



Geographical Names in an Urban Environment





Table of Contents

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON3

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT5

IN MEMORIAM: Ervin Földi (1931 – 2021)7

SPECIAL FEATURE: Geographical Names in an Urban Environment . 8

 Geographical names in an urban environment – Canberra – the
 National Capital of Australia8

 From Austria - The problems of commemorative naming, especially in
 urban areas10

 Canada12

 Lire la ville à travers ses noms de lieux12

 Reading the City Through its Place Names13

 Geographical Names of Cyprus in an Urban Environment15

 Geographical names in an urban environment – New Zealand18

**UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work (SP&PoW) 2021-
202921**

 Launching a research project on the implementation of UNGEGN SP &
 PoW in the Republic of Korea22

FROM THE DIVISIONS23

 Inaugural Meeting of UNGEGN Bureau and Division Chairs23

 Asia South-East Division24

 Webinar “Recognizing Generic Terms in Geographical Names from Local
 Languages”24

 The 9th Divisional Meeting of the UNGEGN Asia South-East Division26

 Portuguese-Speaking Division28

 Report on the Activities of the Portuguese-Speaking Division,28

 2007 - 202128

 Romano-Hellenic Division31

 UNGEGN - Romano-Hellenic Division – 3rd International Scientific
 Symposium31

FROM THE COUNTRIES33

 Historical dimension of geographical names in Suriname and Influence
 of equivalent international multilingualism visibility33

 Overview of Geographical Name Standardization in Zambia34

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND NEWS ITEMS36

 UNGEGN collaborates and delivers webinar on: “Geographical names
 standardization supporting national development”36

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Previous issues of the Bulletin (formerly Newsletter) can be found at
<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/pubs/#bulletin>

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Différentes fonctions, un principe directeur

Chers Collègues,

Les noms de lieux ont plusieurs fonctions. La plus évidente est d'ordre pratique : ils désignent des points ou des espaces géographiques, ce qui les rend fondamentaux à toute gestion d'information spatiale. Mais ils ont aussi une valeur cognitive associée à leur fonction de dénomination et qui peut varier selon des cas que « Les noms géographiques en environnement urbain », thème de la présente livraison de notre *Bulletin*, permettent de bien distinguer.

Certains noms de lieux servent essentiellement à organiser l'espace dans lequel évoluent les habitants : places dénommées d'après un monument public qui s'y trouve, voies dénommées d'après les lieux auxquels ils conduisent, ensembles de rues d'un quartier dénommées selon une thématique commune, etc. Ces noms sont généralement donnés par les usagers locaux, officiellement ou non. Beaucoup d'entre eux comprennent un élément générique.

D'autres noms expriment l'identité d'une communauté tout entière. Ils sont beaucoup moins nombreux et sont généralement employés sans élément générique. Il s'agit surtout, en environnement urbain, des noms de collectivités humaines telles que les communes ou parfois les quartiers. Dans d'autres environnements, il peut s'agir des noms de pays, ou souvent de divisions territoriales.

L'élément spécifique ne peut guère être choisi de la même façon dans les deux cas. Dans les premiers noms, l'élément générique joue en réalité le rôle principal, et l'élément spécifique peut être de nature simplement commémorative ou exprimer une orientation politique ou sociale qu'un autre nom similaire pourra équilibrer ou nuancer. En revanche, les seconds noms doivent être consensuels pour éviter d'exclure quiconque, et leur formation gagne à être participative.



Mais dans tous les cas, malgré des différences d'application qui s'expliquent essentiellement par des différences de nature entre ces noms, un même principe directeur apparaît : une transposition locale de celui que la Charte des Nations unies appelle au niveau international « le droit des peuples à disposer d'eux-mêmes ».

Je souhaite à chacun, à vos familles et à vos collègues, de joyeuses et saines fêtes de fin d'année.

Pierre Jaillard (France)
Président du GENUNG
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Various functions, one guiding principle

Dear Colleagues,

Place names have several functions. The most obvious is practical: they designate geographical points or spaces, which makes them fundamental to any management of spatial information. But they also have a cognitive value associated with their naming function, which can vary according to cases that "Geographical names in an urban environment", the theme of this issue of our *Bulletin*, makes possible to distinguish.

Some place names serve essentially to organise the space in which the inhabitants live: squares named after a public monument located there, roads named after the places to which they lead, groups of streets in a neighbourhood named according to a common theme, etc. These names are usually given by local users, officially or unofficially. Many of them include a generic element.

Other names express the identity of an entire community. These are much less numerous and are usually used without a generic element. In urban environments, these are mainly names of human communities such as municipalities or sometimes neighbourhoods. In other environments, they may be names of countries, or often of territorial divisions.

The specific element can hardly be chosen in the same way in both cases. In the first names, the generic element actually have the main part, and the specific element may be merely commemorative, or may express a political or social orientation which another similar name



may balance or qualify. On the other hand, second names must be consensual to avoid excluding anyone, and their formation is better done in a participatory way.

But in all cases, despite differences in application that are essentially explained by differences in the nature of these names, the same guiding principle appears: a local transposition of what the United Nations Charter calls at the international level "self-determination of peoples".

I wish everyone, your families and colleagues, a happy and healthy New Year.

Pierre Jaillard (France)

Chair, UNGEKN

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MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

“Geographical Names in an Urban Environment”

Introduction

The Secretariat is pleased to share with you the 62nd issue of the UNGEEN Bulletin. In keeping with the thematic focus, this issue features “Geographical names in an urban environment”. To satisfactorily address this topic and provide context, I thought a review of relevant global development agreements and frameworks, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda, in addition to previous work done by the Group of Experts on urban geographical names, was necessary.

Background

More than half of humankind live in cities and the number of urban residents grows by nearly 73 million every year. The UN Sustainable Development Goal 11, “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” sets targets and defines indicators to measure progress and growth. There is also recognition of the cross-cutting nature of urban issues, which have an impact on a number of other Sustainable Development Goals, including SDGs 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 15, and 17, among others.

The [New Urban Agenda](#) adopted at Habitat III in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016, “presents a paradigm shift based on the science of cities and lays out standards and principles for the planning, construction, development, management and improvement of urban areas along its five main pillars of implementation: national urban policies, urban legislation and regulations, urban planning and design, local economy and municipal finance, and local implementation.”¹ The New Urban Agenda is seen as an accelerator to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities. Both global agendas provide a comprehensive framework to guide and track urbanization around the globe. Specifically, the Kuala Lumpur Declaration of the Ninth World Urban Forum, under innovative solutions, encouraged the development of “monitoring and data collection mechanisms, including community generated data, to enhance availability of information and disaggregated and comparable data at city, functional urban areas and

community levels. This would promote informed and evidence-based decision making and policy formulation, assessing progress and impact at all levels.” Standardized geographical names are relevant to the urban agenda.

Summary of Themed Articles

A review of UNGEEN conference papers unearthed [E/CONF.105/99/CRP.99](#) submitted by Canada to the eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSSGN) in August 2017. The paper references four relevant resolutions, I/4 on the national standardization, X/4 on Discourage the commercialization of geographical names, VIII/2 Practices in relation to commemorative toponymic designations and VIII/9 Geographical names as cultural heritage. The paper highlighted the fact that the treatment of urban geographical names is a management challenge, particularly given that the management of place names in urban centres is done by local governments and municipalities and not national names authorities. To address the issue, the author used the example of Quebec and tendered effective management measures such as: i) collaboration between two administrative levels, ii) national names authorities should take close interest in the management of urban geographical names, iii) implement awareness raising activities among city administrators to increase knowledge on UNCSSGN resolutions and national naming standards and iv) disseminate naming guidelines and standards to the local authorities. The concluding sentence of the paper is very instructive, “Knowledge in toponymy can only add to the healthy development of cities, which are now the living environment of most of the world’s population”.

We received five themed articles, from Australia, Austria, Canada, Cyprus and New Zealand. Given the small number of articles, I will attempt to provide a summary of each.

Australia’s article focused on the use of themes being central to the standardization of place names within the suburbs of Canberra and the benefits of adopting a representative approach. The use of themes was also expanded to address inclusivity and diversity of culture and heritage, with examples of places named based on a music theme. The authors also shared that over time there has been an increase in the use of

¹The New Urban Agenda Illustrated

https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/12/nua_handbook_14dec2020_2.pdf



the names of women for commemorative naming. The article from Prof. Peter Jordan, Austria addressed the challenges and solutions to commemorative naming. He pointed out the complexities to be considered in according commemorative names that I never thought of before, such as, naming a small alley or street after an extraordinary personality would not be an appreciation. I rather liked the appropriateness of the title of the Canadian article, "Reading the City Through its Place Names", it was on point as it highlighted the connection between culture and preservation of history through street names in the urban setting. This article as with that from New Zealand, shared the use of themes and the increased number of women and indigenous people who have been honoured via commemorative names. It is my opinion that the message from the article is perfectly given in the concluding paragraph, the names of cities preserve history if properly done/standardized which allows for name changes over time, as does the urban landscape changes. Andreas, a dedicated contributor to the Bulletin and our cover page designer (for which we are extremely grateful) took me on a historical and cultural journey, which highlighted the evolution of cities in Cyprus. He shared that cities and their names evolved based on cultural, social and economic needs and settlement patterns. I understood from the article that geographical names standardization is important as it serves to respect and protect authoritative urban names. Last but not least the article from New Zealand focused on the considerations required for guiding the standardization of authoritative naming of suburban centres. Also shared was the importance of indigenous peoples and cultural heritage supported with examples of naming practices used for suburbs such as Hillpark and Blenheim. I recognize the authors for taking the time to prepare well written, researched, and very informative articles, they are a must read.

For Further Discussion

Two central tenets identified throughout all five articles were: one, the use, challenges and benefits of commemorative naming and two, that history, culture and heritage are inextricably linked to assigning geographical names to urban centres, structures and streets among other features. While our contributing authors highlighted issues of commemorative naming and the link to history, culture and heritage, additional research indicated that there are other related challenges and factors influencing the toponymy of urban geographical names, which may also be considered for future discussion. One is the toponymic commodification, that is selling of naming rights, where names of commercial entities take precedence over names derived from everyday linguistic practices, thus the influence of branded place names (brandscaping) e.g., Coca-Cola London Eye, and Freedom Tower now 1 World Trade Centre, which often result in dispossession of the

²Rose-Redwood, R. and D. Alderman (2011), *Critical Interventions in Political Toponymy*. ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies 10.1,1-6.

identity of spaces, property and institutions. R Rose-Redwood, and D Alderman (2011)², in *Critical Interventions in Political Toponymy*, supports this thought, "...there is clearly a need for a more nuanced critical theory of political toponymy that moves beyond the long-held belief that place naming is a strictly "cultural" phenomenon which is somehow disconnected from the political, economic, and social struggles over the production of "place",... what is needed is instead a critical exploration of the social struggles over place naming within the context of the current politico-economic restructuring of toponymic practices". Toponymic commodification is however seen as a means by which local authorities gain resources to finance the needs of their growing cities and towns. Other areas worthy for further discussion on geographical names in an urban environment include banal naming practices, scalar politics of toponymy and linguistic hegemony.

