attract the most sponsorship: *arena* is non-specific and hence fits many of the multipurpose venues that are in our corpus. Clearly, the connotations that *arena* has with spectacle, drama and grandeur, not to mention the paradoxical modernist symbolism of a word with such a classical pedigree, have increased its traction as a source and signal of onomastic capital in recent decades, to the point that its mere use in a name suggests the name is more likely to be sponsored, at least in the data set used here.

The same connotations could be said to apply to *stadium/Stadion/stadion/ stadio/stadiwm* in relation to football grounds, but the earlier widespread use of this group of generics in most contexts studied here means that they were already well established among non-sponsored names and do not necessarily carry the same novelty factor as *arena/areena*. One exception, to some extent, can be found in Scotland, where *stadium* might have more novelty value than in England and Wales, and where the currency of this generic may have grown partly due to the advent of name sponsorship. The prevalence in Scotland of *park* over *stadium* as a traditional generic for football grounds, and the continued productive use of *park* in that sense

there, indicate that *stadium* may have stronger stand-out novelty value in that country than elsewhere. This is also suggested by the use of *stadium* as the most common generic for sponsored football grounds in Scotland, followed by *arena*. In Italy, meanwhile, although the Italian form *stadio* is the function-related generic used for all non-sponsored football grounds, *stadium* has re-entered the scene via English as the most common generic for sponsored names of football grounds, as that generic's onomastic capital comes full circle.

5.2 Sponsored names as rule-breakers

Another key trend among *arena* names, whether or not they are sponsored, is that they frequently have non-traditional structures. In addition to cases such as *Arena Leipzig* (see 4.3 above), there was also *Arena Birmingham* in England (temporarily in 2017–20), which appeared to be another invitation for sponsorship and which, after the cut-off date for our corpus, has found a new sponsor as *Utilita Arena Birmingham* (Balloo 2020). In Norway, what was originally *Arena Larvik*, in itself a strange onomastic structure for Nor-wegian, found a sponsor and became *Boligmappa Arena Larvik*, followed five years later by *Jotron Arena Larvik* after a new sponsorship deal, giving the last element more of an address function (Skogheim 2015, Jotron 2020). This trait of novel syntax in some commercial names has been noted by Paula Sjöblom in her investigation of the multimodality of company names in Turku (2008:361).

A small but significant detail that is apparent in many of the examples shown above, and can also be seen in many other cases not studied in detail in this article, is the use of capital letters in sponsored names. In Finnish and Norwegian, for example, traditional names made up of multiple words, with a 'specific + generic' structure, typically only have initial capital let-ters for the first word and not for any subsequent words that are part of the name, such as *Helsingin olympiastadion* or *Haugesund stadion*, whereas spon-sor-named venues tend to favour more capital letters, such as Helsinki's *Telia 5G Areena* (now *Bolt Arena*) or *Aker Stadion* in Molde.

Such examples suggest that the prominence of the sponsor's name and aggrandizement of the venue through orthography and typography are pri-oritized above conformity with established naming conventions. In effect, this may come across as an endeavour to inflate the perceived combined onomastic capital of the sponsor's name and venue name. Breaking rules in this way may indeed help such names to stand out, which is especially

pertinent bearing in mind the resistance that they can face. Some types of rule-breaking or innovative naming might also prevent names from being abbreviated in colloquial use in a way that would silence the sponsor's name, as with *The O2* (see 4.1 above) or *The SSE Hydro* (see 4.2 above). In the latter case, the generic also has connotations with the sponsor, although its status as a generic is debatable.

5.3 Toponymic attachment patterns and attitudes to name sponsorship

As shown in earlier critical toponomastic studies, numerous characteristics explain the recurring tensions around the name sponsorship phenomenon in Europe and beyond (see, for example, Madden 2019; Vuolteenaho, Wolny & Puzey 2019). Some fans and local residents do seem to welcome radical and multiple name changes brought along by this boom, owing to added financial resources, enhanced prestige or other factors. However, name sponsorship has also been resisted on several grounds, such as for its use in corporate image laundering, for doing away with the conventional functions of venue names as the bearers of heritage or public values, for additional technical–cartographic costs, and for everyday confusion related to name changes.

