Landskrona, *Sibirien* and *Jeriko*
Borrowed Place Names in Sweden down the Ages

Mats Wahlberg
Sweden

Abstract

Since the Middle Ages, a succession of names has been added to the place nomenclature of Sweden that have been borrowed, ready-made, from other countries. In many cases, these names have the form native to Swedish, e.g., *Kina* 'China' and *Sibirien* 'Siberia'. Names borrowed in something closer to their original form have often been reshaped linguistically, once they have been incorporated into the Swedish place-name stock. Borrowed names may sometimes be examples of 'pure name transfer', the principal reason for their adoption being the prestige and glory associated with their original bearers. Others may have become attached to the site in question as a result of their secondary associations, e.g., *Kina* for a yellow house or *Sibirien* to refer to fields that are remote, exposed to frost or difficult to cultivate.

Medieval examples of loan names of German origin are the town names *Landskrona* and *Falkenberg* and the common settlement name *Rosendal* (Ger. *Rosenthal*). In the 18th century some French and Italian names were introduced. In the 17th and 18th centuries, many smallholdings on large estates were named after foreign places associated with Sweden's many wars, e.g., *Lützen* and *Narva*.

A special group of name borrowings consists of Biblical names, e.g., *Betlehem* and *Jerusalem*.

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1. Introduction

Since the Middle Ages a succession of names has been added to the place nomenclature of Sweden that have been borrowed, ready-made, from other countries, e.g., *Landskrona*, *Sibirien* and *Jeriko*. Such names can denote settlements, fields and other localities such as valleys and woods. Well-known names often have a form native to Swedish, such as *Kina* 'China' and *Sibirien* 'Siberia'. Less known names have either been retained in their original form or reshaped linguistically into a more Swedish-sounding form. (For an overview of names of this kind in different parts of the world, see Rentenaar 1996.)

Borrowed names may sometimes be examples of 'pure name transfer', the principal reason for their adoption being the prestige and glory associated with their original bearers. Others may have become attached to the site in question as a result of their secondary associations, e.g., *Kina* for a yellow house or *Sibirien* to refer to fields that are remote, exposed to frost or difficult to cultivate (cf. Rentenaar 1996: 1015 ff.). For general documentation of the names mentioned in this article, readers are referred to Ortnamnsregistret at the Institute for Language and Folklore, Uppsala (www.sofi.se/ortnamnsregistret).

2. German names

The town of Landskrona in southern Sweden was founded in 1413 by King Erik. Since he was of German origin, it is not surprising that the name is borrowed from Germany. As early as the 13th century, several German castles were called *Landeskron*, *Landeskrone* or the like. The very positive meaning of the name is 'crown of the country' (Hallberg 1973: 151, Sahlgren 1925: 15).

But the name had been used by Swedes even earlier; the first settlement on the site of the present city of St. Petersburg in Russia, founded around 1300 as the furthest-flung outpost of Sweden, was also called *Landskrona* (Mattisson 1986: 122 f.).

Another early example of a German loan name is the town name *Falkenberg* 'Falcon Mountain' (*Falkynbergh* 1298, Sahlgren 1950: 303). The German origin of the name is easily recognized from the suffix *-en* in the first element. At the place in question, German and Dutch falconers are known to have resided in the Middle Ages. A small elevation in the town, which has been called *Falkaberget* 'Falcon Mountain', at least in more recent times, could be the 'mountain' referred to (Sahlgren 1920: 166 ff., Wahlberg 2002: 71).