General Remarks

Also included in this issue are contributions from the Divisions, Member States, updates on special projects and news items. Please note that this and future issues of the Bulletin will feature a new section entitled, ***UNEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work (SP&PoW) 2021-2029***, which will provide news and updates on the implementation of the SP&PoW. This issue shares how to find and access the strategic plan and programme of work and invites member states and divisions to contribute to its implementation.

We are also kindly reminding our experts to complete the following form if you have not already done so.

- [The UNEG N contact information for national geographical names authorities](#) and

The information collected from this form will be used to update the Group of Experts contact database which allows us to keep you informed. Thank you is extended to all our contributors to this issue, and to Andreas Hadjiraftis of Cyprus for designing the front page.

Your comments on this issue and contribution to Bulletin number 63, to be circulated in May 2022 under the theme "***Geographical names as indicators of the environment***" are welcomed. Please circulate the bulletin among your colleagues and we hope you enjoy reading. Remember to tweet your geographical names activities @UNSD_GEGN. Please stay safe and healthy, and I do hope you will enjoy reading this issue.

UNEGN Secretariat

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IN MEMORIAM: Ervin Földi (1931 – 2021)

The cartographic and toponymic community in Hungary has learned with sadness that Ervin Földi passed away on 8 November 2021 in Budapest. Born on 6 March 1931, he had studied both at Szeged and Budapest Universities. As a qualified geographer he was among the first to obtain a diploma in 1957 in cartography at the newly created Department of Cartography at Budapest Eötvös Loránd University.

Working as a map editor at the prestigious Hungarian Cartographia company and coupled with a high instinct in languages he became a specialist in geographical names. As a toponymist and map editor he was chief contributor in works of Cartographia's major atlas projects like the 1959 World Atlas, the Little World Atlas of 1965 and the Geographical World Atlas of 1985.

He was the chief architect in establishing the Hungarian Committee on Geographical Names both in its narrow scope between 1963-89 and its present form. He retired from chairing the Committee in 2004 but kept on being a member until 2011. The orthography of Hungarian geographical names is based on the rules of which he was chief author. During his years at the Institute of Geodesy and Cartography (1969-91) he actively participated in several UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (1967, 1972 and 1977) especially in its working group on romanization, and in its toponymic training courses in Indonesia in the early 1980s. He was also an editor of Emil Meynen's Multilingual Dictionary of Technical Terms in Cartography (1973).



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SPECIAL FEATURE: Geographical Names in an Urban Environment

Geographical names in an urban environment – Canberra – the National Capital of Australia

On 12 March 1913, the Governor-General of Australia inaugurated the site of the future capital city and laid the first foundation stone on Capital Hill. Lord Denman's visionary speech declared that "...the traditions of the city will be the traditions of Australia. Let us hope that they will be the traditions of freedom, of peace, of honour, and of prosperity. That here will be reflected all that is finest and noblest in the national life of the country...". Lady Gertrude Denman then pronounced, "*I name the capital of Australia – Canberra*"; a name having a long association with the location.

This article introduces some of the practices that enable suburbs, parks and roads in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) to be named in ways that give our national capital a nomenclature which is representative of the whole country.

A cornerstone of names standardisation in the ACT is the use of themes. In 1928, it was formally proposed that place names within the capital's suburbs follow a theme. This thematic approach was readily adopted, and it continues today with new themes approved over time. For example, the first determination in 1928 commemorated "honourable men" prominent in the fields of navigation, exploration, pioneering, colonisation, administration, politics, science and letters. By the 1960s new themes were approved focussing on the commemoration of notable women; and since 2002 it has been mandatory to consider gender balance when determining names for public places.

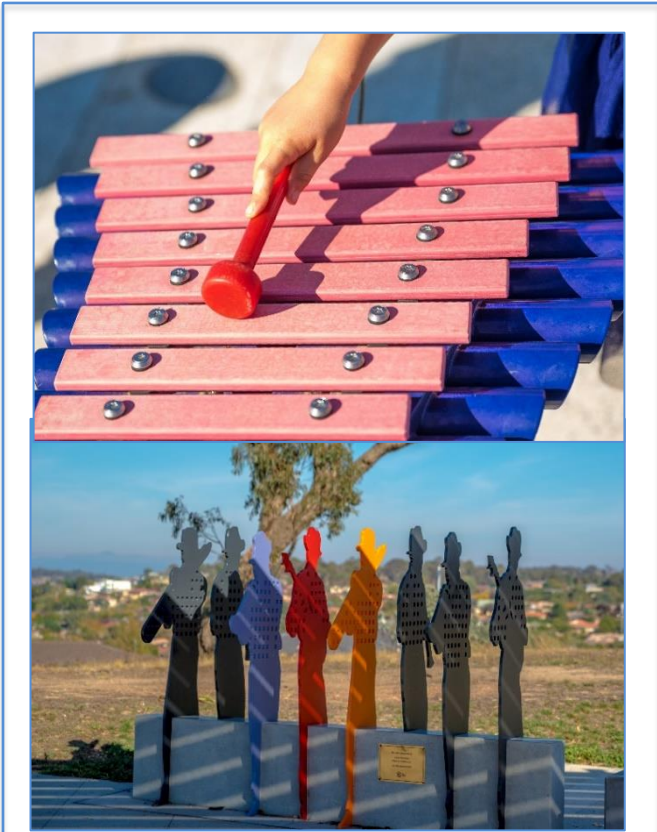
Across Australia, names authorities recognise the need to continually evolve their focus on elements of diversity and inclusion in place naming. Legislating for diversity and inclusion in place names of the capital (such as introducing the requirement for gender balance) strengthened those initiatives but proved an onerous way to give guidance. Statutory guidelines now give legal status to policy documents. This has improved the transparency and accessibility of the naming process and it is much easier to provide specific direction to decision makers. The approach was most recently used this year to implement recommendations which included explicit reference to Article 13 of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and which added a requirement

that the totality of public place names in the ACT be reflective of diverse cultural situations and cognisant of community sensitivities. The guidelines for use of personal names are consistent with broad Australian naming principles and UNGE GN resolution VIII/2 that only the names of deceased persons should be determined.

The 1928 determination also commemorated local Aboriginal place names and words of Aboriginal origin. From the 1960s suburbs were named to recognise cultural groups from across the country, with street names selected from related vocabularies. The suburbs of Bonner and Nicholls commemorate the significant contribution of First Nations leaders, and road names in Bonner are themed to recognise other Indigenous Australian leaders and their supporters. The suburb of Ngunnawal commemorates the Ngunnawal people, the traditional custodians of land on which the capital is built.

Australian practice pays respect to the numerous First Nations peoples and their connection to country by stipulating that Indigenous place names or words from one particular area are not to be applied to other areas for official naming purposes. On the other hand, the longstanding policy that names in the capital should be fully representative of the nation still applies. There are cultural sensitivities in balancing these two competing guidelines. In naming places to recognise First Nations peoples or adopting words from their vocabularies when they do not identify with the lands of the ACT, the person's relatives and/or an appropriate cultural group are respectfully consulted before broader consideration is given to a name. There is also a commitment that Indigenous words, other than those from the local Indigenous languages, may be applied to roads but not to urban open space or natural features.

The use of themes can also influence other elements of the planning for suburbs. The theme for the new suburb of Moncrieff, for example, relates to music, since the suburb name honours the Australian singer, Gladys Moncrieff. It has provided an opportunity for a road to be named Yidaki Way (from the word for a wind instrument played by the Yolngu people of the Northern Territory), and for an area of open



The play park in the suburb of Moncrieff supporting the musical place names theme

Photo credit: ACT Government | Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

space to be named Yunggaballi Park (from a word in the local Ngunawal language meaning ‘sing’). In a lighter vein, the play equipment in the park also follows the musical theme, in the hope that it might stimulate valuable conversations with even the youngest community members about where place names come from and why they were chosen.

This representative approach to names in Australia’s capital requires cooperation between authorities across the country. An agreed procedure of the Australia and New Zealand Working Group on Place Names enables Australian jurisdictions to confidentially reserve names for future consideration and to avoid any duplication in suburb names. It has enabled the reservation of names of eminent Australians, including the names of prime ministers, for posthumous commemoration in the capital.

From collaborating on reserved names to endorsing respectful variations to national principles on adopting Indigenous names and words, the positive relationships between Australia’s sub-national names authorities support a cohesive and respectful approach to place naming across the country and special considerations for the capital. A thematic approach to place naming in urban areas provides a useful framework for commemorative naming and has been particularly successful in Australia’s capital city. Even though perspectives may have shifted, for almost 100 years themes have been an important vehicle for implementing the government’s desire for a capital with a diverse and inclusive nomenclature representative of all of Australia.

References and further reading:

1. *Place names in the Australian Capital Territory* - https://www.planning.act.gov.au/tools-resources/place_names
2. *1928 report that recommends themes for the capital - Canberra National Memorials Committee Report in regard to the Naming of Canberra’s Street and suburbs printed 29 March 1928 – Source National Library of Australia, Digital Library Reference: nla.obj-2772889463 PP no. 187 of 1928 (nla.gov.au)*
3. *The Public Place Names Act 1989* https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/alt_a1989-31co/default.asp
4. *Public Place Names (Naming of Public Places) Guidelines 2021*



Suburbs honouring prime ministers have commemorative signage in addition to normal road signage.
Photo credit: ACT Government | Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

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From Austria - The problems of commemorative naming, especially in urban areas

In contrast to descriptive geographical names, commemorative names are reminiscent of people, institutions or events. In addition, there are also 'neutral' geographical names (after plants, animals, planets, legendary and fictional characters, etc.), which are often used today for the 'thematic naming' of traffic areas and identity building of new urban developments ('planetary district', 'birds district').

Commemorative naming is not a new idea. It was practiced already in the Roman Empire, where, e.g., Nova Roma [Istanbul] was renamed Constantinopolis after the Roman emperor Constantine, and even earlier, when in the 4th century AD modern Plovdiv in Bulgaria was named Philippopolis after Philip II, king of Macedonia, or several places became Alexandrias after Alexander the Great.³ However, it did not essentially gain ground before the late 19th century, when urban areas like streets, squares, promenades, parks, etc. received such names. In some countries and more recently this practice has also been expanding into rural areas, when small towns and villages started naming their traffic areas.

