

Vibeke Dalberg

NAME AND PLACE

**Ten essays on the dynamics
of place-names**

*Edited and translated by
Gillian Fellows-Jensen, Peder Gammeltoft,
Bent Jørgensen and Berit Sandnes on the occasion of
Vibeke Dalberg's 70th birthday, August 22nd 2008*

Department of Scandinavian Research
Name Research Section
Copenhagen 2008

Fotografisk, mekanisk eller anden gengivelse af denne bog
eller dele heraf er ikke tilladt ifølge gældende dansk lov
om ophavsret.

© Afdeling for Navneforskning,
Nordisk Forskningsinstitut
Det Humanistiske Fakultet
Københavns Universitet

Photo by Rob Rentenaar

Freely available internet publication,
the Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen
Copenhagen 2008

ISBN 978-87-992447-1-3

On the question of epexegesis in Danish nature names*

The onomasticon of nature-names in present-day Denmark differs on one striking point from that found in other Germanic-speaking areas. Simplex names, particularly those formed by the addition of suffixes, occur only in small numbers as the names of natural features in present-day Denmark, while such names are familiar in linguistically related neighbouring areas. Among many other examples can be mentioned the lake-name *Vättern* in Sweden, the river-name *Kvina* in Norway, and the river-names *der Rhein*, *de Waal* and *the Severn* in Germany, the Netherlands and England respectively.¹ The Danish nature-names almost always occur with a two-element structure, where the second element from an etymological point of view indicates the nature of the locality. Synchronically it is often homonymous with a living word for a topographical concept – as for example in the river-name *Gudenå*, the lake-name *Furesø* and the island-name *Barsø*.² The difference between Denmark and the neighbouring countries cannot be explained by differing natural or cultural conditions. The situation in Denmark has been explained as being largely the result of epexegesis. This implies that an existing name at some point enters into a new name-formation together with a word that was intended to indicate the nature of the name-bearing locality (cf. *Stednavneforskning* I: 84–85).

* A revised version of: “Gudenå-typen versus Gern Å-typen. Til spørgsmålet om epexegese i danske naturnavne”. In: Jørgensen, Bent (ed.), 1991: *Stednavne i brug. Festskrift udgivet i anledning af Stednavneudvalgets 75 års jubilæum*. Navnestudier 26. København, pp. 64–75. Translation based on chapter II.3. in Dalberg 1991: 93–114.

¹ Whether or not the role played by the definite article – pointed out, for example by Odo Leys (1967: 23–24) – as the marker of certain categories of denotata and name-groups is taken to be related to the absence of epexegetic elements will not be the subject of comment in the present paper, since the question is hardly of relevance for Danish place-names, where definiteness apparently does not have this function, cf. DS XVII,1 and XVII,2.1.

² *Sø* ‘lake’ and *å* ‘stream’.

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

Many old simplex nature-names of the same type as those occurring in the neighbouring countries can thus be presumed to be found in Denmark with an epexegetic element. However, this very reasonable assumption can only be confirmed by documentary evidence in a very limited number of cases (cf. the material presented in Dalberg 1991: 47–77). Most of the examples consist of island-names and if we had not had King Valdemar's Cadastre from c. 1300, which, among other items, contains an island-list from the 13th century, our basis would have been even more flimsy. In this single source, about two-thirds of all the simplex island-names listed below have been transmitted. As documentation here only one instance will be named of a non-epexegetic form and one of an epexegetic form, since reference can be made to the work cited above for the etymology of the names and their development.

Agerø (Karby p., Morsø Sønderh.)
VJb 1231 (c. 1300) Akær
1594 Jonas Koldingensis 97 Aggerroo, Aggerøe

Barsø (Løjt p., Rise h.)
VJbØ 13th cent. (c. 1300) Bars
20/1 1411 Barsøø

Hesselø (Rørvig s., Ods h.)
VJbØ 13th cent. (c. 1300) Esæl
FrIReg 5/7 1523 Hesløen

Holmsland (Hind h.)
21/7 1411 Holm
M 1664 Holms Landt

Jegindø (Refs h.)
VJbØ 13th cent. (c. 1300) Ekund
FrIReg 27/3 1523 Iegennøø

Langø (Kalvehave p., Bårse h.)
VJbØ 13th cent. (c. 1300) Lang
M 1688 Lang=øe

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

Langø (Kappel p., Lollands Sønderh.)
VJbØ 13th cent. (c. 1300) Lang maior
Jb c. 1560 Langøø

Langø (Stubberup p., Bjerger h.)
VJbØ 13th cent. (c. 1300) Lang
M 1688 Langøe

Langø (Nørre Sandager p., Skovby h.)
29/5 1480 (1650–1700) Lang
M 1688 Langøe

Lidsø (Rødby mkt. t., Maribo c.)
MB 1681 Liiz
Gst 1892 Lidsø

Nekselø (Føllenslev p., Skjævinge h.)
14/11 1203 (Århusbogen 1313–1350) nixlæ
1529 (c. 1570 ÆDA III 362) Nexeløen

Strynø (p., Sunds h.)
VJbØ 13th cent. (c. 1300) Stræn
KancBrevb 27/3 1604 Stryen Ø

Tunø (p., Ning h.)
VJbØ 13th cent. (c. 1300) Thund
KancBrevb 17/5 1592 Thundland

Other simplex names with a natural location as their denotatum occur more rarely in the recorded sources. In the examined name corpus they are only represented by a handful of names of water-courses, as will be seen from the following list and from Dalberg (1991: 51–63).