In stricter onomastic terms, a root cause of resistance to the renaming of older venues is often that naming rights tend to obliterate or transform existing names or naming elements, most usually by replacing but sometimes by adding to existing structures. Fans have typically developed a strong attachment to the existing names of venues, and these linguistic attitudes can cause resistance to sponsorship. The more established a place's name is, and the more tradition it is seen to embody, the more resistance any attempt to change it will typically come up against. The attachment felt by fans to the names of stadiums and other sports venues, in particular, is not dissimilar to the notion of toponymic attachment elaborated by Kostanski (2009), conceivable in this connection as a potential source of onomastic capital that is prone to be diminished rather than boosted through name sponsorship.

Partly related to this resistance is another onomastic repercussion of the naming rights boom. In all of the European contexts in our data, the majority of non-sponsored facilities have names with relatively conventional 'face-value' structures. Among sponsored names, a great many follow a similar pattern, and there is even one example in our corpus of a spon-

sor-derived simplex name (*The O2*). More often, however, the expansion of name sponsorship seems to have led to an increase in more complex names, with inverted structures (see 5.2 above) but also effectively with multiple specific components, such as the *Sportpark Ronhof Thomas Sommer* in Fürth, or the aforementioned *Orogel Stadium-Dino Manuzzi* and *Dumbarton Football Stadium sponsored by DL Cameron* (see 4.4 and 4.2 above, respectively).

Characteristically, the above kinds of unconventional or idiosyncratic name structures seek to serve multiple functions of a place name simultaneously. Sometimes, this tendency may be explained by latent or explicit resistance, anticipated by name sponsors or venue owners in order to avoid interruptions to name-based heritage and place identities. A new phenomenon seeking to bridge this gap is the embedding of original 'heritage' names within a sponsored name, potentially with multiple function-related generic elements. One such example from Scotland is the home of Dundee FC, which had been called *Dens Park* since 1899, but in 2018 became *Kilmac Stadium at Dens Park*, notably with *stadium* as the generic connected to the sponsor's name. Another similar case is the home of Partick Thistle, in Glasgow, which has been at *Firhill Stadium* since 1909 or, since 2017, *Energy Check Stadium at Firhill*. These examples show that, reluctant to abandon commemorative or heritage-related functions of names, many name-givers have increasingly resorted to complex multi-part name constructs in an onomastic trade-off due to divergent commercial and other pressures: a 'have cake and eat it' approach to onomastic capital and name sponsorship. A paradoxical downside to such attempts to maximize the exploitation of onomastic capital is that the longer or the more convoluted a sponsored name gets, the more likely it is that the functions of the full venue name as a communicative tool and identity marker will be impeded, as predicted by the branding consultants of *The SSE Hydro* (see 4.2 above). This paradox evokes the aforementioned irony in the name of Rome's Colosseum: occasionally, no matter how hard an owner tries to implement their preferred name, colloquial use or attachment to established names may prevail. Indeed, another common, parallel tendency is for the continued use of two or even more separate names with official or semi-official status for the same venue. Anticipated resistance towards commercial naming practices is arguably driving the multiplication of different concurrent names for the same place, with both 'official-original' and 'official-commercial' names used in different communication contexts (see *Hamar Olympiske Amfi* vs *Nordlyshallen* vs *CC Amfi* in 4.6 above).

These trends in the commodification of such place names signal that it is not only poor 'sponsorship fits' or the time-limited aspects of naming rights contracts that many are opposed to and that can impede the implementation of such deals. In fact, contradictions between different forms of onomastic capital are at stake in this toponymic novelty.

5.4 Future challenges for research into onomastic capital

The notion of onomastic capital, as set out in the introduction to this article (see 1.2 above), offers a new focus not only for studies of name sponsorship and the direct commodification of names, but indeed for naming practices in a wide range of contemporary human activity. Much critically aware and politically engaged research in onomastics has rightly focused on the impact of colonialism and conflict on indigenous and minority names, and on other relatively overt political and cultural struggles. A focus on onomastic capital can certainly be useful when exploring such themes too, but it has particular utility in turning the spotlight on what might otherwise be more covert power struggles. One fruitful way of doing so would be to integrate the study of onomastic capital more completely within a multimodal framework (see also 5.2 above). It has been shown that valuations of onomastic capital vary over time and depending on context, so there is also considerable scope for this concept to be applied in further historical and diachronic studies, as well as in research uncovering the onomastic impact of short-term events such as international sporting competitions, and in studies delving deeper into the differences between, for example, official and colloquial use of names.

