

# On the genuineness of Names

The industry's view on name standardization and the proposed standard ST.93

WIPO Name Standardization Workshop

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## Names - the eternal riddle

matthew maté mattheüs  
matthieu matouš  
matthæus mateju  
mateusz matthäus  
mateuksen matteus  
mateo ma-thi-ō matteo

## Very early

- Names (for humans) have probably existed at least since Homo Sapiens!
- It is more convenient to call someone “Peter” than: “You, with black hair, blue eyes, and the big nose!”
- When mankind started recording facts and figures, it was only logical to put spoken names into written form.
- Since most names only had a regional purpose, the requirements for accuracy were not high.

## The last two millenia

- With growing communities and urbanization, it became more important to distinguish people more clearly.
- It took until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century before cross-regional registration and administration of inhabitants was introduced in Europe.
- Not much earlier, the concept of legal entities was formalized in Europe, giving companies assigned names as well.
- Increasing mobility of people and goods necessitated solutions to treat regionally or nationally defined names when they were introduced beyond language boundaries.
- Latin-based alphabets used in Europe were subject to regional and national adaptations with different phonetic meanings of the individual letters!

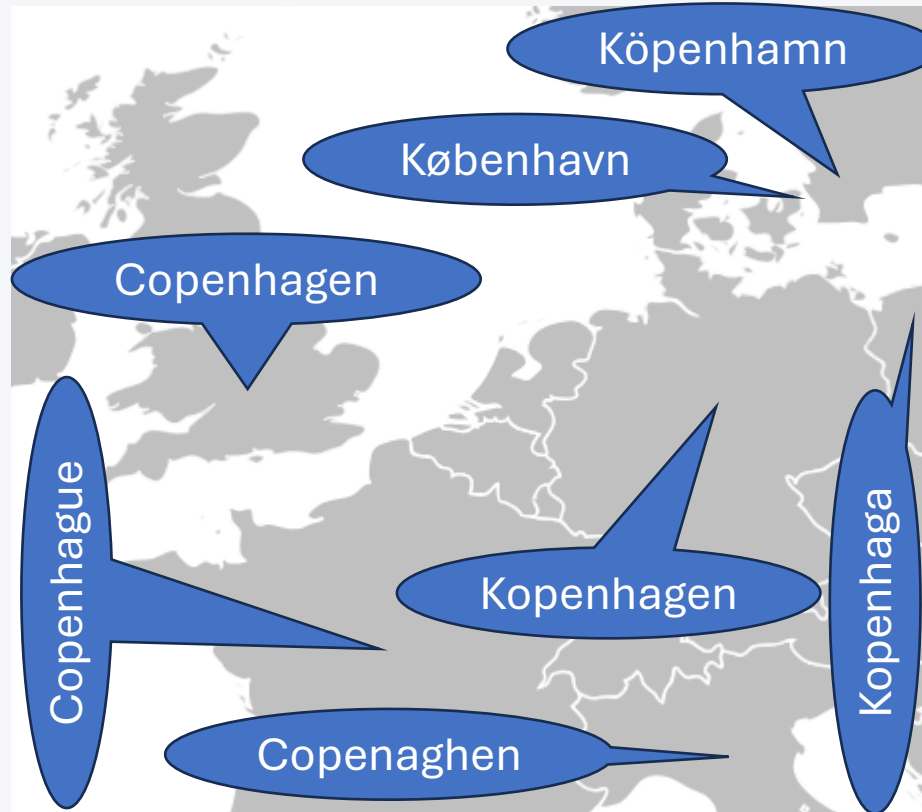
## Today's dilemma

- Solution approaches included, but were not limited to *transliteration*, *transcription*, and *translation* – initially due to ignorance, but later because of limited and limiting technologies, such as typewriters and later, the first generations of computers.
- None of these methods meets today's requirement for the unambiguous identification of persons - they merely represent a workaround, as all three methods inevitably involve information loss.
- The attempt to create rules that capture all peculiarities of a given language pair is nearly impossible and does not do justice to reality.
- The ability to process characters from alphabets used for writing almost any language with modern computer systems opens up a pragmatic approach:  
**When a name is subject to adaptation to local spelling, the authentic, original spelling must be preserved in a suitable place for later considerations or revisions.**

## Key considerations

- Language is not the same as Script:
  - Language is hearing, Script is seeing.
  - Language is a fundamental function of the brain; Script is merely a manual, learned convention.
- You cannot write “in English” while you can write “English words” with Latin letters.
- Names are convenient abbreviations in languages.
- Writing names is a cultural exercise.