Drideå (Møborg and Flynder p., Skodborg h.)
28/6 1503 Drydi, Drydi aa
11/7 1508 Dryde Aa

Furesø (Smørum, Lynge-Kronborg and Ølstykke h.)
Skovsyn 1660 Fursøe
MB 1682 Fure, Fuersø

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

Gudenå (Vejle, Skanderborg, Viborg and Randers counties)
13/7 1478 Gwyen, Gwden
PrI 1638 I 183 Gunaa

Hellesø (Jetsmark p., Hvetbo h.)
PrI 1638 I 33 Helffuede
M 1662 Helle Søe

Kølstrøm (Givskud p., Nørvang h., Gadbjerg p., Tørrild h.)
17/6 1488 (18. cent.) Cøll
Opt 1916 [*kjølstrøm*]

Lærksø (Jystrup p., Ringsted h.)
RJb 1370–80 Hiortsio læærk
KancBrevb 9/10 1645 Lerckesø

Ravedam (Tommerup and Brylle p., Odense h.)
MB 1682 Raffte
Jb 1572 Raffte dam

Rødsø (Rødding, Pederstrup and Vammen p., Nørlyng h.)
1519 (1612 ÆDA V 94) Røø
5/12 1489 Rødsiø

The fact that the development from being a simplex nature name to becoming a nature-name with an epexegetic suffix is so rarely traceable in the source material cannot, however, be adduced as a serious objection to the assumption that there has been widespread epexegetis in the corpus of nature-names. The lack of such names can be ascribed to the survival situation of the sources. The older place-name sources, i.e. those from before c. 1500, are mainly interested in settlements and consequently their names. Nature names simply have a poor chance of being recorded early. After 1500, nature names become much more frequent in the sources. When we do not find many simplex nature-names among these younger sources, it may be because the names had already entered into epexegetic compounds at the point when they begin to be transmitted. One may supplement the sparse information in the sources for epexegetis in nature-names with what can be read out of the transmission of settlement-names recorded with epexegetis. In that way we see clearly

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

that names with an epexegetic ending were rather rare in the earlier period.³ They do not really make their appearance in sources until the 16th and especially the 17th centuries, that is at precisely the time when the transmission of nature-names becomes copious.

There are therefore good grounds for assuming that there have been many more epexegetic nature-names than are revealed by the sources. By employing different criteria it has been rendered plausible that many nature-names only surviving with elements denoting their nature can best be explained as epexegetic (cf. Stednavneforskning I: 77–82). In this way it has been possible to reconstruct much ancient nature-name material, not least old suffix-derivatives that would otherwise seem to be lacking in Denmark. In particular, attention can be drawn to the large corpus of names of watercourses that has been treated by John Kousgård Sørensen in *Danske sø og ånavne* (DSÅ I–VIII, cf. Dalberg 1991: 149–50). Additionally, many reconstructions of island-names can be found in the works of Kristian Hald, most of which have been collected in the article *De danske Ønavne* (Hald 1971).

In the rather densely settled country of Denmark there are many examples of the familiar phenomenon where the name of a natural locality has been transferred to the settlement that has grown up close to this locality. It is therefore not surprising that we find simplex names among such semantically secondary settlement-names, including derivative formations that must originally have denoted natural phenomena. Based on word-formation, semantics and topography, the names of the following villages can be assumed to have been borne originally by the watercourses close to which they lie.

Ganer (Skjern p., Bølling h.)
25/8 1508 Gane, ChrIIReg, 1514 Ganner (DSÅ II: 198).

³ For an assessment of the chronology of epexegetis it is without significance that epexegetic forms of settlement-names do not generally obtain a footing in linguistic usage.

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

Gjern (p., Gjern h.)

1343 (1558 *ÆDA* II 55) Giernsogen (DS XII: 116, DSÅ II: 306–09).

Gurre (Tikøb p., Lynge-Kronborg h.)

31/12 1361 (PavKopib, DD 3 rk VI 118) Gorwe (DS II: 7–8, DSÅ II: 298).

Halle (Grædstrup p., Tyrsting h.)

27/7 1456 Haligh Mark,

6/1 1497 Halle (DSÅ III: 24–25).

Hampen (Nørre Snede p., Vrads h.)

Jb 1586 Hampenn (DS XII: 163, DSÅ III: 28–29).

Hee (p., Hind h.)

RO end of 13th c. He, Hee (DSÅ III: 49–51).

Hvejsel (p., Nørvang h.)

RO c. 1325 Hwyl (DS VIII: 59, DSÅ III: 187–87).

These simplex names have not been transmitted in their primary function as nature names but this is, as will be explained below, not of importance for the problem that is to be discussed here, namely the assessment of the later names of the natural localities in question, which are always formed with a suffix describing the nature of the locality.

Ganer Å, KrSk 6/1 1546 Gaanner Aa

Gjern Å, Trap⁴ VII: 300 1926 Gern Aa

Gurre Sø, KancBrevb 2/2 1568 Gurre Sø

Halle Sø, 6/1 1497 Halle syø

Hampen Sø, M 1664 Hampensøe

Hee Å, PrI 1638 I 144 Hie aae

Hvejsel Sø, PrI 1638 I 184 Huixellsø

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

The authors of *Stednavneforskning* take these names to be epexegetic, that is consisting of a simplex nature-name plus a word indicating the nature of the locality (*Stednavneforskning* I: 85). As one of those jointly responsible for the claim, I can state that the idea behind it is that an epexegetic element in these names must have been necessary in order to remedy the inconvenience that would be bound to arise when both the settlement and the river were called *Gjern*, both the settlement and the lake *Gurre*, etc. etc.⁴

A possible interpretation that seems to have been overlooked is that such lake- and river-names might contain the original watercourse-names in their secondary function as settlement-names. In that case it would not be a question of the name of the watercourse entering into a compound with an epexegetic *å* 'stream' or *sø* 'lake'. The new names of the watercourses would then consist of the name of the neighbouring village plus *-å* or *-sø* respectively.

