

Summary

Långsved or Dröttjan?

Recent settlement names – competition and change

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In this essay, three different cases of settlements being referred to in written sources by alternative, competing names are discussed: *Aspetorp* or *Aspesten*, *Almbynäs* or *Svartviken*, and *Långsved* or *Dröttjan*. The three settlements were first recorded in the 17th century and are thus relatively recent. The author traces the history of their names in different types of written sources, in order to shed light on their origins and subsequent development. The sources used are extracts from cadastres, land survey maps, poll-tax registers and parish registers.

The study shows that the competing names came into use early on in all three cases, perhaps as soon as the settlements were established. In two of the cases at least, the competition seems to have been between a name that was deliberately chosen, presumably by the settler him- or herself, and one that arose more naturally, probably used by the settler's neighbours. Names of the latter type seem to have a greater chance of finally surviving as the names of settlements.

In all three cases, the competing names are attested over several hundred years, and the records appear to reflect active use of the different alternatives. One reason why this competition could persist for so long was probably that the names were documented in writing. As a result, the rival names were preserved in people's consciousness for longer than would otherwise have been the case.