Exonyms as parts of the cultural heritage
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Introduction - Exonyms in the sense of place names not used by the local community and differing from the respective endonym (as the place name used and accepted by the local community) are certainly parts of the cultural heritage insofar as they are elements of a language – and it is common sense to regard languages parts of the cultural heritage.

But calling exonyms parts of the cultural heritage has also some more justification. A feature frequently addressed in a given community due to its importance for the community is named by an exonym, since the exonym – in orthography corresponding to the receiver language – is easier to be pronounced and memorized. The pattern of exonyms used by a certain community thus reflects the network of its external political, cultural and economic relations and a feature addressed by a high number of exonyms is obviously important for many external communities.

Another justification of classifying exonyms parts of the cultural heritage is that they relate a community with its history. In historical treatises places are always addressed by names in the community's own language – may they have been endonyms in older periods and only by change of political or demographic circumstances later have turned into exonyms or have always

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been used as conventional names in a community's historiographic literature.

A fourth justification may be seen in the fact that exonyms play an important role not only in urban names like as the specific component of street names (e.g., Via Ragusa in Lecce), where they actually assume the status of endonyms, but also as specific components of ergonyms like names of dishes, pieces of music or theatre plays.

Exonyms are elements of a language, a community builder and identity marker - When we understand culture in the most comprehensive sense as a system of norms, by which human communities differ from each other, language is a most essential part of it. Every language stands for and reflects a system of concepts that characterizes a specific culture and makes a group of people, a community, looking at least slightly different from others at our world, i.e., at complex reality. Thus, people speaking the same language have roughly the same system of concepts, which makes living in a community much easier. And this same system of concepts could develop, because they were able to communicate about it in the same language.

Exonyms are elements of a language owing all the characteristics mentioned before. Who uses an exonym, is part of the group acquainted with the set of exonyms specifically used by this (sub-)group. Who addresses a small village beyond the language boundary by the exonym in local use on his/her side of the boundary, identifies himself/herself as an insider and generates a feeling of closeness with his/her conversation partner – like it is, when they speak the same local dialect.

Exonyms reflect the network of a community's external relations - It is supported by several case studies that exonyms have been formed and maintained for external geographical

features to which a community was and is closely related in economic, cultural and political terms. This results in a frequent use of their names that need for this very reason to be easily and safely pronounced, to be easily memorized. The spatial pattern of exonym use reflects thus the historical and current political, cultural and economic relations of a community.

Exonyms relate a community with its history - There is no question that in the literature of a certain linguistic community historical events, places and people are referred to by those name forms that were valid at the time of the event, at the time referred to or that have long been used for this purpose by the receiver community. Also when we speak in a historical context or represent a specific historical point in time or period on a history map, we will use the names official at that time or customary in our own language for the feature at the time in question. In many cases they are today exonyms due to a change of the endonym.

Carrying them on and using them also in current contexts is frequently impossible or not advisable. It is certainly not possible in the case of Nova Roma or Constantinopolis for the Roman and East Roman, Byzantium or Byzantion for the Byzantine Istanbul [İstanbul], where these exonyms refer to exclusively historical concepts and not to the modern concept of this city – in fact not to the same feature. In cases like Canton [Guangzhou] or with most country names and names of historical-cultural landscapes, however, the use of a traditional exonym also in present-day contexts may help to underline the continuity of the place and to emphasize the identity between the historical feature and the current place. The same applies when in modern speech or texts explicit reference is made to a linguistic community's historical or current diaspora situation.

Exonyms are the reference of endonymic name systems - It is a frequent practice to name streets and other traffic areas after external places to which a given community has close relations – be it that the street leads into their direction or for commemorative reasons, e.g., because this external place played an important role for the city naming a street or square after it or is very important in general.

Not only streets, but also buildings like railway stations, dishes, drinks or music groups can be named after external places for commemorative reasons, due to their foundation from there, for marketing purposes or because this is their place of origin. They are usually named by the exonyms in common use for these places that assume in this other function the status of endonyms and constitute the germ of a name system in the receiver community. They provide a strong argument for preserving the use of exonyms for these external places not to lose the connection between this external place and the domestic name system. Would the corresponding exonyms get out of use, the meaning of these endonyms would become intransparent.