The very common settlement name *Rosendal* is also of German origin. A farm with this name is mentioned as early as 1332 (*rosindal*, SD 4: 297). The name is most probably a Swedish form of the German monastery name *Rosenthal* 'Rose Valley', probably referring to Rosenthal between Koblenz and Trier, founded in 1170 (Sahlgren 1920: 170, Hallberg 1976: 54, 60). From the Middle Ages, at least twenty or so Swedish settlements named *Rosendal* are known. A couple of them previously bore other names. In a document from 1 January 1473 (SRAp), a now lost settlement is called *rosyndaal*, but a note on the back of the document tells us: 'of old, it is by rights called ardz' (*ardz* is the same word as English *arse*). The settlement belonged to the famous Vadstena Monastery and is recorded only as *ards* in the 1480 cadastre of the monastery (Vkjb: 19v). The 1502 cadastre (D 12: 50r) speaks of 'a farm called ardz but some call it rosendaal'. Although the monks were evidently not especially prudish, in this case, the name *Rosendal* is most probably to be seen as a euphemism. This name has been popular in later times as well, especially for smallholdings – in the collections of the Institute for Language and Folklore in Uppsala, at least 400 examples, mostly denoting smallholdings, are found.

Another name in southern Sweden referring to smallholdings is *Sorgenfri*, borrowed from the German *Sorgenfrei* 'sorrow-free, carefree'. Some of the names, at least in the province of Skåne in southernmost Sweden, are probably inspired by the Danish royal castle of Sorgenfri; an additional reason for the adoption of one of the names is probably the fact that it referred to an inn (Isaksson 1980: 232).

The Danish castle of Sorgenfri, whose name is known from the 1690s, was also referred to during the same period as *Sorgenløs*, with the same meaning as *Sorgenfri* (Jørgensen 1994: 267). A German gazetteer from 1916 (*Meyers Orts- und Verkehrs-Lexikon*) includes eight *Sorgenfrei* as well as the castle name *Sorgenlos* in Mecklenburg, but I have no information about the ages of these names. As a surname, originally a nickname, *Sorgenfrei* is known in Germany from the 14th century (Kohlheim and Kohlheim 2000: 626). (The American surname *Sorrowfree*, which I found on the Internet in Grandview, Iowa, a town where 44% of the population is of German origin, is perhaps a translation of the German name.)

Sanssouci, the French name of Frederick the Great's famous palace in Potsdam near Berlin, with the same meaning as *Sorgenfrei*, should also be mentioned in this connection, but I have not gone into that possible influence in greater depth. This palace was not built until 1745–57 and is thus younger than the Danish Sorgenfri. *Sans-Souci* (*Sanssouci*) does not seem to be recorded as a place-name in France before the middle of the 18th century (though it is recorded earlier than that as a soldier's name and a surname).[1]

Another name which cannot directly be shown to be a German loan name is *Fågelsången*. It is, though, most probably a translation of the German *Vogelsang* 'bird song' (Sahlgren 1948: 11; Hallberg 1976: 54, 56). In the 14th century several settlements in northern Germany are known with this name, which has been considered to be linked to the culture of medieval chivalry and minnesinging (Bach 1954: § 520). The name is recorded in Denmark as early as 1403 as the name of a manor. In Sweden, four examples denoting settlements are known from the Middle Ages, the earliest from 1433 (Wahlberg 2007: 106). This name, too, has continued to be popular, though

not to the same degree as *Rosendal* – at least 200 examples of *Fågelsången* and *Fågelsång* (in the indefinite form), mostly denoting smallholdings, are known.

3. French and Italian names

Because of the interest in French culture during the 18th century, many French words and personal names, as well as some place-names, were adopted into Swedish. But the name *Paris*, for a farm in the province of Västergötland, is known as early as 1475.

Unmistakably French is *Bellevue* 'Fairview', the name of a number of smallholdings and villas from the 19th and 20th centuries. In many cases this name was probably chosen more for its fashionable ring than because of an extraordinary view.

The name *Bellevue* is found all over France denoting beautifully situated places, especially those with a wide view. It is recorded as a castle name as early as the Middle Ages, but did not become popular until the 18th century.[2] The most famous house with this name was built in Paris in 1748–50 for Madame de Pompadour, Louis XV's mistress, and was destroyed some decades later during the Revolution. It could be this château that has spread the name all over Europe. An early Swedish example is a summer residence, built in 1757 on the then outskirts of Stockholm. But it was not given the name *Bellevue* until after it had been bought by the Stockholm governor Carl Sparre in 1782 (Stahre et al. 2005: 299 f.; Rittsél and Engström 2005: 105; Råberg and Mandén-Örn: 89, 92). Most probably he was inspired by the Parisian *Bellevue* when he gave this name to his summer residence, beautifully situated with a wide view over Lake Brunnsviken.