Although it cannot be denied that commemorative names have also an orientation function so important for names of traffic areas (They appear on the mental map just like descriptive and neutral names.), they are often unrelated, certainly less related to the place than descriptive names, which, for example, point in a certain direction, describe the location within the place (e.g., *Main Square*), establish a temporal (*New Market*) or size relation (*Broadway*) or indicate the historical (*Baker Street*) or current (*Airport Drive*) function of a traffic area.

The risk of renaming

What makes commemorative names a major problem is the risk of renaming. At least since the late 19th century, the respective dominant political and societal force has tried to leave an imprint on the linguistic landscape (in the sense of all linguistic manifestations in public space). Although mostly only significant regime changes and political upheavals such as decolonization or the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe led to a wave of renaming, accidental name changes also occur in politically calmer times.

³ The author thanks Peder Gammeltoft for hinting at the Philippopolis and Alexandria cases.

It is inherent in the principle of commemorative names after persons that the rank of the honored must roughly correspond to the rank of the traffic area named after them. To name a small alley or a street in a suburb after an extraordinary personality would not be an appreciation, but rather a degradation. Renaming therefore preferably and repeatedly affects prominent traffic areas (*see Figure*). Sometimes squares, parks, and streets are also divided into sub-units to find an appropriate place for a prominent name. In any case, commemorative names lead city administrations from one dilemma to another, and many wish that Pandora's box had never been opened.



The main business street in the center of the Romanian city Brașov/Kronstadt/Brassó (Strada Nicolae Bălcescu) has changed its name three times in the 20th century.

(Photo: Peter Jordan 2016)

A dominant trend of our time strives to compensate for the mostly blatant asymmetry between traffic areas named after men and women. This asymmetry can be explained historically and is due to the fact that until not so long ago women very rarely held public positions. But if women were exceptionally prominent public figures such as the Austrian regent Maria Theresia or the English Queen Victoria, there was (and still is) no shortage of squares, streets, parks, bridges, train stations and railway lines named after them. This trend also reveals the usual commemorative naming dilemma: If only new traffic areas or traffic areas in the



outskirts of a city would be named after women, who are already numerous today in public and prominent positions, and not also one or the other prominent in the center of a city, the cause would be of little use. Another gender gap would arise – the quantitative difference would only be replaced by a qualitative one.

As important as commemorative names seem to be in the moment of their allocation and in the event of political upheavals with their waves of renaming, over time they become mere labels and their meaning is hardly in mind in everyday use. This is probably due to the primarily practical importance of names of traffic areas as orientation aids and addresses. It is therefore the value of commemorative names for the culture of remembrance to be questioned and to assume that this would be better served with monuments and commemorative plaques.

Inadequate relation to the place, naming after persons still alive or only recently deceased

Further problems with commemorative names are the frequently inadequate connection between the person honored and the street named after him/her as well as the naming of those who are still living or who have only recently died.

Ideally, the traffic area named after a person should be close to the place of birth, place of residence or the place of work. However, especially for those who are only local or regional celebrities, mostly a so far unnamed traffic area is found that has little to do with them. Of course, this desideratum of the most precise local reference possible does not apply equally to nation-wide or international celebrities. A deserving minister, prime minister or president can of course be honored by a geographical name anywhere in the country, and universal greats like Mozart or Michelangelo anywhere in the world.

Round birthdays, handovers, etc. sometimes cause people who are still alive to be honored with the names of traffic areas. The upsurge in feelings of death often leads to the commemorative name being given immediately after death. City administrations usually find it difficult to shut themselves off from the pressure of the deceased's family, associations or groups. But precisely this can lead to early renaming, because every new event of this kind puts the old one in the shade, or it turns out after some time that the honored person also had dark sides. It is therefore provided in many guidelines and supported by [UN Resolution VIII/2](#) "Commemorative naming practices for geographical

features" not to honor a person who is still alive with a commemorative name and to observe a waiting period as a 'cooling-off phase' in the case of deceased persons. However, one often does not adhere to it, and the prescribed waiting periods are very different in length (between one and five years).

Practical aspects

There is also a tension between the shortness of a street name, which is desirable for practical reasons, and the clear recognizability of the person honored by it, which is required by the commemorative purpose. Names of traffic areas are part of addresses and are often used to provide information, arrange meeting points, etc. For these purposes long names that consist of first and last names and may be supplemented by a title or a function, are obstructive and therefore mostly abbreviated (to the family name). On the other hand, the purpose of a commemorative name is to pay tribute to a specific person who can often only be identified by first name and family name, sometimes only by mentioning in addition a title or a function. Baker Street, e.g., is not necessarily reminding of Josephine Baker, even if the latter was intended.

Field names and other traditional microtoponyms as alternatives

A way to avoid street naming after persons, especially in new developments at the fringes of larger cities as well as in smaller towns in rural areas is to choose names after former houses/farmsteads and fields that earlier characterized the area. It is a possibility to combine place-related naming with avoiding that the former cultural landscape and their geographical names fall into oblivion. This proposal was made by the Austrian Board on Geographical Names in its "Recommendations for the naming of urban traffic areas" ([E/CONF.105/21/CRP.21](#)) and later included also into similar recommendations of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for Germany ([GEGN.2/2019/20/CRP.20](#)).

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Canada

Lire la ville à travers ses noms de lieux

Introduction

Les premières villes du monde sont apparues quelques millénaires avant notre ère. Aujourd'hui, au XXI^e siècle, c'est plus de la moitié de la population mondiale qui habite en milieu urbain.

La création des toponymes est une conséquence directe et inévitable de l'occupation humaine du territoire. Dans les villes, au-delà de l'orientation spatiale, la toponymie est le reflet de la société qui l'habite.

Représenter l'ensemble de la société

« Tous les chemins mènent à Rome ». Cette expression reflète bien les rôles centraux qu'occupent les villes dans l'aménagement et l'organisation du territoire. Depuis longtemps, il est bien connu que les centres urbains sont des lieux privilégiés d'échanges et de rencontres des cultures. Alors qu'on pourrait s'attendre à ce que la toponymie en milieu urbain reflète la constitution de l'ensemble de la société, on remarque une sous-représentation de certains groupes dans la toponymie. Parmi eux, il y a notamment les femmes, les autochtones et les personnes issues de l'immigration.

Néanmoins, depuis quelques années, on observe un changement graduel de la situation. À titre d'exemple, au Québec, le pourcentage annuel de femmes rappelées dans les nouveaux toponymes honorant une personne suit une tendance à la hausse depuis les cinq dernières années. Des initiatives locales permettent également de rappeler la contribution de membres issus des minorités culturelles (**Passerelle Ulrick-Chérubin**, à Amos). D'autres encore s'inscrivent dans le mouvement de réconciliation avec les premiers peuples (**Rue Awacak**, à Trois-Rivières).

Lieux innomés

Les villes regorgent de lieux et de microlieux susceptibles de faire l'objet d'une désignation. Espaces verts, immeubles, places commémoratives, sentiers, fontaines, escaliers et passerelles n'en sont que quelques exemples. Ces lieux jouissent d'une visibilité très enviable.

Devant tant de possibilités, est-il souhaitable d'attribuer le plus tôt possible un nom à tout ce qui peut être nommé? En s'appuyant sur la notion d'équité intergénérationnelle promue par le concept du développement durable, on peut penser, au contraire, qu'il serait sage de conserver des entités significatives à nommer par considération pour les générations futures. En effet, il est essentiel que ces dernières aient elles aussi la possibilité de nommer des lieux d'importance afin de s'approprier leur milieu et d'exprimer leur identité.

Les voies de communication

Les voies de communication sont des éléments cruciaux de l'organisation des villes. Les trames de rues sont parmi les infrastructures les plus stables dans le temps, et leur attribuer un nom est essentiel à la compréhension de l'espace urbain.

Dans plusieurs villes dont le développement est récent et rapide, notamment en Amérique du Nord, l'attribution de numéros aux voies de communication est une pratique courante. Le côté simple et fonctionnel de ce système est indéniable dans les cas de trames urbaines orthogonales. Par contre, la charge culturelle de ce genre de dénomination est minime, voire inexistante. De plus, l'ajout ou la disparition de voies dans le futur peut compromettre les avantages de ce genre de système.

L'attribution de noms faisant partie d'un thème mettant en valeur un lexique spécifique est une solution de remplacement intéressante à la numérotation des voies de communication, car cela laisse une marge de manœuvre en cas de changements dans le futur. De plus, ces systèmes thématiques offrent l'occasion de mettre en valeur un élément distinctif de l'histoire du développement de la ville. Par exemple, au Québec, les voies d'un secteur de Drummondville sont désignées par des noms en lien avec l'industrie du textile, en référence aux nombreuses manufactures de textiles qui se trouvaient autrefois dans la municipalité, qui fut un temps elle-même surnommée la « ville de la Soie ».

Toponymes témoins de notre passé

Le cadre bâti des villes n'est pas statique. Il a évolué en fonction des impératifs économiques et technologiques, ainsi que des besoins de ses habitants. De plus, beaucoup d'éléments naturels comme des cours d'eau, des champs



et des forêts ont disparu pour faciliter l'urbanisation. La toponymie est un moyen efficace de conserver les traces du passé.

Par exemple, le toponyme **Parc du Ruisseau-du-Pont-à-l'Avoine** permet, à lui seul, de rappeler plusieurs éléments d'un paysage aujourd'hui disparu. Situé au cœur de la ville de Montréal, au Québec, ce parc est aménagé à l'endroit où coulait autrefois un ruisseau dont le cours était enjambé par un pont et qui traversait des champs consacrés à la culture de l'avoine.

Au moment de l'attribution d'un nom, son origine et sa signification sont claires dans les esprits. Par contre, avec le temps, l'origine et la signification des noms, particulièrement ceux qui sont peu évocateurs, finissent souvent par s'effacer de la mémoire collective. Les citoyens des villes voient ces noms quotidiennement, mais ils sont devenus des mots vides de sens servant simplement à s'orienter dans la ville.

Afin de conserver vivante la charge culturelle de la toponymie urbaine, plusieurs actions peuvent être mises de l'avant. Par exemple, lors d'une désignation commémorative, l'attribution du nom complet de la

personne plutôt que seulement son nom de famille permet de mieux reconnaître l'identité de la personnalité honorée. L'ajout d'un court texte explicatif sous les affiches des toponymes est un bon moyen d'information. Plusieurs renseignements pertinents peuvent y être inscrits, comme une courte biographie ou une mise en contexte. Enfin, la réalisation d'un inventaire des toponymes et leur diffusion sur une plateforme numérique, comme la Banque de noms de lieux du Québec (www.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca), permet d'éviter que l'information ne se perde au fil du temps.

Conclusion

La ville est un terreau fertile pour la création de toponymes, que ce soit pour rappeler l'histoire ou rendre un hommage. Une toponymie urbaine de qualité constitue en quelque sorte la trame d'un récit à ciel ouvert qui ne cesse de s'écrire.