The surviving name forms provide no basis for preferring either of the two possibilities. Here, however, it is not the defective transmission of the sources that is at fault. Even an ideal transmission of the sources would have left us in the lurch. In addition to possible information about the etymology of the name, records of the simplex name in its original function as a nature name would thus only have been able to prove the otherwise hypothetically based interpretation of the settlement-name as being semantically secondary. It could no more answer the question as to whether the components of the compound nature-name had such forms than could the forms of the name in function as a settlement-name. Even additional forms of the compound nature-name could not have helped us, since the difference between an epexegetic name and a name compounded with the name of another locality is of a nature that is not revealed in the name form.

As mentioned elsewhere (Dalberg 1991: 75), an epexegetic name appears to be a compound in which the original name of the locality is the specific and the epexegetic description of its nature

⁴A similar argumentation with respect to Norwegian river- and fiord-names has been put forward by Magnus Olsen (1939: 32–33) and Oddvar Nes (1990: 41), cf. also Stemshaug (1990: 34–35).

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

the generic. The same formal structure belongs to the compound name that has the name of a different locality (e.g. a neighbouring locality) as its specific and a word denoting the locality as its generic. The difference between the two is to be found in the semantic structure that was present when the name was coined. In the epexegetic name both elements refer to the same locality, namely to the one that bears the name. The etymological content in an epexegetic *Gurre Sø* must be expanded as ‘the lake that is called *Gurre*’. In a *Gurre Sø* with the village-name as specific, it is only the generic that refers to the name-bearing locality, the lake, and the meaning of the name must be assessed as being ‘the lake that lies beside the settlement called *Gurre*’. As so often when it is a matter of older names, we are in the position of being able to point to different possibilities for interpreting the semantic relationship between the components of a place-name, but we have few means of preferring the one possibility to the other.

A pointer to the question of the interpretation of these names can be found in the various degrees of support given by the parallel material. Not only is it exceptionally common that Danish watercourse-names are compounded with the name of a significant settlement close to the watercourse,⁵ it can also often be proved or rendered likely that a change of name has taken place, so that an older watercourse-name has been replaced by one containing a settlement-name as a component.⁶

Villestrup Å (Ove p., Hindsted h.), *Viby Å* (Nørre Åby p., Vends h.), *Dalby Bæk* (Skanderup and Sporup p., Gjern h.), *Lejre Å* (Gevninge p., Volborg h.), *Hauge Sø* (Torning p., Lysgård h.), *Holsted Å* (Gørding p. and h.) and many other watercourses whose names are formed with a village-name as their specific, must thus be

⁵ An impression of their frequency of occurrence can be gained by reading the introduction to *Danske sø- og ånavne*. Here John Kousgård Sørensen states that for considerations of space he was only able to include in that work the instances of such names that are attested in medieval sources (DSÅ I: 24).

⁶Corresponding changes of name can be observed in Norway and Sweden (Olsen 1939: 32, Stemshaug 1980: 35, Hellquist 1903–06: 44).

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

assumed to have borne simplex names originally, *in casu* **Ava* (DSÅ I: 100), **Burghung* (DSÅ I: 261), **Fūsung* (DSÅ II: 167–68), **Giofn* (DSÅ II: 224–27), **Grathi* (DSÅ II: 250–53), **Gyria* (DSÅ II: 303).

Occasionally we find the original name of the watercourse as the specific in the settlement-name which eventually forms a component of the watercourse's later name. One example is *Esrums Sø* (Esbønderup p., Holbo h.), MB 1681 Esbønderums Sø, which contains the name of the village lying beside the lake *Esrums*, undated 1151–57 (DD 1 rk II 107) *Esrom*. In oral tradition the lake was still known as late as into the 19th century under the name *Ese*. It is this old simplex lake-name which enters as specific into the compound settlement-name *Esrums* with ODan *rum* 'open space' as its generic (Nielsen 1881–87: 185, DS II: 43, 72, DSÅ VII: 385–87). Our knowledge of several old watercourse-names depends exclusively on their survival as the first element of names of settlements close to the watercourse in question. A random sample from *Danske sø- og ånavne* yields the following instances: **Bæfli* in *Bælum* (p., Høllum h.), **Gera* in *Gørlose* (p., Lyng-Frederiksborg h.), **Giofn* in *Gentofte* (p., Søkkelund h.), **Grunni* in *Grøntved* (Sønder Asminderup p., Mørlose h.) (DSÅ I: 274–75, II: 212–14, 224–25, 268–69). These settlement-names reappear in the names evidenced in the sources for the relevant watercourses: EB 1683 Bellum Sø, Gst 1900 Gjøllose Å, Gst 1901 Gjøllose Sø, MB 1682 Grøntesø.

Incidentally, such changes to watercourse-names that contain settlement-names are not only found with simplex watercourse-names and they can therefore hardly be associated with their special typological feature. *Hellegårds Å* (Borbjerg p., Hørm h.), for example, contains the name of a settlement **Helghā-garth*, whose name is an older compound name of the river **Hælgæā*, consisting of an ODan adj. *hēlagh* 'holy' in definite form and the ODan noun *ā* 'river, stream' (DS XVII: 228, 252–53, DSÅ III: 65).⁷ It should also be noted that the above-mentioned lake-name *Ese* as well as the **Horni* posited in *Horneby* appear compounded in epexegetic form

⁷ A yet older name of the river is 28/3 1451 (1749) *Oe hin hellige* (with more instances) (DS XVII: 252–53).