Beyond the versatility of onomastic capital for exploring the use of names in society, further elaboration and wider application of this concept in socio-onomastic and critical approaches to the field of name studies would reveal new aspects of the nature of capital in its multiple forms. Observing trends in name sponsorship and other types of onomastic commodification can pinpoint significant changes in the organization of public or common good vs private or commercial property and activities. In a number of cases in the present study, for instance, we have seen the paradox of what are effectively commercial names being applied to facilities that were originally intended to serve mainly non-commercial purposes. In addition to the onomastic implications, this shows the extent to which public-use infrastructure is in various ways being conditioned by commercial interests. In many cases, the very creation of that infrastructure, even when

it is to be publicly owned, is dependent on commercial sponsorship, and the level of commercialization of the public space may occasionally be such that the public-use aspect in practice appears to be on the way to becoming a secondary function, at least judging by the semiotic landscape.

Just as acts of philanthropy raise pressing social questions (see 2.3 above), so do acts of sponsorship, including name sponsorship. Top-down acts of naming or renaming, for example by state actors, are often criticized. In democracies, however, there should at least (ideally) be some level of accountability for naming decisions taken or delegated by public officials. When the power to make those decisions is sold to the highest bidder, though, how much accountability does the sponsor have towards the general public? If a sponsor has the power to name a public-use facility, this act can certainly condition how the facility is spoken about, but it can even condition how it is used, as well as determining which facilities are built. Returning to toponymic attachment patterns and public attitudes, this suggests that, in a worst-case scenario, name sponsorship could represent a crisis for the organicity and reciprocity of naming processes for public spaces (see Vuolteenaho & Puzey 2018). Where there are gaps in public funding, however, such commercialization of the public sphere and trading in onomastic capital are increasingly likely to shape the future of urban namescapes.

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Concluding commentary

The social and political life of names and naming

Reuben Rose-Redwood

Abstract: This concluding commentary critically and constructively engages with the articles in this first multidisciplinary issue of the *Nordic Journal of Socio-Onomastics*. It does so in the spirit of affirmative critique, with the aim of advancing the ongoing dialogue on the social and political life of names and naming. The commentary concludes by arguing that the multidisciplinary field of socio-onomastics is best viewed as a contact zone, or space of convergence, for scholarship that examines the diverse ways in which names and naming shape, and are shaped by, worlds-in-the-making.

Keywords: naming, socio-onomastics, critical toponymy, gender, performativity, linguistics, geography, disease

The study of names and naming is a multidisciplinary endeavor, yet the approaches adopted to examine naming practices continue to be shaped by particular disciplinary histories, traditions and trajectories. My own intellectual trajectory in the field of human geography led me to develop an interest in the social and political life of names and naming as part of a broader focus on cultural landscape studies and the interrelations of naming, politics and place. Trained as a geographer, I came to the study of onomastics by way of a critical geographical analysis of the politics of place naming generally and street naming in particular (e.g. Rose-Redwood

2008; Rose-Redwood, Alderman & Azaryahu 2010). Given the common assumption in popular culture that the study of geography involves little more than the memorization of place names, many geographers have sought to distance themselves from onomastics in order to demonstrate the breadth of geographical scholarship. Yet, over the past several decades, there has been a growing recognition among geographers that place naming plays an important role in the social production of geographical space (Berg & Vuolteenaho 2009; Giraut & Houssay-Holzschuch 2016). Toponyms, in other words, are not merely labels that designate pre-existing places; rather, naming is a performative practice of world-making that actively constitutes the spatial identities and ontologies of place (Rose-Redwood, Alderman & Azaryahu 2018).

This conception of naming has led some of us in the field of critical toponymy to move beyond the representationalist assumptions of semiotics and toward the more-than-representational approaches of speech act theory, performativity theory and pragmatics, focusing particularly on what philosopher Judith Butler calls 'the reiterative and citational practices by which discourse produces the effects that it names' (1993:2). From a performative standpoint, naming is understood as a form of embodied social action that brings into being the very things it appears to merely represent. Put simply, naming not only involves the signification of meaning but is also a mode of *doing* that plays a central role in the practices of identity formation, subjectification, boundary-making and the enactment of the worlds in which we live. This is true just as much with respect to the naming of human and non-human individuals and collectivities as it is with the naming of places.