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Reading the City Through its Place Names

Introduction

The world's first cities appeared thousands of years ago. Now in the 21st century, more than half of the world's population lives in urban areas.

The creation of toponyms is a direct and inevitable result of the territory's human occupation. In cities, toponymy does more than simply help people to find their way. It also tells us something about the society living there.

Representing all of society

"All roads lead to Rome," as the saying goes. This accurately reflects the key roles that cities play in the territory's organization and development. It has long been known that urban centres act as hubs for trade and cultural interactions. Much as we might expect a city's toponymy to reflect the constitution of its society as a whole, we see that

some groups are noticeably under-represented. They include women, Indigenous people and immigrants.

However, a gradual change has been taking place over the last few years. In Québec, for example, the annual percentage of women who have been honoured in toponyms has been increasing steadily over the last five years. Local initiatives also help to commemorate the contribution of members of cultural minorities (**Passerelle Ulrick Chérubin** in Amos). Others spring from the movement for reconciliation with Canada's first peoples (**Rue Awacak** in Trois-Rivières).

Unnamed places

Cities abound with places and micro-places that can be designated. These include green spaces, buildings, memorial squares, paths, fountains, staircases and



boardwalks, to name but a few. These places are characterized by their high visibility.

Faced with this wealth of possibilities, we should ask ourselves if it is a good idea to name any place that can be named as soon as possible. As we consider the notion of intergenerational equity promoted through the concept of sustainable development, we may, on the contrary, come to realize that it would be wise to leave prominent locations unnamed out of consideration for future generations. It is indeed essential that they too have the possibility of naming iconic locations to take ownership of their living spaces and express their identity.

Streets

Streets are critical elements of city planning. They are among the most enduring types of infrastructure, and the names they are given are an essential component for understanding the urban streetscape.

In many cities that have come into being quickly and recently developed, particularly in North America, it is a common practice to assign numbers to the streets, and there is no denying the simple and functional aspects of this system for orthogonal urban streetscapes. However, cultural echoes are all but absent in this type of naming system. Moreover, its benefits can be compromised by the addition or disappearance of streets in the future.

One alternative is to name streets according to a theme based on a given lexicon, as it provides leeway for future changes. These thematic systems can also provide an opportunity to highlight a distinctive element of the city's historical development. For example, the streets in a part of Drummondville, Québec, were named using terminology from the textile industry, referring to the many textile manufacturers that were located in the area. In fact, the municipality itself was once known as "Silk City".

Toponyms as a window into our past

A city's built environment is not static. It evolves according to economic and technological imperatives, not to mention the needs of city residents. Many natural elements such as

waterways, fields and forests have disappeared as urbanization expanded. Toponymy is an effective way of recalling the past.

For instance, the toponym **Parc du Ruisseau-du-Pont-à-l'Avoine** brings to mind several elements of a landscape that has now disappeared. Located in the heart of Montréal, Québec, this park marks the spot where a bridge once spanned a creek that wound its way through oat fields.

The origin and meaning of a place name are clear to everyone when the name is given. As time goes by, however, the source and significance of the name often fade from the collective memory, particularly when names are not very meaningful. City residents see these names daily, but they have become empty words devoid of meaning used simply to navigate the city.

Many actions can be taken to keep the cultural aspect of urban toponymy alive. For example, using the person's full name (rather than just the family name) in a commemorative naming helps to better identify the person being honoured. Adding a short interpretive text below toponymic signs is another good way of sharing information. Many relevant details can be included, such as a short biography or contextual information. Lastly, creating a bank of place names and posting it on a digital platform, such as the Banque des noms de lieux du Québec (Database of Quebec Place Names, www.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca), helps to prevent information from being lost over time.

Conclusion

Cities provide ample opportunities to create toponyms, be it to recollect a moment in history or honour an individual. Quality urban toponymy serves as a sort of open-air narrative that is constantly in the process of being written.

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Geographical Names of Cyprus in an Urban Environment

Historical Reference

The civilization history of Cyprus, according to archaeological evidence, goes back 11000 years to the 9th millennium BC (early Neolithic Period, or Stone Age).

The island acquired its Greek character after it was settled by the Mycenaean-Achaean Greeks between the 13th and 11th century BC. In the mid-9th century BC, Phoenician settlers began to arrive, concentrating mainly in the coastal city of Kition. Subsequently, Cyprus came, in turn, under Assyrian, Egyptian and Persian domination (8th - 4th century BC).

Cyprus became part of the Roman Empire between 30 BC and 330 AD. It was then that Christianity came to Cyprus. However, it retained its Greek identity and, as part of the Hellenistic state of the Ptolemies (310-30 BC), and of the Greek-speaking world of Byzantium (330 AD-1191), its ethnic heritage was kept alive. The Greek language and culture also prevailed throughout the centuries that followed, even though Cyprus came under the rule of successive foreign powers – King Richard I (the Lionheart) of England and the Knights Templar (1191-1192), the Franks (Lusignans) (1192- 1489), Venetians (1489-1571), Ottoman Turks (1571-1878) and British (1878-1960).

Urban Centers through History

Compared with its eastern Mediterranean neighbors, the island of Cyprus is remarkable for the rather late appearance of urban centers during the Late Bronze Age [Ref. "Making the first cities on Cyprus: Urbanism and Social Change in the Late Bronze Age", Kevin D. Fisher, May 2014]. Using an approach that focuses on the role of built environments as contexts for social interaction, it is estimated that the first cities were the result of place-making by the various groups and individuals that make up an increasingly complex Late Bronze Age society.

Cities first appear in Mesopotamia by the mid-fourth millennium BC and by the early third millennium, we see the emergence of fortified urban centers, generally thought to represent city-states in the Levant and Anatolia. In Cyprus, urban centers do not appear until the Late Bronze Age. Explanations for this appearance of cities have tended to see the process as an almost natural outcome of demographic growth and politico-economic development through secondary state formation.

Across the Mediterranean, historic cities are largely defined by the preservation of their medieval and early modern past. These urban entities maintain the physical evidence of their role as economic and cultural hubs, with their layered architectural heritage being integral to the experience of their urban fabric.



Kato Pafos Archaeological Park is a blend of ancient Greek and Roman social and cultural life. The site is an ancient city inhabited since prehistoric to Middle Ages.

The socioeconomic, political, and cultural complexity of their contemporary state reveals their historical transition, the monuments of the medieval and early modern period being instrumental for their subsequent growth and development. Among these structures, fortifications constitute the largest preserved examples, frequently having become iconic attributes of civic pride and identity.

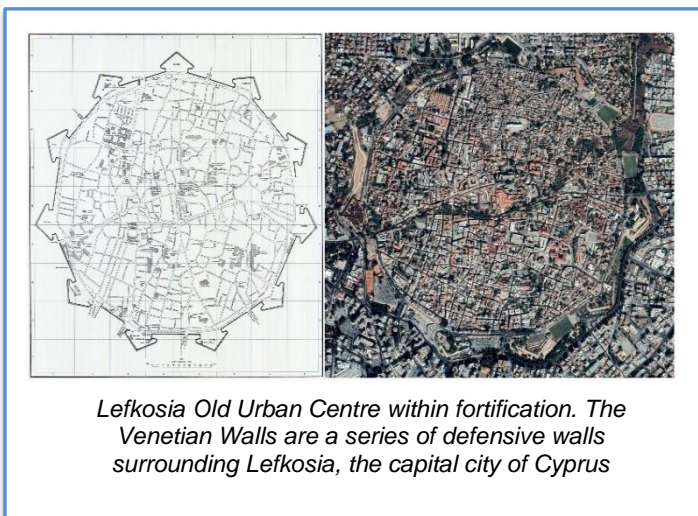
Although they have lost their protective function, their physical presence still influences the spatial experience of the city. Their preservation carries significance as a reflection of a range of spatial, social, and economic needs, as well as ideological and cultural perceptions of the past and how it affects both the present and future.

Lefkosia – The Capital City of Cyprus

In the city of Lefkosia in Cyprus, the iconic sixteenth-century walls remain the city's most recognizable monument. Their identification, as heritage worth protecting, dates from the period of British rule, which lasted from 1878 until 1960. Similar projects were pursued in other eastern Mediterranean sites, such as British-ruled Palestine and Malta, as well as in cities controlled by other colonial powers, such as the iconic example of the work of Italian architects in the city of Rhodes. In this context, the restoration of defensive works carried political and ideological implications that affected perceptions of history and narratives of national identity.

The first walls surrounding Lefkosia in the 14th century were built by the Franks and enclosed a much larger area than the 16th century Venetian Walls that still surround the old town today. When the Venetians occupied Cyprus, they decided to demolish the Frankish Walls, because they were old and did not offer adequate defense against new weapons such as artillery. The Frankish Walls were also too big to be manned by the Venetian army and too close to the hills in the east and southeast of the city [Ref. "Fortifications as Urban Heritage", Nikolas Bakirtzis, 2017].

Forming a circle, the walls built by the Venetians were fortified by eleven heart-shaped bastions and protected by an 80 meters wide moat. They were built of mud-brick, with the lower part only buttressed by stone. When the Ottomans occupied Lefkosia, they repaired the walls and covered the upper part with stones. The moat around the walls now has many different uses, serving as sports fields, public gardens, an open - air sculpture exhibition, car parks etc.



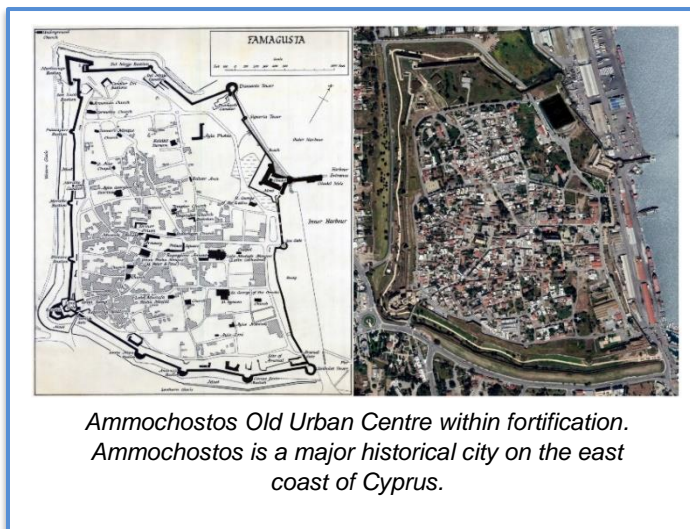
Lefkosia Old Urban Centre within fortification. The Venetian Walls are a series of defensive walls surrounding Lefkosia, the capital city of Cyprus

Ammochostos – “Hidden in the sand”

In antiquity, the town was known as Arsinoe (Greek: Αρμόχωστος Ammóchostos), after Arsinoe II of Egypt, and was mentioned by that name by Strabo. In Greek it is called Ammochostos, meaning "hidden in sand". This name developed into Famagusta (originally Famagouste in French and Famagosta in Italian). Founded in 300 BC on the old settlement of Arsinoe, Famagusta remained a small fishing village for a long period of time. Later, as a result of the gradual evacuation of Salamis, it developed into a small port.