## Buying Harbour



## Articles from Proposed ST.93 considered essential by the industry

Proposal presented for adoption by the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)  
at its twelfth session:

WIPO STANDARD ST.93 - RECOMMENDATIONS ON NAME DATA CLEANING

...

*8. IPOs may support entry of the customer's name in native characters of the customer's language, in addition to the customer's name in the language(s) of operation for an IPO, which should be stored using UTF-8<sup>1</sup> encoding. For instance, an IPO that works in English could allow separate fields for an applicant name in English and the original applicant name in Korean.*

...


*10. For data exchange and processing, including the receipt of international applications or registrations, IPOs may consider the name transformation (see the Annex to this document). It is recommended that IPOs should send and receive name data using UTF-8 encoding.*

...

*11. It should be noted that the localization or conversion of customer names is extremely error prone as there are no generally accepted or uniform[ed] standards. ...*



## A few illustrations of the German alphabet beyond borders (1)

(19)  Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
Deutsches Patent- und Markenamt

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**B63C 11/22** (2006.01)

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(19) **DANMARK** (10) **DK 2006 00257 L**

  
Patent- og  
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(21) Patentansøgning nr: **PA 2006 00257**  
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(41) Alm. tilgængelig: **2006-11-21**  
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 (12) **UTDRAG**

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(41)	Alm.tilgj	2006.11.21			
(71)	Søker	<b>Dräger Safety AG &amp; Co KGaA, Revalstrasse 1, 23560, LÜBECK, DE</b>			

## A few illustrations of the German alphabet beyond borders (2)

(12) UK Patent Application		(19) GB	(11) 2590544	(13) A
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(31) 102019007716	(32) 07.11.2019	(33) DE		
(71) Applicant(s):				
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		(51) INT CL:		
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		(56) Documents Cited:		
		WO 2019/162572		
		(58) Field of Search:		
		INT CL A61M		
		Other: WPI, EPOD		
		(19) United States		
		(12) Patent Application Publication		
		REINBOTH et al.	(10) Pub. No.: US 2021/0138122 A1	
			(43) Pub. Date: May 13, 2021	
		(54) COLLECTING UNIT FOR MEDICAL SUCTIONS WITH A FOLDED BAG		
		(52) U.S. CL.		
		CPC ..... A61M 1/0017 (2014.02); A61M 2207/00 (2013.01); A61M 1/0015 (2014.02)		
		(71) Applicant: Trägerwerk AG & Co. KGaA, Lübeck		
		(DE)		


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(71) Applicant(s):				
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(Incorporated in the Federal Republic of Germany)				
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		(51) INT CL:		
		A41D 13/11 (2006.01)		
		(56) Documents Cited:		
		EP 3226707 A1	EP 2046458 B1	
		WO 2017/208260 A1	US 20080271737 A1	
		(58) Field of Search:		
		INT CL A41D		
		Other: WPI, EPODOC		

## A few illustrations of the German alphabet beyond borders (3)

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**JÄGER et al.** (43) **Pub. Date: Feb. 6, 2025**

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(54) **TREATMENT SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR TREATING WORKPIECES** *B08B 3/14* (2006.01)  
*B08B 13/00* (2006.01)  
 (71) Applicant: **DUER SYSTEMS AG**, Bietigheim-Bissingen (DE) (52) **U.S. CL.**  
 CPC ..... *B05C 3/109* (2013.01); *B05C 11/1002*  
 (2013.01); *B05C 11/1039* (2013.01); *B08B 3/14* (2013.01); *B08B 13/00* (2013.01)  
 (72) Inventors: **Tobias JÄGER**, Karlsruhe (DE);  
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 **Innovation, Sciences et Développement économique Canada**  
 Office de la Propriété Intellectuelle du Canada

**Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada**  
 Canadian Intellectual Property Office

CA 3238497 A1 2023/06/29  
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**CANADIAN PATENT APPLICATION**  
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*B65G 49/02* (2006.01)  
 (71) **Demander/Applicant:**  
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 (72) **Inventeurs/Inventors:**  
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 (74) **Agent:** GOWLING WLG (CANADA) LLP

## A promising example of the Danish alphabet on German soil

(19)	 Deutsches Patent- und Markenamt	
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(12)	<b>Gebrauchsmusterschrift</b>	
(21) Aktenzeichen: <b>20 2023 106 466.3</b>		(51) Int Cl.: <b>A01C 23/02</b> (2006.01)
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(45) Bekanntmachungstag im Patentblatt: <b>08.05.2024</b>		
(30) Unionspriorität: <b>BA 2022 00077</b> <b>07.11.2022</b> <b>DK</b>		(74) Name und Wohnsitz des Vertreters: <b>Dantz IP &amp; Law, 10719 Berlin, DE</b>
(73) Name und Wohnsitz des Inhabers: <b>Halsø Maskiner A/S, Årle, DK</b>		

## Legal basis for the previous example

- The DIN 91379 standard, developed for the administration and registration of citizens, has been mandatory in all administrative authorities in Germany since November 2024!
- DIN 91379 governs “Zeichen und definierte Zeichensequenzen in Unicode für die elektronische Verarbeitung von Namen und den Datenaustausch in Europa” = “Characters and defined character sequences in Unicode for the electronic processing of names and data exchange in Europe”. It defines a normative subset of Latin-based Unicode [i.e. UTF-8], sequences of base characters and diacritic signs, and special characters for use in names of persons, legal entities, products, addresses etc.
- Additionally, the standard defines a normative mapping of all Latin letters in use in the European Union to base letters A-Z as an extension of the recommendations of ICAO. (International Civil Aviation Organization)
- With the implementation of DIN 91379, the DPMA (German Patent and Trademark Office) is technically capable of processing any UTF-8 characters in principle, whereas currently only Latin-based characters are processed for administrative purposes.
- A respective standardization at EU level is under preparation by CEN (Comité Européen de Normalisation)

## Summary for further discussions

- Since a name cannot be transferred losslessly between regions of the world, the only authoritative source of information would be the accurate recording of the name (and other details) from the original source (e.g. priority document).
- IP offices have the task of recording information. Today, they cannot make changes without the consent of the applicant or its representative.
- It might therefore be a promising approach to record the authoritative source-information along with the data in the receiving office's local format. (Article 8 of Proposed ST.93)
- Modern computer systems offer the possibility of capturing, documenting and processing texts, including names, in any script, in text-coded form and with character-accurate details.
- It would be desirable if offices would strive to modernize their IT systems so that the authoritative name of persons or legal entities can be recorded, processed and published along with the nationalized version. This is the only way to avoid irreversible information loss and enable end-users or service providers to create evidence-based “ground truth” data for future applications.

## Possible next steps with respect to Proposed ST.93

Since WIPO Standard ST.20 addresses topics that Proposed ST.93 also considers from a different perspective, and partially reformulates the approaches already addressed in ST.20, it might be way forward to postpone the adoption of Proposed ST.93 and instead first adapt the content and scope of ST.20 to the current state of information technology.

Based on an updated ST.20, it might then be easier to develop a generally acceptable scope and wording of a future Proposed ST.93.

## A personal note on Identifier Systems

- Despite the many advantages of identification systems replacing names with unique IDs, such systems have a common disadvantage with the system "name", if they are based exclusively on Latinized or otherwise processed data and not on the authoritative original data, and thus relevant information is already lost when the ID is created.
- To truly improve the current situation, identification systems would need to be linked to trusted national/regional registries that are freely available to all stakeholders in order to transform IDs back into meaningful and actionable information for human users.



Thank you!