Naming is a relational practice that does not occur in a vacuum but is enmeshed in social relations, with various institutional actors – from municipal governments to the World Health Organization (WHO) – seeking to assert a 'monopoly over legitimate naming' (Bourdieu 1989:21). At the same time, the multiplicity of naming practices, and the material excesses of that which is named, can never be fully contained by efforts of standardization and the codification of official names. The latter efforts may seek to establish a hegemonic conception of an ordered 'linguistic cosmos' (Benjamin 1999:522), in which everything corresponds with its officially recognized name, but the uses of names in everyday life often diverge considerably from officially sanctioned naming practices – whether due to the inertia of habit and tradition or active resistance and subversion.

Given the importance of names and naming in both the ordinary and extraordinary circumstances of social and political life, the study of

socio-onomastics has a relevance to society that extends far beyond the confines of academic circles alone (Ainiala & Östman 2017). The articles in this special issue demonstrate such relevance in spades through insightful analyses of everything from the history of titles of civility in colonial New England and the sociopragmatics of gender assignment in German dialects to the naming of places of affective power and economic capital as well as the (im)moral and political uses of naming diseases such as COVID-19. Although each of the articles has a different topical focus, on people, places or diseases, the collection as a whole nicely illustrates the importance of examining the social dimensions of naming and thus the need for multi-disciplinary approaches to socio-onomastic scholarship. In this concluding commentary, I critically and constructively engage with the articles in this special issue in the spirit of affirmative critique, with the aim of stimulating further dialogue to advance the multidisciplinary field of socio-onomastics.

<p style="text-align:center">★★★</p>

Adrian Pablé's contribution to this issue provides a useful overview of different theories and paradigms in the philosophy of language, semiotics and onomastics. Drawing inspiration from linguist Roy Harris's (2009) critique of the 'myth of reference' – that is, the notion that 'words identify entities in the real world in a stable one-to-one relation' (Pablé 2021:87) – Pablé advocates for an integrationist approach to linguistics and onomastics. Integrationism rejects the linguistic view that conceives of signs as abstractions disconnected from those who make or use signs. In this sense, the integrationist approach is situational and shifts attention from the semiotic question 'What does a sign or name mean or represent?' to the pragmatic question 'What does a sign or name *do* in the world, with what purpose, and to what effect?'

Although Pablé does not frame it as such in his article, this conceptual move aligns with critiques of the semiotics of meaning and the turn toward more-than-representational and performative approaches across the social sciences and humanities. Indeed, this should come as no surprise since, as Pablé & Hutton (2015) mention in their book, *Signs, Meaning and Experience: Integrational Approaches to Linguistics and Semiotics*, Harris's integrationist linguistics was inspired, in part, by the late Ludwig Wittgenstein and ordinary language philosophers such as speech act theorist J. L. Austin, among others. The latter's work on performative utterances offers a devastating critique of representationalist conceptions of language (Austin 1962), even if

many subsequent theorists have moved beyond the humanist underpinnings of Austinian speech act theory itself. It seems, however, that Pablé's integrationism is still wedded to the humanist assumption of a duality between 'humans' and the 'external world'. Pablé's (2021:102) claim, for instance, that 'human beings exist separately from the external world which they inhabit' is, ironically, one of the most *non*-integrative ontological positions one can imagine with respect to human–environment relations and is out of step not only with posthumanist thought but also with the vast majority of contemporary geographical scholarship. The issue of human–environment relations aside, Pablé's call for an integrational approach to linguistics and onomastics, and his critical reflections on different approaches to studying the gendered titles of civility such as *Goodman* and *Goodwife* in colonial New England, provide much food for thought.

Simone Busley and Damaris Nübling also consider the gendering of language in their study of the sociopragmatics of German dialects. Their work on the everyday use of feminine and neuter designations for women and girls in Luxembourgish and other German dialects is based upon a rich body of empirical evidence from interviews and an online questionnaire that informs their sociopragmatic analysis (Busley & Nübling 2021). As a geographer, I was particularly impressed by the authors' documentation of how language use varies both within and across geographical spaces as well as the ways in which historical shifts in the structures of social power (vertical vs horizontal) relate to sociopragmatic changes in gendered language use.