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

with the noun *sø* ‘lake’ in KancBrevb 21/6 1585 Esse Sø and undated 1158–60 (DD 1 rk II 128) Hornisseu, KancBrevb 17/3 1562 Hornessøholms Gaard (DSÅ III: 148–50). Nevertheless they are later replaced by *Esrum Sø* and *Horneby Sø*, names with settlement-names as specifics.

A watercourse-name transferred to a settlement sometimes undergoes a change in form determined by its new function. Absolutely certain examples of the replacement of an older watercourse-name by a new one containing a settlement-name are those where we find the entity in changed form as a part of the watercourse-name.

For example, the original lake-name **Hā* in its employment as a settlement-name (15/6 1474 (DuehDipl), 1/1 1485 Haa⁸), receives a reciprocating element (20/5 1509 Norrehaa, 30/11 1389 Synderhaa) (Hald 1977: 717, DS XVIII,1: 80, Jørgensen 1977: 170, DSÅ III: 218–19). On topographical grounds it must be assumed that it is the lake known as *Nørhå Sø* (21/7 1502 Nørrehaasø) that was once called **Hā* (Jørgensen 1977: 170). *Nør(re)-* in the transmitted lake-name shows that this is a case of a change to a name with the semantically secondary settlement-name *Nørhå* as a component, not epexegetis.

Such changes can also be noted in connection with compound watercourse-names and this supports the claim about the great frequency of occurrence of the phenomenon. Near *Dybe Å* (Dybe p., Vandfuld h.), for example, the parish village (RO c. 1325 dybek), lies on the river and to judge from its situation it must have taken over an older name, *Dybæk* from the river (DSÅ I: 338–39, DS XVII: 135–36).⁹ As a parish-name *Dybæk* would often have been used in combination with the word *kirke* ‘church’, i.e. *Dybæk Kirke*. With a false subtraction of *-k*, which was taken to be the *K-* in *Kirke*, the settlement-name *Dybæk* acquires its later form *Dybe* (earliest

⁸ According to Bent Jørgensen the 1474-record refers to *Sønderhå* (p. Hassing h.), the 1485-record possibly to *Nørhå* (p., Hundborg h.) (Jørgensen 1977: 170).

⁹ At an even earlier date the river probably bore the name **Otta* (DS XVII: 148, DSÅ V: 205).

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

record 23/11 1499 Diøbe) (Hald 1977: 227). It is this form, specially developed as a settlement-name, that is found in the younger name of the watercourse *Dybe Å*. Another example is the lake-name *Gundsø* (Gundsømagle p., Sømme h.), 1500 (c. 1570 *ÆDA* III 330) Goffuens szøe, which was transferred to a settlement 27/7 1288 (PavKopib) Guthinssio.¹⁰ In combination with a reciprocating adj. *magle* ‘great’ the settlement-name became *Gundsømagle* (RJb 1370–80 Gundesio maklæ), and this form reappears in the later name of the lake *Gundsømagle Sø* (earliest M 1664 Gunsemagle Søe).

The last-mentioned name, however, we would rather have tended to assess as a lake-name containing the semantically secondary settlement-name, even if the settlement-name had not appeared in altered shape. The name would have been a counterpart to, for example, MB 1683 Helligsøe Søø, used of the lake *Helligsø*, close to which lies the settlement *Helligsø* (p., Refs h.), and to Gst 1939 *Glumsø Sø*, used of the large lake *Glumsø*, close to which lies the village of *Glumsø* (DSÅ III: 67, II: 242).¹¹ The tautological noun *sø* in *Helligsø Sø* and *Glumsø Sø* indicates that it is a case of *formally secondary* names, that is formations involving an already existing place-name.¹² In the examples mentioned it is probably the villages in question that are the denotata for the *formally primary* names *Helligsø* and *Glumsø* – which are therefore secondary from a semantic point of view. If we instead think of the lakes as denotata, then *Helligsø Sø* and *Glumsø Sø* must be taken to be epexegetic, since this would mean that an epexegetic element *sø* ‘lake’ is added to a name already containing the word in a form in complete agreement with the homonymous appellative.

Parallels that support the idea that the type *Ganer Å*, *Gjern Å*, *Gurre Sø*, *Halle Sø* etc. contain the settlement-names *Ganer*, *Gjern*,

¹⁰ The lake-name *Gundsø*, originally **Guthung*, contains an epexegetic *-sø* (DSÅ II: 299–300).

¹¹ Corresponding Swedish examples are to be found in Franzén (1939: 159–60).

¹² A summary account of this terminology is given by Vibeke Christensen (Dalberg) 1973.

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

Gurre, Halle etc. are not too difficult to produce. The same does not apply to the epexegetic interpretation of these names.