Only a few examples of *Bella Vista* and *Belvedere*, the Italian equivalents of *Bellevue*, are found in Sweden as names of villas. Since these names, as well as Spanish *Buena Vista* and Portuguese *Boa Vista*, are found in many parts of the world, they are well worth a study from a socio-onomastic point of view. (Perhaps such a study already exists.) The popular English place-name *Fairview* could well be a translation of the French *Bellevue*, but may also be a result of the Picturesque movement of mid-18th-century England, with its ideas of the view or prospect as a part of rural aesthetics. Equivalents in other languages, such as the German *Schönblick*, should likewise be considered.

At Lake Brunnsviken in Stockholm, opposite Bellevue, we find King Gustav III's summer residence of Haga, built in classical style in 1787, but preceded by an earlier building. The name *Haga* is formed from Swedish *hage* 'enclosed pasture'. Situated around the lake there are also four settlements with Italian names: *Frescati*, *Albano*, *Tivoli* and *Montebello*. They are commonly thought to have been inspired by Gustav III's journey to Italy in 1783–4, which very much influenced the cultural life of Sweden (Stahre et al. 2005: 143; Calissendorff 1981: 57). *Frescati* is now the name of the Stockholm University campus. It originally denoted a large, still preserved villa, built in 1791 by Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt, one of the noblemen who accompanied the king to Italy. The villa is situated opposite Haga (Stahre et al. 2005: 143; Rittsél and Engström 2005: 115 f.; Råberg and Mandén-Örn: 93). It is named after Frascati, one of the small towns in the Albano Mountains just south of Rome, which the king visited on 1 April 1784. The background to the name form *Frescati* is unclear. It is used by Armfelt himself in his travel diary (*Resan till Italien*: 146) and on at least eight 19th-century maps (Wahlberg 2007: 110, note 5). A possible explanation could be that it is influenced by Italian *fresco* 'fresh', referring to the fresh mountain air in the Albano mountains, appreciated ever since antiquity by people from Rome. (It is evident from Armfelt's diary that he knew Italian, cf. *Resan till Italien*: 17, 217.) The town name *Frascati* is, to my knowledge, formed from *frasca* 'branch, twig', and no instance of a form *Frescati* is known.[3]

Albano, the name of a small area not far from Frescati, must be seen in connection with the name *Frescati* – Albano is another of the towns in the Albano Mountains – but the exact background to the name is unclear. It is marked on a map from 1794 (von Fieandt 1794); in the

19th century it referred to an inn, and later to a railway station and an industrial area. The industries are now gone, and the University of Stockholm and the Royal Institute of Technology are currently planning new institutes there. Consequently another major university centre in Stockholm will bear a name that recalls Gustav III's Italian journey.

A beautifully situated promontory in Lake Brunnsviken is called *Tivoli*. Here the Swedish nobleman Gustaf Philip Creutz planned to build a summer residence, just opposite Gustav III's (Edling 1983: 12). Creutz had been the Swedish ambassador in Paris, but had been recalled to Sweden to lead the government during the king's Italian tour. He began to make arrangements for a large park in the English style, which was never completed owing to his death in 1785. A later owner built a house and a musical pavilion in 1796 and 1800, both named *Tivoli*. The name was most probably given by the first owner Creutz to commemorate the king's Italian journey, just completed, during which the king visited the small mountain town of Tivoli just outside Rome (*Resan till Italien*: 148). Perhaps Creutz was inspired by the memory of the ancient Roman villas in Tivoli, above all the Emperor Hadrian's, and also the still remaining 16th-century Villa d'Este with its magnificent park and fountains. But another reason for giving the name could also be considered. Creutz is better known as a poet than as a diplomat; perhaps he wanted to evoke associations with his Roman fellow poet Horace. During the 18th century it was commonly believed that Horace's summer villa was situated in Tivoli (Kellgren 1995: 292), though we now know that it was probably situated in the Sabini Mountains some kilometres away (Staf 1947: 55 ff.).