One issue that Busley & Nübling do not address is treating what they call 'the female referent' as if it were a universally agreed-upon material foundation to which different linguistic gender assignments refer. At a time when binary conceptions of sex and gender identity are increasingly being called into question, sociopragmatic approaches to the gendering of language and naming cannot take the sexed body as a given in socio-onomastic studies. When reading Busley & Nübling's article, I therefore could not help but wonder how the consideration of transgender, intersex, gender-fluid or other non-binary people would have enhanced our understanding of gender assignment practices among those who participated in their study. For instance, how did research participants' conceptions of who is or is not 'female' shape their use of gendered language? The authors briefly gesture toward this question when discussing unisex names, but they fall back on the notion that '[r]eferential gender depends on properties of the referent' (Busley & Nübling 2021:36). However, from a sociological perspective, gender identity is not strictly determined by the body (referent) but is rather

performatively enacted through material and discursive practices of identi-fication and subjectification. I suspect that the authors are aware of this issue since the article's focus is on how gendered language is used in different ways among diverse populations, but it would have been helpful if it was explicitly addressed in the study itself. Similarly, while the authors discuss the influence of age, marital status, and the level of intimacy on gender assignment, the matters of race and class are left largely unspoken in their analysis. Does the racialization of gendered bodies influence gender assign-ment in German dialects, and did the racialized and classed positionalities of research participants themselves influence the results? Such questions are not considered in Busley & Nübling's study; however, they are crucial to bringing an intersectional lens to bear on the sociopragmatics of gendered language.

The contributions by Terhi Ainiala and Pia Olsson as well as Guy Puzey, Jani Vuolteenaho and Matthias Wolny turn our attention to the relation between naming and place-making. Much of the literature on crit-ical toponymies focuses on the contested politics of place naming (Berg & Vuolteenaho 2009). Ainiala & Olsson's (2021) study, by contrast, shifts the emphasis from how political power is exercised through place naming to how places of empowerment – or what they call 'power places' – are identi-fied, named and experienced by individuals as 'affective places'. In doing so, they situate socio-onomastics within the broader context of contemporary theorizations of affect, emotion, the non-representational and materiality. Yet their conception of 'place' arguably bears more of a resemblance to the classic definition of place as space that has been imbued with meaning that we find in the tradition of humanistic geography (i.e. viewing places as 'socioculturally meaningful entities', as the authors put it).

The questionnaire data on participants' descriptions of, and attachments to, empowering places that Ainiala & Olsson analyze was collected just as the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning to gain global attention in late 2019/early 2020. One certainly wonders how the research participants' responses will have changed after a year of quarantine, self-isolation and travel restrictions. Have some of their 'power places' now become places of disempowerment? Or have people grown more attached to their places of comfort and security in the face of global crises? I am intrigued by Ainiala & Olsson's discussion of the agency of places to affect the emotional expe-riences of people-in-place, but I would have liked to hear more about how the very same place can be a 'place of power' for some while simultaneously being experienced as a place of disempowerment for others. The authors

hint at this issue when acknowledging that an overemphasis on the 'positive affect of place' can be problematic; however, this point is not explored in any depth in relation to the analysis of the data. Moreover, while I appreciate Ainiala & Olsson's consideration of how participants described and named their places of power, I was also left wondering how official and vernacular place names themselves become part of the 'material particularities' of places and generate a diversity of affects and emotions among different people. In other words, it is not simply a matter of material places arousing particular affects or emotions, which are then identified and named in different ways; rather, the naming process is itself an embodied practice that affects the production of place, which in turn provides the conditions of possibility for affective and emotional experiences of place.

If Ainiala & Olsson examine the affective and emotional aspects of place naming, Puzey, Vuolteenaho & Wolny (2021) focus instead on the economic dimensions of commodified namescapes. In particular, they provide an in-depth historical and comparative analysis of naming rights sponsorship of sports and entertainment venues in the European context from a linguistic perspective. The emerging scholarly literature on the selling of naming rights has primarily focused on the corporatization and privatization of public space (Rose-Redwood et al. 2019). Puzey, Vuolteenaho & Wolny's study extends this body of work by considering how such naming practices have influenced not only the use of specific corporate names as toponyms but the *generic* names that accompany them as well (e.g. stadium, arena, colosseum). The dataset upon which their analysis is based is a significant empirical contribution to toponymic scholarship on naming rights, yet their paper also makes an important theoretical contribution by proposing the concept of 'onomastic capital' as a framework for theorizing the 'value' of naming in both symbolic and economic terms.