As mentioned above, it has been suggested that epexegetis is employed in such names to distinguish between names. It should be interpolated here that name-distinguishing epexegetis can only be conceived in connection with localities of differing nature, since its aim is to specify to which of two localities with the same name reference is being made. If the localities belong to the same category, the information will not have the desired effect. Identical names borne by localities from precisely the same category, for example two villages, are distinguished from each other first and foremost with the help of distinctive reciprocating affixes such as *Store-*, *Lille-*, *Øster-*, *Vester-* etc.¹³

Epexegetis motivated by synchretism does, however, occur. In *Valløby-* the *-by* ‘settlement, village’ was intended to serve to distinguish the village of *Vallø* from the manor-house *Vallø* (cf. Dalberg 1991: 68–69). Most of the examples of name-distinguishing epexegetis make only a few sporadic occurrences in the transmission of the names and hardly ever become conventional. In addition, it would appear that settlement-names and watercourse-names that sound alike can actually live happily side by side with each other without the use of a distinguishing element. By the river *Nivå*, for example, lies the settlement *Nivå*,¹⁴ *Ørbæk* flows along the village of *Ørbæk*, by the lake *Langesø* lies the manor-house *Langesø* – many more examples could be mentioned (Jørgensen 1981: 88, DS XIII: 200, DS XIV: 217). These are examples of compound watercourse-names with generics that are homonymous with appellatives in the living language, and for this reason epexegetis in the watercourse-name would perhaps be less well-founded. One could imagine, however, that epexegetis in the settlement-name might well have been called for. This has evidently not been the case. Examples where

¹³ Dan *stor* ‘great, large’, *lille* ‘little, small’, *øster* ‘eastern’, *vester* ‘western’.

¹⁴ The name has acquired epexegetic *-å* ‘stream’ in its function as a watercourse-name and has together with this been transferred to the settlement (cf. the forms cited in DS II: 24 and the interpretation of the name as a simplex in Jørgensen (1981: 88 and DSÅ V: 140–41).

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

simplex names form such name-pairs can – for good reasons – not be cited, since, as mentioned above, they simply do not occur.

If one thinks that the arguments put forward have sufficient cumulative weight to result in abandonment of the epexegetic interpretation of the type of compound nature-names that acquired the function of the names of the neighbouring settlements in uncompounded form, then the number of epexegetic nature-names in Denmark will be reduced. This does not mean, however, that the number of simplex Danish nature-names will be fewer – the names in question still exist in function as settlement-names.

Additionally, through the interpretation of such lake- and watercourse-names as consisting of the semantically secondary settlement-name plus the element denoting the nature of the locality, it is possible to propose an explanation of a peculiar structural divergence between Danish island-names of the present day and contemporary watercourse-names.

The few simplex nature-names that still are borne by natural localities almost all denote islands. *Als*, *Falster*, *Fur*, *Fyn*, *Illum*, *Mors*, *Møn*, *Vresen* are familiar examples. Similar simplex watercourse-names are excessively rare. Among the hundreds of watercourse-names in *Danske sø- og ånavne* only a few simplex examples are to be found, for example *Bliden*, *Bløster*, *Flom*, *Færgen*, *Glammen*, *Glut*, *Gløde*, *Skvatten* (DSÅ I: 166–67, 171. II: 117, 174, 233–34, 242–43, 246, VI: 178).¹⁵ It is probably characteristic that these names are borne by rather insignificant watercourses. The names have never been transferred to settlements. Nor is it by chance that the written transmission of the names is very weak and generally very young.

The surviving simplex watercourse-names only make up a strikingly small percentage of the total number of watercourse-names – a considerably smaller percentage than that of the simplex island-names of the total number of island-names. If we assume, however, that many watercourses have changed from being simplex

¹⁵ Comparative names such as *Brillerne* ‘the spectacles’ are left out of consideration.

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

names to becoming a part of the name transferred to the settlement together with an element denoting the nature of the locality, it is no wonder that so few watercourses bear simplex names today. Island-names are transferred to settlements much less frequently and this means that the theoretical possibility for a change of name of this type is also much less common.

Apart from the noting of its presence in certain names, the aspects of the phenomenon epexegetis most often referred to in place-name literature are the syntactic-semantic structure of epexegetic name-formation and the reason for its appearance (cf. Dalberg 1991: 47–92). On the other hand, it has never been discussed why epexegetic names in some cases gain a footing in linguistic usage and in other cases not.

In principle, as already mentioned, any category of locality may be indicated by epexegetis but epexegetic names do not occur with equal frequency in connection with all categories of denotata. In Danish place-name literature the view has been put forward, both directly and indirectly, that epexegetis takes place more frequently in connection with nature-names than with settlement-names (Stednavneforskning I: 85, Jørgensen 1981: 126). The claim is undoubtedly correct, if the cases where the epexegetic name has ousted the non-epexegetic one are taken into account (cf. Jørgensen 1982: 134 and 1983: 137).¹⁶

On the other hand, it is hardly valid, if it is meant to apply to epexegetic place-name-formation in general and thus also include the examples where an epexegetic element is only known from a single record or some few of these, while the non-epexegetic form otherwise continues as the current name for the locality in question. Within the last-named category a large number of settlement names can be found,¹⁷ and one can easily convince oneself of this by

¹⁶ Bent Jørgensen has in the last two sections of his three-part place-name dictionary defined his formulation more clearly than in the first one so that this limitation is stated expressly (Jørgensen 1982, 1983).

¹⁷ Swedish examples of this type, where *-by* “...seems...to have been added but is no longer retained” were pointed out by Elof Hellquist as early as in 1918 (Hellquist 1918: 96–97).

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

reference to the volumes dealing with settlement-names in *Danmarks Stednavne*.¹⁸ A few random examples will be cited here. The recorded forms are only a selection of those available, since fuller documentation can generally be found in *Danmarks Stednavne*.

Broholm (farms, Brylle p., Odense h.) M 1664 Broeholmb, M 1844 Broeholm Gaard,¹⁹ Gst 1872 Broholm (DS XIV: 78).