The turning point for Ammochostos was 1192 with the onset of Lusignan rule. It was during this period that Ammochostos developed as a fully-fledged town. It increased in importance to the Eastern Mediterranean due to its natural harbour and the walls that protected its inner town. Its population began to increase. This development accelerated in the 13th century as

the town became a centre of commerce for both the East and West. The belief that people's wealth could be measured by the churches they built inspired these merchants to have churches built in varying styles. These churches, which still exist, were the reason Ammochostos came to be known as "the district of churches". The development of the town focused on the social lives of the wealthy people and was centered upon the Lusignan palace, the Cathedral, the Square and the harbour.



Ammochostos Old Urban Centre within fortification. Ammochostos is a major historical city on the east coast of Cyprus.

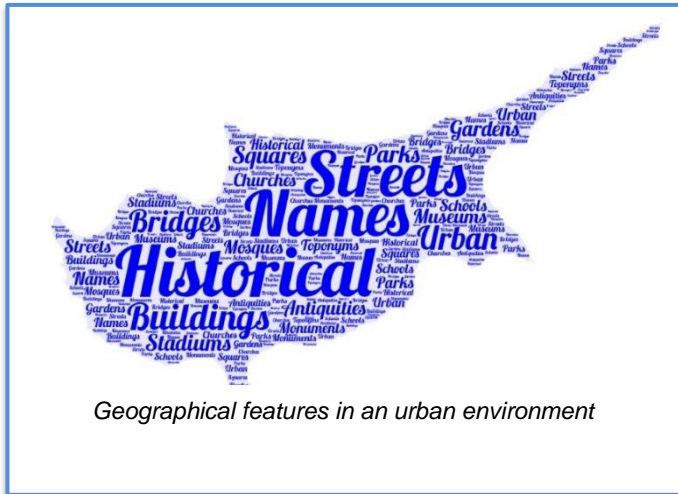
Settlement patterns in Cyprus are particularly contrasted and largely influenced by the physical configuration of the country. The population concentrates along the coast as well as in the non-mountainous inland areas around the capital Lefkosia. The rapid population decline of inner mountainous areas has contributed to the low population densities that are currently observed in these parts of the island. Population growth is concentrated around the main urban areas, as well as around tourism hotspots along the coast. This demographic polarization between coastal and inland areas occurs even within commuting distance of urban areas, which tends to show that out-migration occurs even when one can access urban labor markets, and that the perceived attractiveness of coastal areas as a living environment is a main determinant of population movements.

Urban structure

The radial structure of urban agglomerations has evolved over time without significant planning interventions, based mainly on the traditional road layout. This organization led to overcharging main arteries with commercial and other uses, and was accompanied with congestion and environmental degradation, particularly in urban centers and sensitive coastal areas [Ref. "Cyprus National Report - HABITAT III: Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development", September 2016].

The dispersion of settlement in the form of urban sprawl renders the provision of infrastructure, services and facilities unsustainable, while seriously degrading the quality of life. Despite this problem's recognition at the expert level and mainly due to pressures from organized landowners and developer lobbies, development boundaries of spatial plans for urban areas have continued to expand.

Urban geographical names in Cyprus include names of: Streets, buildings, bridges, antiquities, stadiums, squares, gardens, museums, historical names, parks, churches, localities, monuments, mosques, schools etc.



The largest cities in Cyprus are Lefkosia, Keryneia, Ammochostos, Larnaka, Lemesos and Pafos, whereas there are additionally a total of 608 communities. A complete catalogue of cities and communities is included in the following link:

http://www.geonoma.gov.cy/myfiles/archeia/diafora/typopi_iisi_onomaton_poleon_kai_chorion_tis_kyprou.pdf

A Complete Gazetteer of geographical names is included in the following link:

<http://www.geonoma.gov.cy/myfiles/ekdoseis/cygazetteer/index.html>

Urban geographical names in Cyprus reflect not only its cultural history, but they also reveal regional settlement patterns of the conquering tribes. They also reflect the net effects of several millennia of cultural succession.

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Epilogue:

Most people view place names simply as labelling conveniences to identify features on maps or public signs. Geographical names, or toponyms, however, form an integral part of the linguistic, cultural and historical character of a country or region. The study of toponymy is thus concerned with the origins and meanings of all geographical names and with the changes these names have undergone, in form, spelling and pronunciation [Ref: "An Introduction to Geographical Names and the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board", W. Gordon Handcock, 2011]. Place names form part of the vocabulary of all cultural groups and can thus reflect important aspects of the individual cultures which create and use them. Language itself is often regarded as the most central part of culture and the chief means whereby other aspects (ideas, beliefs, knowledge, and values) are learned, transmitted and preserved. Naming is a defining process in creating earth surface identity and providing a means for cultural groups to comprehend and relate to their environment. Authoritative urban names are an integral part of the history and cultural heritage of Cyprus, and thus they have to be respected and protected accordingly.

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1. *Cyprus National Report - HABITAT III: Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, September 2016.*
2. *Making the first cities on Cyprus: Urbanism and Social Change in the Late Bronze Age, Kevin D. Fisher, May 2014.*
3. *Fortifications as Urban Heritage, Nikolas Bakirtzis, 2017.*
4. *An Introduction to Geographical Names and the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board, W. Gordon Handcock, 2011.*



Geographical names in an urban environment – New Zealand

Introduction

The previous article from New Zealand in [UNGEGN Bulletin #61](#) discussed alternative Māori names for cities and major towns. Other modern examples that are shaping New Zealand's approach to formalising geographical names in an urban context are now shared in this article. While the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha has jurisdiction over the naming of entire cities, towns and suburbs, and the geographic features within them, the names of streets remain the domain of local councils. Therefore, there is an understandable variety in their appropriateness in light of good naming practice. Here we focus on suburbs and smaller urban centres.

Officially naming suburbs

A suburb is defined in the [New Zealand Geographic Board Act 2008](#) as 'an identifiable area within a local authority area, usually urban in character, with facilities such as those for education, transport, and shopping'. The Board has jurisdiction for naming suburbs under the Act, however, only 221 of 738 are official (30 percent), and of those, only 112 have defined boundaries.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand has a '[localities](#)' dataset, which is freely available and widely re-used in third party mapping products, however, it was designed for despatching appliance callouts via the quickest route. While it is generally aligned with what councils and communities recognise as their suburb names, there are differences. Therefore, there is potential for confusion and ambiguity, which could ultimately lead to loss of life. Authoritative addressing is also affected which can cause postal delivery failures. For example, half of the town of Cambridge⁴ is within the locality of Leamington.

The gap in authoritative official suburb names and their extents is one that the Board hopes to resolve within the next five years, subject to government funding and support. The process will include direct engagement and consultation with councils, mana whenua⁵ and local communities. This communication will ensure full transparency and provide the opportunity for everyone to have their say so that we arrive at informed, robust and enduring decisions. Their views and involvement are critical to the success and uptake of the final decisions.

Considerations will also include:

- Support from the Minister for Land Information who may be required to make final decisions for contentious suburb names
- Considering colonial legacies: deciding (i) whether to retain appropriate historical non-Māori names, taking account of the call for de-colonisation through the removal of inappropriate place names, (ii) whether Māori names should replace them, or (iii) whether a shared arrangement is the best solution (dual or alternative names)
- Recognising social expectations such as gender balance, inclusivity, and diversity in place naming
- Promoting the heritage and cultural connection beyond simple data collection, dissemination, and re-use
- Gazetteer enhancements to enable councils, mana whenua and local communities' direct access to make suburb (and/or locality – which are rural in nature) name proposals with pre-validation business rule checks
- Establishing a process for naming new developments⁶. Many of the large subdivisions are given appealing marketing names that don't meet good naming practice. However, their informal status comes into common use and can be difficult to change later on, for example in Queenstown: Lake Hayes Estate, Lower Shotover, Jacks Point
- Implementing an education programme about the Board's project for making suburb (and locality) names official, so that New Zealanders are fully informed and understand the Māori names, especially their meanings and derivations

Hillpark

In 2021 Hillpark, a suburb in New Zealand's largest city Auckland, was officially named. Making Hillpark official recognised its use over the last 60 years, celebrated its unique heritage and acknowledged the wishes of the community. Hillpark was first informally named for the 1961 subdivision, being derived from 'the hill', an original homestead built in 1910 and rebuilt in 1925. It also references the stands of regenerated native forest that were retained as parks. In a media release the Minister for Land Information commented that suburb names 'are important for people's sense of belonging, identity,

⁴ Cambridge is south of Hamilton city

⁵ Mana whenua means Māori jurisdiction over land or territory associated with possession and occupation of tribal land

⁶ Large subdivision responding to urban sprawl

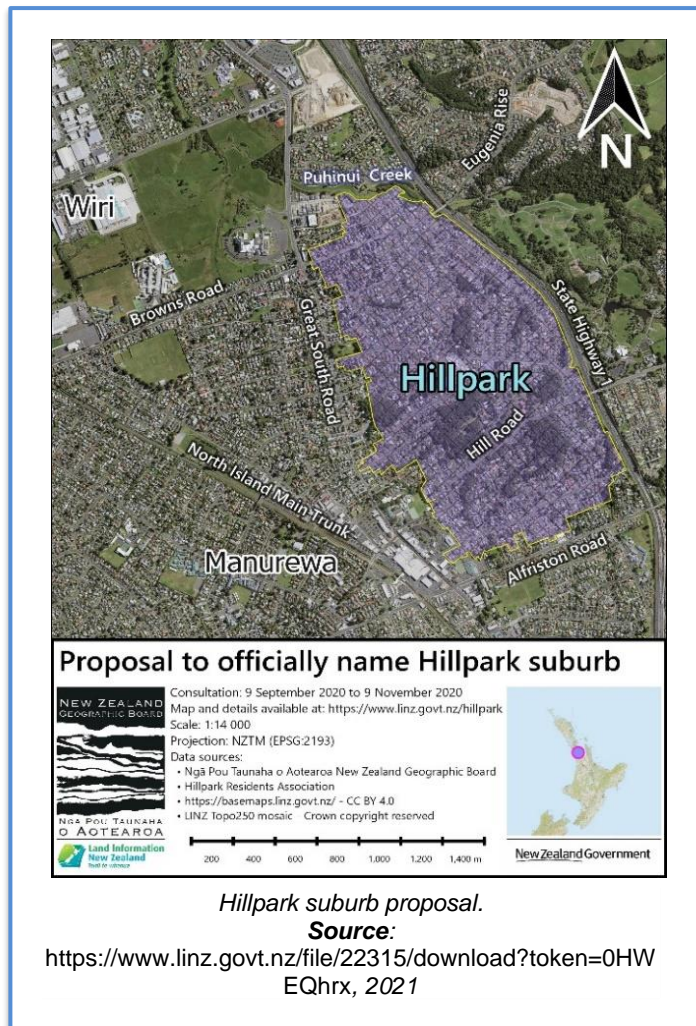
pride and ownership. They matter for practical location identification for emergency response and addressing’.