Puzey, Vuolteenaho & Wolny conceive of onomastic capital as the capacity or potential to commodify a name as well as the perceived properties of a name that can increase its symbolic or economic capital. The authors trace the history of onomastic capital as it relates to the naming of sports and entertainment venues, but the concept is applicable to the commodification of naming rights more generally. The notion of onomastic capital is a conceptually innovative lens through which to understand the value of names and naming, and it raises a series of questions. In particular, if onomastic capital is a way of understanding the symbolic and economic value of names and naming, what ontology of value shall we employ to theorize the value of onomastic capital formation and circulation? In other words,

how is the 'value' of onomastic capital produced, actualized, sustained and transformed? Shall we rely on the classic Marxian labor theory of value or is the value of onomastic capital a performative effect of the processes of symbolic and economic valuation itself? If the latter is the case, then onomastic value is less a matter of the inherent properties of names, or the labor time that went into their production, and more a question of *onomastic valorization* as the contested terrain that constitutes the political, economic and cultural arenas of naming.

The value of naming as a political technology of biopower is nowhere more evident than in the naming of diseases. At the time of writing, the world is still grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic, and Elwys De Stefani's (2021) study of the linguistic and onomastic history of disease naming nicely situates the naming of the COVID-19 pandemic within a broader historical context. De Stefani shows how traditions of disease naming have changed over time as medical scientists and professionals have sought to standardize the names of diseases, or nosonyms. At the same time, De Stefani also explains how non-experts (including journalists and politicians) often use alternative disease names, some of which are 'morally questionable', especially when they stigmatize specific peoples or places. Indeed, in some cases, even medical authorities such as the WHO continue to use potentially stigmatizing disease names despite guidelines recommending their disuse. De Stefani (2021:75) suggests that such names are not 'intrinsically racist' since they sometimes serve a descriptive purpose, yet in practice they are often used in 'morally charged ways that construct oppositions between communities'.

A prime example of the latter, which De Stefani examines in detail, is former US President Donald Trump's derogatory use of names such as *China/Chinese virus/flu* and *kung flu* as a means of stoking anti-Asian xenophobia for political gain. Drawing on transcripts of Trump's political rallies, De Stefani illustrates how disease naming is not merely an apolitical process of 'referential designation' but takes place within social and political contexts that shape the use of disease names in practice. De Stefani therefore concludes that disease names can themselves become 'vectors' of political conflict, framing the issue as a matter of (im)morality. Yet what conception of morality should underpin approaches to disease naming, and what is the relation between the morality and politics of naming? These questions are not answered in De Stefani's article, but one useful starting point, of course, is Hippocrates' famous dictum in *Of the Epidemics* to 'do no harm' (400 BCE, Book I, Section II). Given that this ethical principle

has long been the basis of the medical profession, it seems reasonable to assume that it should likewise apply to the naming of diseases as well. Yet, as De Stefani's study highlights, the principle to do no harm is by no means an agreed-upon basis for political life more broadly. On the contrary, the political arena is commonly framed in Manichean dualistic terms as a conflict between the morally righteous Self and the immoral Other, which is then used to justify dehumanizing one's political opponents and thus causing them harm. Consequently, the use of stigmatizing disease names will likely continue to serve the aims of political propaganda among xenophobic demagogues and their acolytes, but De Stefani rightly argues that medical authorities should avoid using names that reference toponymic features and specific peoples when bestowing names for pathogens and diseases.

<p align="center">★★★</p>

Onomastics may be a specialized field of study, but names and naming have a significance in most – if not all – aspects of human life and our relations with the more-than-human world. Naming is not only a linguistic act, it is also an epistemo-ontological project of world-making and identity-formation, affecting and being affected by that which is named or left unnamed, and rendering the world legible through what Rancière (1999) calls the 'partition of the perceptible'. It is little wonder, then, that the issue of naming has drawn together a motley crew of scholars across multiple disciplines – from linguistics to geography – who share a common interest in the social life of names and naming. However, as I noted at the outset, our diverse disciplinary backgrounds have provided us with different points of departure, conceptual tools, methodological techniques and styles of thought when it comes to the study of naming. This intellectual diversity can be disorienting, but it is also one of the greatest strengths of multidisciplinary approaches to socio-onomastic scholarship that are committed to engaging in dialogue across disciplinary divides. The ultimate value of socio-onomastics is serving not as a coherent body of socio-onomastic knowledge but rather as a contact zone, or space of convergence, for scholarship that examines the diverse ways in which names and naming shape, and are shaped by, worlds-in-the-making.

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