Donskær (farms and houses, Møborg p., Skodborg h.) VSKOrig 1795 Danskær [symbol for house], M 1844 Donskær huus,²⁰ Gst 1873 Donskjær Hse, PA 1966 Donskær (DS XVII: 64).

*Geddal*²¹ (village, Ejssing p., Ginding h.) 15/5 1500 (18th cent.) Gedelbye, KancBrevb 8/12 1591 Giedil, MB 1683 Giedil, M 1688 Giedel=bye,²² M 1844 Gieddal (DS XVII: 227–28).

Heldager (village, Tved p. Sunds h.) M 1664 Haldagger, KrSk 7/1 1671 Heldagerbye, M 1688 Haldagger, VSKOrig 1773 Heldager Bye og Gaard, 1844 Helager (DS XIII: 28).

Kulerup (village, Bjæverskov p. and h.) Mandt 1596 Kyllerup, M 1664 Kiullerupbye, M 1688 Kiulerup (DS XVI: 29.).

Mark (farm, Heldum p., Skodborg h.) KrSk 7/6 1586 Marck, M 1688 Marchboell, Folketælling 1787 Mark, VSKOrig 1790 Markhuus, M 1844 Markgaard, PA 1966 (DS XVII: 42).

¹⁸ One may suspect *Danmarks Stednavne* of inconsequence in its documentation of epexegetic name-formation. Sometimes epexegetic elements are rendered – more often they would seem to be ignored in the source forms that have been selected. The reason is probably that the main objective for *Danmarks Stednavne* has been to present the name records as the basis for interpretation of the *non-epexegetic* name, and any epexegetic form was thus only of subordinate interest.

¹⁹ Dan *gård* ‘farm’.

²⁰ Dan *hus* ‘house’.

²¹ *-dal* is unetymological (DS XVII: 227–28). Reshaping to *dal* had, however, not occurred at the time when the epexegetic name-formation took place.

²² Dan *by* ‘settlement, village’.

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

Mose (farms, Husby p., Ulfborg h.) LR 1609 Moesgaardh, Mandt 1610 moesgaard, paa moes, M 1688 Moeseboel,²³ M 1844 Mose (DS XVII: 357).

Neble (farms, Allerslev p., Bårse h.) M 1664 Nebelle, M 1688 Nebbølle=gaarde, VSKOrig 1767–68 Neble, M 1844 Neble Gaarde, PA 1972 Neble (DS XVI: 207–08).

Vinde (village, Skive land p., Hindborg h.) Reg c. 1525 widtne, M 1664 Wind Bye, MB 1683 Windbye, Winde, M 1688 Vindbye, M 1844 Vinde (DS IX: 15).

Årbjerg (farms, Skive land p., Hindborg h.) M 1664 Ørnbiergh, M 1688 Aarbierggaard, M 1844 Ahrbjerg (DS IX: 14).

Considerably fewer examples of a settlement-name with an epexegetic element have acquired the status – at least in written form – of being a conventional name. Among these can be mentioned those described in Dalberg 1991: 47–77, where further information is provided.

Hovedgård (Ørridslev p., Voer h.)
Jb 1544 Hoffuitt
M 1688 Hoffuidgaarde

Hverkenby (Humble p., Langelands Sønder h.)
Reg 1531 Huærken
M 1844 Hverkenbye

Hydesby (Radsted p., Musse h.)
2/8 1434 Høwet
MB 1682 Synder Hyrresbye(s Thuerhoyschiff)

Kiddegård (Jelling p., Tørrild h.)
KancBrevb 23/10 1578 Kidie
U 1822 Kiidegaard

²³ Dan *bol* ‘small-holding’.

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

Kærgårde (Nautrup p., Harre h.)

17/6 1474 Kiær

DAtl IV (1768) 739 Kier Bye

Gst 1882 Kjærgaarde

Lavensby (Havnbjerg p., Als Nørre h.)

22/10 1245 Langesio

Sk 1483 Langesbw

Lundby (Landet p., Sunds h.)

31/12 1459 Londh

31/7 1499 Lwnby

Risgård (Egtved p., Jerlev h.)

KancBrevb 15/3 1579

MB 1683 Riisgaard

Valløby (p., Bjæverskov h.)

22/7 1346 Waleuæ

12/3 1461 Valløffwe by

Øby (Viskum p., Sønderlyng h.)

Sk 1528 Øø

DAtl IV (1768) 402 Øe Bye

Øby (Husby p., Ulfborg h.)

26/5 1492 Øø

M 1688 Øebye

There are probably a number of reasons why considerably more epexegetic nature-names than settlement-names become accepted as conventional forms.

One factor that has undoubtedly played a role is the model-forming effect of the existing place-name lexicon. As earlier mentioned, Danish nature-names are from an etymological point of view dominated by compounds with topographical substantives as the generic element. Synchronically these name-elements generally appear in a form that is homonymous with living appellatives whose meaning corresponds to the nature of the name-bearing locality.

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

The reason for this is that the majority of the Danish nature-names have been coined as compounds with topographical nouns as their generic. On the basis of word-formation and vocabulary it can be established that a number of these names are of considerable age and this is a sign that the type must have been productive from the earliest period, even though a large number of these nature-names are comparatively young (Hald 1965: 185, 1971: 74, Kousgård Sørensen 1985: 32).