Traditional Kairangi names restored in New Zealand’s capital city

Three traditional/original Māori names were restored in 2010-11 to geographic features in Wellington:

- [Te Motu Kairangi / Miramar Peninsula](#)
The original tribe, Ngāi Tara, named the island Te Motu Kairangi – Te meaning ‘the’, Motu meaning ‘island’; and Kairangi meaning ‘esteemed or precious’. After an earthquake in 1460, the island was joined to the land and the peninsula took its modern Spanish name, Miramar – ‘behold the sea’ – in the mid-1800s.
- [Te Whetū Kairangi Ridge](#)
The ridge was the famous pā (fortified village) of Ngāi Tara. Te Whetū Kairangi was named because as the only inhabitants of the area Ngāi Tara had only the stars (whetū) in the evening sky to gaze at. It didn’t rename the suburb, Seatoun Heights, but restored the original Māori name to the ridge.
- [Te Awa Kairangi / Hutt River](#)
The Māori name means precious or esteemed river. Hutt River was named after a British MP and one-time chairman of the New Zealand Company, Sir William Hutt.

These urban geographical names demonstrate the restoration of past traditions exposing the earlier history of discovery and offering connection and identity for the Māori who gave the first layer of names to these places.



Maniaiti / Benneydale

In 2019 the small town of Benneydale was changed to a dual name Maniaiti / Benneydale⁷ to recognise the unique histories of both names. The original Māori name, Maniaiti, has been maintained through the oral tradition for the land where the town lies and the nearby hill. The name means ‘a small slide, slip’. Benneydale was established around 1940 to house workers mining coal discovered in the area. Benneydale is a combination of the surnames of the then Under-Secretary for Mines, Charlie Benney, and the Mine Superintendent at the time, Tom Dale. There was strong community support for the retention of Benneydale.



⁷ Maniaiti / Benneydale is near the centre of the North Island or Te Ika-a-Māui



Blenheim⁸

Occasionally, attempts can be mounted to rename urban places. In 2016 a brief media campaign led by winemakers sought to change the town of Blenheim’s name to ‘Marlborough City’. This idea was short-lived and never reached the stage of a formal proposal. It does, however, indicate the potential links between naming and branding, in this case it was an attempt to better highlight the international reputation of the Marlborough region’s wines (Kearns and Lewis, 2019).

Paekākā

An area in Wellington covering three inner city parks was officially named Paekākā in 2021. Wellington City Council proposed the name after mana whenua Taranaki Whānui gifted it to them. Officially naming the area provided a common reference for residents, businesses and the public. Paekākā was considered to be an appropriate name to recognise Māori heritage in the area. It had been the traditional Māori name for Pipitea Marae gardens, which were nearby but no longer exist. The name refers to the perch or realm of the native kākā, a large native parrot, and connects with the population of this species which has, through predator eradication, been restored in the area. Messaging to the public clearly informed that the new name does not change or replace the existing names of suburbs, localities and reserves within the area.

Summary

There will continue to be challenges to using standardised official geographic names in an urban environment, whether restoring traditional/original Māori names or applying contemporary names, whether Māori or non-Māori. The questions to be asked are the same for any standardised naming approach – using appropriate criteria and deciding if the feature or place actually need to be named and why, such as for practical location identification or for cultural heritage reasons.

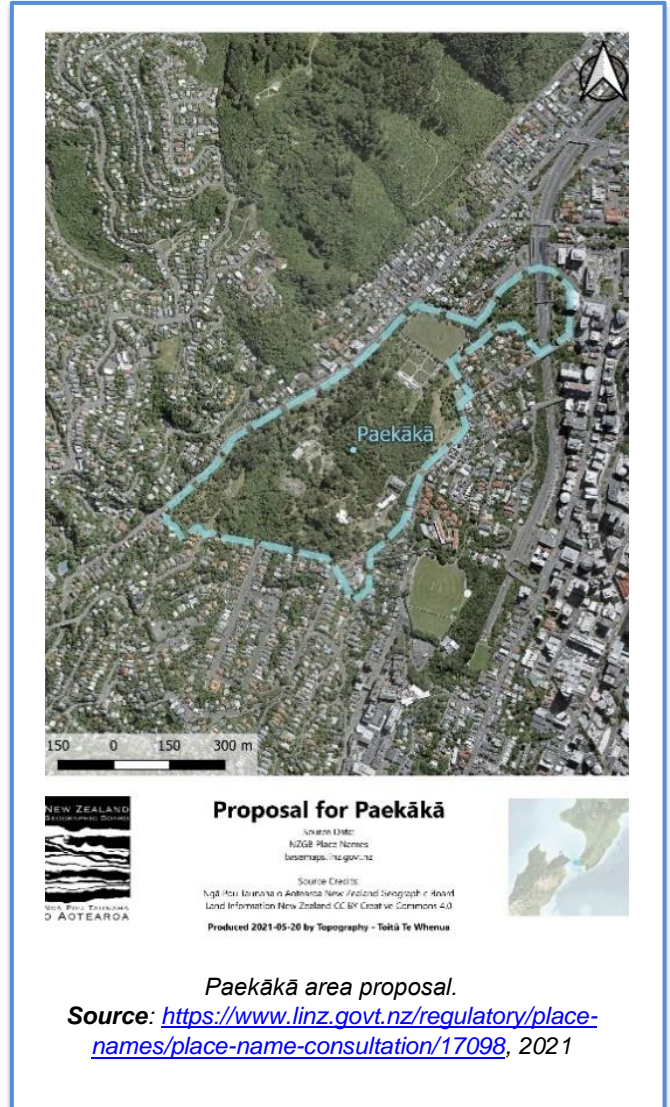
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⁸ Blenheim is a small town at the top of the South Island or Te Waipounamu



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UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work (SP&PoW) 2021-2029

The UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work is a living document intended to guide the work of the Group of Experts over the period 2021-2029. It provides a forward and focused vision, directs the prioritization of activities, allows for more effective communication within the Group of Experts and across its stakeholders, strengthens the Group's accountability, and deepens the impact of its work.



Why is the UNGEGN SP&PoW Needed

A strategic plan and programme of work were considered necessary to build on the advancements made in modernizing and making the Group of Experts operations efficient, to strengthen the Group's alignment with other expert bodies of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and support ECOSOC's work on advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The SP&PoW has been Approved

As you may be aware the SP&PoW was approved in May 2021 by the Group of Experts at its 2021/second session. Further, on 22 July 2021, the ECOSOC at its management segment meeting, approved UNGEGN's 2021 report (E/2021/69) in addition to recommendation one, the Group of Experts Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029. This means that the Group of Experts now has ECOSOC's support on the adoption and implementation of the SP&PoW 2021-2029.

Where Do I Find the SP&PoW

Users wishing to access the SP&PoW document may visit its dedicated web page at [UNSD — United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names](#). Thanks to Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand, the [SP&PoW](#) was of the Working Group Publicity and Funding.

formatted and styled to be made easy to read and user friendly. In addition, they also prepared a [two-page leaflet](#), containing only the Strategic Plan. Both documents may be downloaded from the UNGEGN website. A Portuguese version of the SP&PoW prepared by the Portuguese speaking division is also available on the website. The intention is to make the document also available in French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese. Offers to translate the document are invited and welcomed.

How Do I Contribute to the Implementation of the SP&PoW

The program of work has five strategic areas, as shown in the diagram and supporting table. The five strategies are further broken down into 18 major objectives, supported by 51 action items.



Oversight and coordination of the implementation of the SP&PoW is being done by UNGEGN vice-chairs and working group convenors. *Strategy 1- Technical expertise* is coordinated by Pier Giorgio Zaccheddu (Germany), convenor of the Working Group Geographical Names Data Management; *Strategy 2- Relationships, links and connections* is coordinated by Susan Birtles (Australia), an UNGEGN Vice-Chair; *Strategy 3 – Effective work programmes*, is coordinated by Sungjae Choo (Republic of Korea), an UNGEGN Vice-Chair and convenor of the Working Group Evaluation and Implementation; *Strategy 4 - Culture, Heritage and language recognition*, is coordinated by Annette Torenjöö (Sweden), convenor of the Working Group Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage; and *Strategy 5- Promotion and Capacity building* is coordinated by Peder Gammeltoft (Norway), convenor of the Working Group on Publicity and Funding.



Strategies	No. Objectives	Total Action Items
Technical expertise	3	10
Relationships, links and connections	3	10
Effective work programmes	4	12
Culture, heritage and language recognition	4	12
Promotion and capacity building	4	7
5	18	51

Experts wishing to support the implementation of the SP&PoW are invited to join strategic areas of their choice and participate in the process. Member States and Linguistic/Geographical Divisions are also invited to join the implementation of the SP&PoW by developing national and regional action plans respectively, and report on their progress at future UNGEKN sessions.

This and future issues of the Bulletin will have a section dedicated to sharing and providing information and updates on the implementation of the SP&PoW. Please also visit the SP&PoW webpage for updates on implementation and activities [UNSD — United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names](#).

UNGEKN Secretariat

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Launching a research project on the implementation of UNGEKN SP & PoW in the Republic of Korea

National Geographic Information Institute (NGII) of the Republic of Korea recently launched a research project on the implementation of the UNGEKN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029 at its national level. The project is composed of three steps of research;

- 1) analyzing the components of SP to find its relevance to and implications for the framework of geographical names standardization in ROK,
- 2) figuring out some connectedness of the action items listed in the PoW to those programmes or focuses, on-going or new, conducted in NGII, and

- 3) tabulating NGII's subsequent action items, actors, technical support, financing and time frames. Each action item is supposed to be linked to the Sustainable Development Goals and subject to the priority of implementation.

NGII plans to reach up to the second step within 2021 and extend its further development in the coming years.

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FROM THE DIVISIONS

Inaugural Meeting of UNGEGN Bureau and Division Chairs

On Friday 19 November 2021, an inaugural meeting of UNGEGN Bureau and Division Chairs was convened.

The meeting was the first of planned future meetings with the objective of engaging UNGEGN divisional leadership, to listen and learn of their geographical

names standardizations concerns and requirements. In addition, the meeting sought to begin the process of identifying strategies, priorities and actions relevant to addressing specific divisional organizational and operational issues, revitalization of inactive divisions and strengthening their involvement and contribution to implementing the Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029.

