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An approach to the study of place names based on properties of their denotata is discussed. It relies on Husserlian phenomenology and utilizes experience of sciences other than linguistics (philosophy, psychology, logic). The approach is contrasted to both classical traditions (J.S. Mill) and new works oriented to ethnolinguistics and linguoculturology (N.I. Tolstoy). A place name is considered as an integral entity which is realized in four apperceptively related semantic structures.

Traditional place names research considers structure and / or semantics of names without taking into consideration the role of the object itself. This fact leaves realities, being perceived as units belonging to the same unified class of individual objects, outside of scientific focus. Such a unification of all types of onyms seems to be in contradiction with the idea of proper names as denotative signs referring to different objects. Denotative characteristics of proper names play an unacceptably insignificant role in the research at the moment. As opposed to the traditional approach phenomenology focuses on the object itself ("Back to the things themselves!"). It addresses to humans' goals by means of the concept *intentionality* and focuses on those aspects of human perception that reflect the essence of the idea of an individual thing, and not isolated attributes of objects which are random indeed.

The importance of the category 'object' in place names research is evidenced by (1) an implicit or explicit indication of the status of the object within onyms, while the attribute does not necessarily appear in names, e.g. *the Island* (island), *the Lagoon* (lake), etc.; (2) names of small-scale objects refer to a name of another object more often than the names of large-scale ones. The latter group usually resorts to qualitative characteristics; etc.

In addition to the interest in the object itself, emphasis in phenomenology is made on the character of the act of consciousness, i.e., on its *noesis* (from Greek 'the process of thinking'), which fixes the direction of the act of consciousness. Noesis consistently singles out *noemes* – the modes of thinking about the object (e.g., *fixing the object, searching for its distinctive features, or additional attributes, transmitting change blindness in place naming*). Every noeme is not limited to reflecting one mode. It'd rather become one of the stages of perception of an individual object which can be subsequently utilized in respect of the other objects.

A matter of the author's particular interest is a notion of *relations* which unite categories of "object" and "attribute" within place names. Logicians and psychologists affirm its compulsoriness. The research studies relations of the components both within a place name and between the names in a system. In contrast to structural and ethnolinguistic approaches, the author refers to denotative properties of a place name – its individuality, (non-)stability, level of its significance as a landmark. By correlating forms of names with their functionality the four types of relations are discerned (they correlate to the modes of thinking about objects given above). Secondariness of a name as a signifier is different from the one displayed by the signified. Secondariness of the latter manifests itself not in the sense of originating names from appellatives, but from the viewpoint of its potential usability as an assessment scheme for future naming.