Together with epexegetic names, the above-mentioned changes of name, in which simplex nature-names are replaced by nature-names compounded of a settlement-name and a topographical noun, have continuously contributed to the numerical superiority of nature-names with generics denoting the locality. As explained above, changes of name of this type have been very widespread. The number of epexegetic nature-names also seems to have been comparatively great – at any rate considerably greater than the transmission allows us to assess. As already mentioned, Kristian Hald and John Kousgård Sørensen have made it seem likely that many island-names and watercourse-names are to be interpreted as epexegetic compounds (particularly Hald 1971 and DSÅ I–VIII). Nature-names linked to other categories of denotata have not been examined anywhere near as closely with respect to the occurrence of epexegetic name-formation. Epexegetic name-interpretation has – in a more or less well-founded way – been proposed in connection with, for example the names of *fairways* such as *Faneffjord* (DS XVI: 259), *Iseffjord* (Jørgensen 1981: 59) and *Kolding Fjord* (Hald 1965: 246, differently DSÅ IV: 149), names of *coastal projections* such as *Lindsnakke* (Jørgensen 1983: 86), *Vindshorn* (Stednavneforskning I: 78) and *Knudshoved* (Stednavneforskning I: 81, differently Jørgensen 1981: 67), names of *elevations* such as *Feggeklit* (Hald 1977: 276), *Bulbjergbakke* (DS XX: 125) and *Nibakke* (DS XVIII,1: 154, differently DSÅ V: 131), names of *boggy areas* such as *Donsmose* (DS XIV: 275) and names of *growths of trees* such as *Arnitlund* (Jørgensen 1983: 15).

The reason why nature-names can so often be perceived synchronically as containing a second element that is homonymous with a familiar topographical appellative whose meaning agrees with the

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

nature of the locality borne by the name-bearer is primarily the fact that nature-names are seldom semantically secondary, i.e. metonymically transferred from a topographically neighbouring locality. The watercourse names *Bølsvad*, *Katterøgel* and *Ormedal*, which were originally borne by a *vad(ested)* ‘a ford(ing-place)’, a *røgel* ‘an elevation’ and a *dal* ‘a valley’, are, together with the examples named in Dalberg 1991: 61, 131, of rare occurrence (DSÅ I: 184, IV: 57–58, V: 194). There is therefore small chance for the etymological content of a nature-name to refer to a different locality from the name-bearer, and consequently a reduced possibility for a discrepancy between the nature of the name-bearer and a homonymous appellative’s topographical meaning.

The patterns presented by settlement-names are much more diffuse with respect to homonymy with appellatives denoting localities and their semantic agreement with the nature of the denotatum. Many settlement-names lack an element that is homonymous with an appellative whose meaning refers to the nature of the locality, and many settlement-names are semantically secondary. Several of these have an element that is homonymous with a topographical appellative whose meaning does not agree with the nature of the name-bearing locality.

The written transmission may also have been a contributing factor to the difference that has arisen between epexegetic nature-names and settlement-names. An early and stable written tradition has a well-known name-conserving effect. Such a transmission is characteristic for many settlement-names in contrast to nature-names, which are generally committed to writing at a late date and often, in addition, rather sporadically. This is naturally a reflection of the significance of the localities for society and their related dissemination to greater or smaller groups of language-users. Nor is it a coincidence that almost all the current simplex island-names were recorded early – several of them even unusually early²⁴ – and that

²⁴ For example, *Falster*, 9th cent. account of Wulfstan’s voyage in King Alfred’s translation of Orosius (c. 900 Sweet, Orosius 20) *Falster*, *Fur* 1166 (c. 1600 DD 1 rk II 171) *Phur*, *Fyn*, Arnórr Jarlaskáld c. 1050 (Jónsson, Skjalde-

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

the name-bearers in question from ancient times are known to have had social and political functions (cf. Hald 1971: 71).

Bibliography

- Christensen (Dalberg), Vibeke, 1973: Termerne primær og sekundær i nordisk stednavneterminologi. In: *Terminologi inom ortnamnsforskningen. NORNA-rapporter* 1. Uppsala, pp. 40–48.
- ChrIIReg = Kong Christian II aabne Breve. In: Suhm, Peter Friderich, 1782: *Samlinger til den danske Historie*, vol. II.
- Dalberg, Vibeke, 1985: Gudenå-typen versus Gern Å-typen. Til spørgsmålet om epexegetis i danske naturnavne. In: Jørgensen, Bent (ed.), 1991: *Stednavne i brug. Festskrift udgivet i anledning af Stednavneudvalgets 75 års jubilæum*. Navnestudier 26. København, pp. 64–75.
- Dalberg, Vibeke, 1991: *Stednavneændringer og funktionalitet. Analogisk stednavneomdannelse, epexegetisk stednavnedannelse og stednavneskifte belyst ved danske toponymer*. Navnestudier 33. København.
- DAtl = Pontoppidan, Erich, 1763–81: *Den Danske Atlas I–VII*. København.
- DD = *Diplomatarium Danicum*. Udg. af Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab. København 1938–.
- DS = *Danmarks Stednavne I–*. København 1922–.
- DSÅ = Kousgård Sørensen, John 1968–96: *Danske sø- og ånavne I–VIII*. København.
- DuehDipl = *Dueholms Diplomatarium*. Udg. af O. Nielsen. København 1872.
- EB = Eng- og græsningsprotokol. [Register of meadow and grazing-lands in Denmark 1682–3].
- Folketælling = Folketælling år 1787 [1787 Census]
- Franzén, Gösta, 1939: Sverige. In: Olsen, Magnus (ed.), *Stedsnavn*. Nordisk Kultur. Stockholm-Oslo-København, 124–71.
- FrIReg = *Kong Frederik den Førstes danske Registranter*. Udg. af Kr. Erslev & W. Møllerup. København 1879.
- Gst = Generalstabskort. Geodætisk Instituts målebordsblade [Danish Ordnance Survey Maps].
- Hald, Kristian, 1965: *Vore Stednavne*. 2. ed. København.
- Hald, Kristian, 1971: De danske Ønavne. In: *Namn och bygd. Tidskrift för nordisk ortnamnsforskning* 59, pp. 71–83.
- Hald, Kristian, 1977: various place-name interpretations in: *Nudansk Ordbog*. 9. ed. København.
- Hellquist, Elof, 1903–06: *Studier öfver de svenska sjönamnen – deras härledning ock historia*. Stockholm.
- Hellquist, Elof, 1918: *Om namn och titlar, slagord och svordomar*. Lund.