The meeting was attended by 25 experts, and 13 of 24 linguistic/geographical divisions were represented. UNGEGN's divisions were created to support the work of Group of Experts and serve as the bridge to Member States. The UNGEGN divisions are entrenched, and codified structures buttressed by binding instruments such as the Rules of Procedure and resolutions dating back some 50 years.

Pierre Jaillard, France, chair of UNGEGN led the meeting. He gave opening remarks and set the tone of the meeting. The director of UNSD delivered welcome and opening remarks which addressed, the reformulation of The Group of Experts, the historical importance of the role and work of Divisions and encouraged their contribution to the implementation of the Group of Experts Strategic Plan and Programme of Work. Best practices and challenges were shared by the chairs of the Asia South East, Norden and Romano-Hellenic Divisions. This was followed by open discussions from which recommendations to address challenges were identified. The following chart shows the challenges and recommendations



Challenges/Issues	Recommendations
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of members and maintenance of their contacts, 2. Exchange of good practices on geographical names standardization 3. Increase the participation of divisional members, 4. Regulations to govern divisional operations 5. Research and partnership with Universities 6. Management and maintenance of Divisional websites 7. Transition and handover of leadership challenges 8. Strategies to reactive divisions 9. Uniform implementation framework 10. Review UNGEGN publications 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact national mapping agencies in countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek assistance of the UNGEGN Secretariat 5. Increase cooperation with universities – 6. Seek Secretariat support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG Data management – use of WIKI – provide help to Divisions in creating wiki pages. important to have identified those responsible for the maintenance of the web, so that they share the information and publish it on the sites of the divisions. Content should remain on the UNGEGN website rather than separate websites. This would ensure a standardized look and feel and help each Division to address main topics of interest. 10. Dutch & German Division will help with revision of UNGEGN publications

The next meeting of the groups is to be held in the first quarter of 2022. UNGEGN Divisional webpages <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/divisions/>

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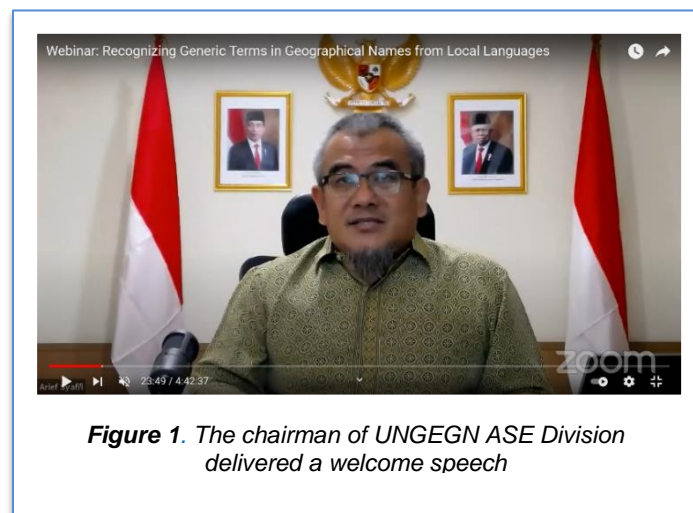
Asia South-East Division

Webinar “Recognizing Generic Terms in Geographical Names from Local Languages”

The Geospatial Information Agency of Indonesia (*Badan Informasi Geospasial - BIG*), as the current Secretariat of UNGEGN ASE Division, organized a webinar on the topic of “Recognizing Generic Terms in Geographical Names from Local Languages” on 30 August 2021. The webinar took place as a virtual event and was subsequently published on BIG’s social media platform. The event drew massive attention with more than 300 attendees and a further 600 views on BIG’s YouTube channel.

The webinar was a realization of the resolutions that were agreed upon at the UNGEGN ASE Division’s 8th divisional meeting in 2020. The objective of this event was to share knowledge about the relation between toponymy and language, the distribution of local languages in ASE Division member countries, and the role of geospatial information in preserving local languages. The webinar was aimed at toponymy experts, governments, academics and was open to all individuals that have interests in toponymy from around the globe.

Mr. Mohamad Arief Syafi’i, as the Chairman of UNGEGN Asia South East Division, opened the webinar and delivered a welcome address (**Figure 1**). The webinar was moderated by Mr. Ade Komara Mulyana, the Head of the Center for Topographic Mapping and Toponym from the Geospatial Information Agency.



Four renowned speakers: Mr. Ferjan Ormeling, Mrs. Multamia RMT Lauder, Mr. Meliton B. Juanico, and Mr. Muh Aris Marfai were invited to the webinar (**Figure 2 & Figure 3**).

Ferjan Ormeling

Mr. Ferjan Ormeling, the toponym expert of the Netherlands delivered the topic of “Toponymy and Language”. At the beginning of the presentation, he said that “we work together in UNGEGN because we want to standardize geographical names, and the principle behind the international standardization is, we do not only standardize our own geographical names but also accept geographical names standardized by other countries”. He then explained that geographical names are cultural heritage, as they reflect on the language, culture, traditions, and sensibilities of the communities that coined them. He also mentioned the effect of national standardization on toponyms, all citizens of the country will know how to refer unambiguously to spatial objects within their country, how to spell them in the nominative case, pronounce them as correctly as possible, and know what kind of objects they are, how to abbreviate, hyphenate, and use capital letters so that they can correctly locate these objects and use their names as links to which attribute data can be added. He added, protecting names in local languages will lead to parallel namespaces and it is unavoidable. We just have to indicate which name is appropriate to reconcile the protection of local languages. As a consequence, national standardization will necessitate the development of rules for the validity and status of these parallel namespaces.

Multamia RMT Lauder

Mrs. Multamia RMT Lauder, the toponym expert from Indonesia, emphasized the importance of basic information about local language generic terms in identifying and naming geographical features in Indonesia. She also mentioned that language maps can be beneficial in locating generic terms from various local languages, allowing us to have accurate information on how to write and pronounce place names correctly. At the end of her presentation, Mrs. Multamia suggested that we need basic knowledge of geographical linguistics, local history, and a working knowledge of toponymy. Furthermore, Indonesia has 718 local languages, which means there are 718 lists of generic elements, so further coordination on the use of duplicate generics is required

because Indonesian and local languages are used concurrently.



Figure 2. Mr. Ferjan, Mrs. Multamia, and Mr. Ade Komara (Moderator) in QnA session

Meliton B. Juanico

Mr. Meliton B. Juanico, the professional lecturer from the Philippines, gave a presentation on local languages and toponyms in the Philippines. The Philippines, like Indonesia, is a multicultural country with 175 languages, some of which are in Austronesian, as are Indonesian languages like Javanese and Balinese. He explained that toponyms in the Philippines have been strongly influenced by the Spanish colonization era, so the full form of Filipino toponyms contains a combination of Spanish components as well as components mostly in Filipino and to a lesser extent in English. The Spanish components in Philippine toponymy are represented in macro (national) and micro (city and town) toponyms, reflecting the pervasive interaction of Spanish colonizers with the numerous ethnic groups of the Philippine archipelago at the level of onomastic vocabulary. In addition, he added, the Philippines exhibits the same tendency, namely the problem of naming places not following toponymic rules. The Philippines has yet to seriously examine its place name system, including the rampant whimsical practice of changing historic names of streets and structures and replacing them with names of local politicians.

Muh Aris Marfai

Mr. Muh Aris Marfai, the Head of BIG gave a presentation on geospatial information and geographical names standardization in Indonesia. He said that the task of geographical name digitalization in Indonesia has come a long way since the establishment of the National Toponymy Standing Committee in 1993 until the role of geographical names standardization was shifted to BIG in 2016 and the enactment of Government Regulation Number 2 of 2021 on Standardization of Geographical Names. The regulation encourages a collaborative environment in which BIG, ministries/agencies, local governments, citizens, and

communities can work together to implement geographical names standardization. The implementation of the standardization is done by using an information system called *Sistem Informasi Nama Rupabumi* (SINAR) as the main platform. Through toponymic pronunciation that is stored in Gazetteer of the Republic of Indonesia, BIG preserves local languages by recording locally spoken geographical names and collecting pronunciation of geographical names. The national gazetteer is accessible to the public through SINAR website (sinar.big.go.id/). Furthermore, BIG played a certain role in thematic research on toponymy that was conducted by the Ministry of Education and Culture to add and complete the language protection model.



Figure 3. Mr. Meliton, Mr. Aris, and Mr. Ade Komara (Moderator) in QnA session

The webinar successfully fulfilled one of the UNGEGN ASE Division initiatives to share important knowledge on the local language in the region. The webinar also serves as an initial step towards completing the information on the Map of Estimated Distribution Language that was already stated in the resolution of the Asia South East Division. Webinar recording link: https://youtu.be/3s404K_vwhY

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The 9th Divisional Meeting of the UNGEGN Asia South-East Division

The UNGEGN Asia South-East Division (ASE Division) convened the 9th Divisional Meeting on November 24, 2021. The meeting was organized by the Geospatial Information Agency of Indonesia (or BIG) as the Secretariat of the division. A total of 50 delegates from Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, and Viet Nam participated in this meeting (Figure 1).

The 9th Divisional Meeting provided a forum for ASE Division Member Countries to learn and share the best practices and experiences of each national activity on geographical names standardization. It also delivered new insights for geographical names administration.

In the beginning, the chair of the UNGEGN ASE Division, Mohamad Arief Syafii, conveyed the activities carried out by the division in 2021. Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, no international training courses and formal meetings under the auspice of the UNGEGN ASE Division



Figure 1. The Architecture of the Development of the Collaborative Platform

were conducted. However, on 30 August 2021, the Secretariat organized a webinar with the theme “Recognizing Generic Terms in Geographical Names from Local Languages” in a virtual format.