Fairly soon after the coinage of the name *Tivoli* at Lake Brunnsviken in Stockholm we know that *Tivoli* came into use around Europe as a name for public places of entertainment, though the reason for this is not of course the Stockholm name. The Jardin de Tivoli in Paris is known from 1796, but the famous Tivoli in Copenhagen did not open until 1843, with the name *Copenhagen's Tivoli and Vauxhall* (Vauxhall after Vauxhall Gardens in London). The background to this use of the name *Tivoli* is unclear (H. F. Raup 1974: 35; Rentenaar 1976: 24 f.). The Jardin de Tivoli in Paris was founded by two brothers with the Italian-sounding name *Ruggieri*, but whether they took the name directly from the Italian town cannot be ascertained. In 1815 the Italian Tivoli was described as poor, dirty and unpleasant, but the memory of its magnificent past could of course have survived. In modern Swedish, *tivoli* is an appellative meaning 'amusement park, funfair'.

The fourth of the Italian names round Lake Brunnsviken thought to be inspired by Gustav III's tour of Italy is *Montebello* 'Fairhill', referring to a former house not far from *Frescati*. But this house was not built until 1866, although its name could of course have been inspired by the older Italian names (Nyström 2008). Are perhaps the common English *Fairhill* and the no less common German *Schönberg* translations of the Italian *Montebello*?

The names *Albano*, *Montebello* and *Tivoli* are also represented in other parts of Sweden, as names of smallholdings and villas, but no other instance of *Frescati* is known.

4. Names of smallholdings belonging to large estates

In the province of Uppland, north of Stockholm, there is a farm called *Nogård*, known from 1452 (*Nogard* 7 July 1452, SRAp). In all probability it takes its name from the Russian town of Novgorod (Lars Hellberg as quoted in Strid 1981: 162, note 5). Novgorod was known in Old Norse as *Holmgarðr*, but later also as *Nógarðr*. Situated not far from Nogård are four now lost settlements called *Narven*, *Nogård*, *Rasborg* and *Viborg*, all probably belonging to the medieval manor of Penningby. In my view, these settlements were given their names after the town of Narva in Estonia, the Russian town of Novgorod, the castle of Raseborg in Finland and the town of Viborg in present-day Russia (earlier Finland). The names are all recorded in an inheritance deed from 1525? (*nogardh*, *rasborgh*, *viborgh*, *narffwa*, Skoklp 3:114), and *Viborg* also in a document from 1411 (10 July 1411, SDns 2: 410).

Why these names should have been given after the places referred to is not possible to determine. Finland was at that time a part of Sweden, and Swedish connections with Russia go back to at least the Viking Age. The names in question can also be seen as a parallel to the many smallholdings, belonging to large estates in central and southern Sweden, which in later times have been named after foreign towns and theatres of war, very likely by the owners of the estates. A number of smallholdings on an estate in the province of Östergötland have names such as *Alger*, *Antwerpen*, *Aten*, *Berlin*, *Genf*, *Koburg*, *Madrid*, *Mannheim*, *Marocko*, *Potsdam*, *Rom*, *Sparta*, *Weimar* and *Zürich*. They are inspired by a journey made by one of the 18th-century owners (Andersson 1976: 94). In the early 19th century, several smallholdings on another estate in Östergötland were given names after places where the Swedish army had won victories, e.g., *Lützen* (Germany), *Narva* (Estonia) and *Svensksund* (Finland), or after places where Emperor Napoleon had been defeated, e.g., *Dennewitz*, *Grossbeeren*, *Kulm* and *Waterloo* (Franzén 1982a: 68; Franzén 1982b: 99 f.; cf. Rentenaar 1996: 1014 f.).

All around Sweden many similar names are found, though they do not form part of name sequences. In all, there are at least 80 instances of *Rom*, 70 of *Paris*, 40 of *London* and 20 of *Berlin*. They mostly denote smallholdings of fairly recent date, but some of them refer to fields, bogs, hills or woods.