digtning I A 343) a fioni, *Møn*, 29/11 1135 (1245) Møn (DS XI: 1–2, DS IX: 48, DS IX: 48, DS XIV: 1–2, DS XVI: 238–39).

On the question of epexegetis in Danish nature names

- Jb = Jordebog [Cadastre].
- Jonas Koldingensis = Jon Jensen Kolding, 1594: *Daniæ description nova*. Frankfurt am Main.
- Jónsson, Skjaldedigtning = Jónsson, Finnur, 1912–15: *Den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning* I-II. København.
- Jørgensen, Bent, 1977: *Reciprokering. Studier i indbyrdes afhængighed mellem ældre danske bebyggelsesnavne*. Navnestudier 14. København.
- Jørgensen, Bent, 1981: *Dansk Stednavneleksikon 1. Øerne øst for Storebælt*. København.
- Jørgensen, Bent, 1982: *Dansk Stednavneleksikon 2. Jylland – nordlige del*. København.
- Jørgensen, Bent, 1983: *Dansk Stednavneleksikon 3. Jylland. Sydlige del. Fyn med omliggende øer*. København.
- KancBrevb = *Kancelliets Brevbøger* I–. Udg. af C. F. Bricka, et al. København 1885–.
- Kousgård Sørensen, John, 1985: Hydronymiens nytte. Om danske sø- og ånavne. In: *Saga och sed. Kungl. Gustav Adolfs akademis årsbok*. 25–35.
- KrSk = *Kronens Skøder* I–. Udg. af L. Laursen, et al. København 1892–.
- Leys, Odo, 1967: Zur funktion des Artikels beim Eigennamen. In *Onomastica Slavogermanica* III, pp. 21–26.
- LR = Lensregnskab [County accounts].
- M = Matrikel [Cadastre].
- Mandt = Mandtal [Census].
- MB = Markbog [(Village) register of fields 1681–83].
- Namn och bygd. Tidskrift för nordisk ortnamnsforskning* (NoB) 1–. Uppsala 1913–.
- Nes, Oddvar, 1990: Fjordnamn. In: Sandnes, Jørn & Ola Stemshaug, *Norsk Stadnamnsleksikon*, 3rd ed. Oslo, pp. 38–41.
- Nielsen 1881–87 = Nielsen, Oluf, 1881–87: Bidrag til fortolkning af danske Stednavne. In: *Blandinger til Oplysning om dansk Sprog i ældre og nyere Tid udgivne af Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund*. Kjøbenhavn, pp. 168–92, 227–73, 326–46.
- Olsen, Magnus (ed.), 1939: *Nordisk Kultur V, Stedsnavn*. Oslo–København.
- Opt = Optegnelse i Afdeling for Navneforskning [Place-name record, Name Research Section, Copenhagen].
- PA = *Post- og Telegrafadressebog for Kongeriget Danmark*. København.
- PavKopib = Kopibøger i Vatikanets arkiv [Letter-books in the papal archives at the Vatican].
- PrI = Jørgensen, Frank (ed.), 1970: *Præsteindberetninger til Ole Worm I. Ålborg og Ribe Stifter 1625–42*. København.
- Reg = Register.
- RJb = Roskildebispens Jordebog. Published in: Christensen, C.A. (ed.), 1956: *Danske middelalderlige Regnskaber* 3. rk, 1. bd. København.
- RO = Nielsen, Oluf (ed.), 1867: *Ribe Oldemoder (Avia Ripensis)*. København.
- Sk = Skatteliste [Taxation list].
- Skovsyn = Grandjean, P.B., 1908: Kjøbenhavns Amts Skove efter Svenskekrigen 1658–60. In: *Tidsskrift for Skovvæsen* 1908, pp. 101–26.
- Stednavneforskning = Christensen [Dalberg], Vibeke & John Kousgård Sørensen, 1972–79, *Stednavneforskning* I–II. København.
- Stemshaug, Ola, 1990: Elvenamn. In: Sandnes, Jørn & Ola Stemshaug, *Norsk Stadnamnsleksikon*, 3rd ed. Oslo, pp. 33–36.

On the question of epexegegesis in Danish nature names

Sweet, Orosius = Sweet, Henry, 1883: *King Alfred's Orosius*, Early English Text Society, London.

Trap⁴ = Trap, J.P.: *Danmark*. 4. ed. København 1920–32.

U = Udsiftningssager [Cases concerning agricultural reform].

VJb = *Kong Valdemars Jordebog* I–III. Udg. af Svend Aakjær. København 1926–45.

VJbØ = The so-called “Island list”, a list of Danish islands in VJb, vol. I 30–32.

VSKOrig = Original maps drawn for the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters.

ÆDA = *De ældste danske Archivregistraturer* I–V. Udg. af T. A. Becker et al. København 1854–1910.