5. Biblical names

A special group of borrowed names consists of the many biblical names, such as *Betlehem*, *Emaus* (*Emmaus*) and *Nasaret*, mostly denoting smallholdings from the 19th and 20th centuries (cf. Hjelmqvist 1904). For most of these names we know nothing of their background; often they have probably been given purely because of their prestige and glory.

Three smallholdings just north of Stockholm, *Kaanan*, *Galileen* and *Oljoberget* 'Mount of Olives', are recorded as early as the 1730s. They belonged to an estate owned by a noble family, which was probably responsible for the names (Ahnlund 1966: 157 f.).

Biblical names have also been given to fields, meadows and different natural formations, e.g., fields named *Jeriko* and fields or valleys named *Josafats dal* 'the Valley of Jehoshaphat' – i.e., the Judgement Valley, where the Lord will judge all nations.

The name *Jerusalem* was given to a workman's dwelling because it was situated far away from the farm. A small field called *Jerusalem* was said to be stony, marshy and difficult to cultivate and therefore described as 'a real Jerusalem', perhaps an association with the destruction of Jerusalem. But the field *Kanan* or *Kanans land* was, not surprisingly, considered to be beautiful. The names *Sodom* and *Gomorra* for two buildings belonging to a factory were probably not meant to have a positive connotation – the buildings were occupied by unmarried clerks.

6. Other name types

Amerika is one of the most common loan names in Sweden, but *Afrika*, *Asien* and *Australien* are also represented, as are the names of several different countries, from *Brasilien* to *Finland*. *Amerika* and *Sibirien* often refer to fields that are remote. Some of the fields called *Sibirien* are exposed to frost, or stony and difficult to cultivate. *Amerika* can refer to emigration or even to emigration that never took place. A crofter's son intended to emigrate to the USA, but stayed at home and cultivated a new field, which was given the name *Amerika*. Several instances of the name *Kanada* can be found; one farm was taken up by a settler from Canada, and another was owned by a man who had visited Canada. Some fields named *Kanada* have a remote location, and one was brought into cultivation by a man who saw Canada as the land of his dreams. One field got its name *Turkiet* 'Turkey' because it was once completely scorched by the sun.

Several names have been given with reference to ongoing wars around the world (cf. Rentenaar 1996: 1015). Two small adjacent islands in a river were given the names *Kreta* and *Turkiet* in the 1890s after the rebellion on Crete against the ruling nation Turkey.

Tripolis, the unofficial name of a large house in Uppsala, refers to the Tripolitanian war in 1911–12, during which it was built. Another big house nearby, called *Port Arthur*, was built during the war between Russia and Japan in 1904–5, when violent struggles took place at Port Arthur in north-eastern China, now called *Lüshun* (Wahlberg 1985: 11; Nyström 2003: 119). These struggles must have been much talked of and written about, since a lot of buildings throughout Sweden, as well as a shoal, a sound and a field, are called *Port Arthur*.

An enclosed pasture was named *Kuba* because two men were engaged in a dispute about the right to use it during the Spanish-American conflict over Cuba in the 1890s.

The last war-related name to be mentioned is *Korea*, the name of a number of houses and residential districts built during the Korean War of the 1950s (cf. Rentenaar 2002: 144 f.).

The names treated in this paper bear witness to general cultural influences and reflect important events in other parts of the world that were well known in Sweden, or in which Swedes played an active role.

Notes

1. I am grateful to Dr. Pierre-Henri Billy, Université de Toulouse II-Le Mirail, for this information. Cf. also Gendron 2003: 165 ff.

2. I would like to thank Dr. Pierre-Henri Billy, Université de Toulouse II-Le Mirail, for this information.

3. I am indebted to Dr. Enzo Caffarelli, Rome, for information about the Italian name *Frescati* and the suggested origin of the name form *Frescati*.

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Mats Wahlberg
Institutet för språk och folkminnen
Box 135
SE-751 04 Uppsala
SWEDEN
mats.wahlberg.sofi.se