Furthermore, the chair conveyed that the Secretariat has been developing a collaborative platform since 2020 to support regional data sharing in updating and maintaining

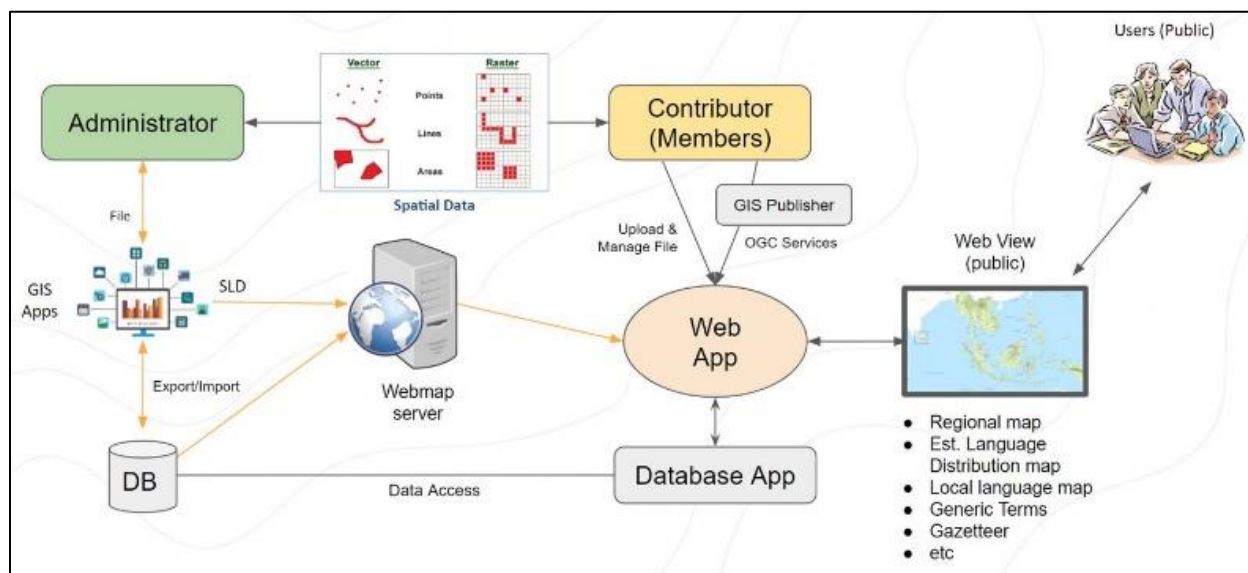


Figure 2. The Architecture of the Development of the Collaborative Platform



the regional map and gazetteer, as well as displaying generic terms from member countries. Through this platform, all ASE Division Member Countries can actively contribute by adding and modifying data from various data types. The architecture of the development of the collaborative platform can be seen in **Figure 2**. This platform will replace the previous ASE website and can be accessed through <http://asedivision-ungegn.org>

In addition, the chair reported that a representative of the UNGE GN ASE Division attended the Inaugural Meeting of the UNGE GN Bureau and Division Chairs on 19 November 2021. The ASE Division was selected to give a presentation because of the division's good record of operations and strong support of UNGE GN's work. The meeting objectives were to engage divisional leadership, listen and learn of geographical names standardizations concerns, and inquiries.

The next agenda was presentations of country reports by member countries. The major items addressed during the meeting were the adoption of the UNGE GN ASE Division Work Plan 2019-2022, practices and norms of geographical names standardization, romanization systems, toponym education, research, involvements in UNGE GN, and future activities that are planned by each member country. The remaining time also enabled delegates to make comments and opinions, which resulted in rich exchanges and a better understanding of each other.

Resolutions

The meeting adopted five resolutions, as follows:

1. appreciation towards activities carried out by the ASE Division Member Countries in 2021;
2. convene the International Training on Toponymy in 2022, subject to the situation of the COVID-19 outbreak;
3. the ASE Division Secretariat facilitates the contribution of ASE Division Member Countries in the division website through a collaborative platform concept;

4. all ASE Division Member Countries shall submit the updated regional map, gazetteer, and generic term through the collaborative platform; and
5. all ASE Division Member Countries are requested to nominate the candidate for the next UNGE GN ASE Division Chairmanship.

Who's Next?

Indonesia's chairmanship period shall be for a period of four years, from April 2018 to April 2022. The 2022/10th Divisional Meeting of the UNGE GN ASE Division will be the last divisional meeting hosted by Indonesia. Therefore, Indonesia requested UNGE GN ASE Division member countries to take over the chairmanship for the next period.

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Portuguese-Speaking Division

Report on the Activities of the Portuguese-Speaking Division, 2007 - 2021

The Portuguese-speaking Division was created in August 2007, during the 24th Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. The (potential) Member Countries of the Division are Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and Timor-Leste, the nine Portuguese-speaking countries in the world.

The following countries attended the inaugural division meeting of the Division, and represented by their delegates as listed below:

- Mozambique (represented by Zinia Gabriela Lopes Menete Mabote);
- Brasil (represented by Moema José de Carvalho Augusto);
- Cabo Verde (represented by José António Andrade);
- Angola (represented by João de Deus Andrade Delgado and Pedro Gomes).

Mozambique was appointed Chair and Brazil Vice-Chair, with Angola as Secretary, for a 5-year term.

The initial goals of the Portuguese-speaking Division were established in this meeting, as follow:

- Create a website for the Division (to be completed by Brazil by June 2008);
- Exchange information concerning the legislation on geographical names, toponymy, administrative division and other related subjects of each country;
- Compile and exchange information on the structures and ongoing work in each country related to geographical names and toponymy among Member Countries of the Portuguese-speaking Division and with the UNGEGN, by the Division Chair;
- Prepare a list of exonyms for each country (to be completed by March 2008);
- Prepare a glossary of terms related to geographical names in Portuguese (to be completed by Brazil by March 2008);
- Translate into Portuguese the UNGEGN glossary of toponymic terminology (to be completed by Brazil by March 2008);
- Exchange information on the criteria for the classification of urban and rural zones (population centers);

- Compile a list of generic terms and abbreviations that appear in topographic maps of each country and disseminate it among Member States, for study and subsequent standardization;
- Exchange electronic addresses of institutions and technicians involved in the matter of geographical names and toponymy;
- Periodical cooperation and interchange of experiences;
- Establish more goals to be achieved by the Division, other than these already listed.

Also in this meeting, it was established that each Member State was individually in charge of:

- Visiting the UNGEGN website to take note of the updated version of the volume "Statutes, Laws, Procedures and Resolutions of Geographical Names";
- Preparing a list of other goals to be achieved by the Division and send it to the Chair for compilation and dissemination (until October 2007);
- Preparing the country's geographical names database;
- Sending the Chair the following information:
- Information concerning the legislation on geographical names, toponymy, administrative division and other related subjects;
- Description of the structures and ongoing work in each country related to geographical names and toponymy;
- The criteria for the classification of urban and rural zones (population centers);
- The list of the exonyms of their country;
- The list of the generic terms and abbreviations that appear in the country's topographic maps;
- The list of the electronic addresses of institutions and technicians involved in the matter of geographical names and toponymy.

The second meeting of the Portuguese-speaking Division took place during the *Primeiro Seminário em Nomes Geográficos da Comunidade de Países da Língua Portuguesa - CPLP* (First Seminar on Geographical Names of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries - CPLP). On this occasion, the chairmanship of the Portuguese-speaking Division had been transferred to Mr. Elias Mucombo, from Mozambique, in substitution for Ms. Zinia Mabote Menete.

Seven of the Member States attended the meeting and the ask that had been agreed on in the first meeting were



presented to the countries which did not attend this previous meeting.

Brazil presented the Portuguese-speaking Division website and the Member States were asked to submit the information necessary to complete it, which was intended to be the repository of and the vehicle for the dissemination of information from each country on geographical names, translations of documents and reference publications of UNGEGN, as well for the contact information of the Member States, among other functions.

Besides the already established goals, the following were set in this second meeting:

- Send information on toponymic changes to UNGEGN and disseminate this information;
- The publication and subsequent update of guidelines for the use of geographical names in cartographic products, including specific information such as the situation of the geographical names in the countries' official languages, rules of pronunciation and national names authorities.

After this second meeting, the contacts among the countries practically ceased. From 2010 to 2011, Brazil made several failed attempts to contact the other Member States, either by phone or email, in order to proceed with the work within the Portuguese-speaking Division. Only two attempts were successful during this period: in 2010, Cabo Verde and Portugal were contacted and Portugal sent some of the information agreed on the first divisional meeting to populate the Division's website. Cabo Verde stated having sent the information requested, however it never reached the IBGE.

From 2011 to 2016 there were no contact among Member States.

In 2015, during the International Cartographic Conference (ICC 2015), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil proposed to the then Coordinator of the Working Group on Toponymy Training Courses, Dr. Ferjan Ormeling, to carry out an international toponymy course, aiming at becoming a training hub in geographical names for the countries of the Latin America and the Portuguese-speaking Division, in an attempt to reactivate the latter.

On his occasion, 4 Member States responded to the IBGE's invitation to participate in the training course. Thus, *The UNGEGN and IBGE International Course on Toponymy* was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 15 to 19 May 2017. Co-organized by the IBGE and UNGEGN, the course was taught by three UNGEGN instructors and 6 IBGE instructors and was attended by 32 participants, 5

of which were representatives of government institutions from DPLP Member Countries, other than Brazil, namely: Mozambique, Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe and Portugal. On that occasion, a meeting was organized with participants from the Member States of the Portuguese-speaking Division, who would take to their countries the proposal to reactivate the Division.

This was a fruitful attempt, which brought Brazil and Mozambique closer together. In 2018, three toponymists from the Institute of Geographical Names of Mozambique - INGEMO - IP participated in the IBGE's Geographical Names Standardization Course and in a two-day workshop at that institution.

In relation to other countries, however, communication ceased again.

In 2021, after the 2nd Session of the UNGEGN, the IBGE requested assistance from the UNGEGN Secretariat in obtaining contacts from the Portuguese-speaking Division potential Member Countries, in order to try to reactivate the Division one more time. So far, we have been able to receive a response from Sao Tome and Principe, which will be contacted shortly.

In view of this, the IBGE invited the INGEMO - IP for a videoconference, in order to discuss the future of the Portuguese-speaking Division, which was inactive and without leaders, since the representative of Mozambique had left the INGEMO - IP and the representative of Brazil had retired. Furthermore, only two of the objectives established at the first meeting were achieved, namely, the translation into Portuguese of the Glossary of Terms for the Standardization of Geographical Names and the creation of the website. However, due to the low interest of the Member States, the website of the Portuguese-speaking Division is outdated and with very little content.

The above-mentioned videoconference was held on July 27, 2021, attended by the following representatives of the institutions:

For the INGEMO - IP - José Mahumane (Director), Juvenália Mendiante (Assistant Director), Ambrósio Mafumo (Toponymist/Historian) and Aníbal Tiane (Toponymist /Historian)

For the IBGE - Míriam Barbuda (Assistant Director of Directorate of Geosciences), Leila Oliveira (General Manager of Cartography), Beatriz Pinto (Manager of the Geographical Names Department) and Ana Cristina Resende (Assistant Manager of the Geographical Names Department).



After the IBGE exposed the current situation of the DPLP, INGEMO - IP, under a new and recent administration, stated they had gone through great difficulties and had been very little active for a period of time and that they were now, with the new Directors, a resuming their activities, albeit with a staff deficit. However, despite the problems reported, the institution was receptive to the proposal to reactivate the Portuguese-speaking Division and decided to give their decision, in a new meeting, on continuing as Chair, assisted by the IBGE, which would remain as Vice-Chair.

On August 19, 2021, a second videoconference was held, with the same participants as the previous one, with the addition of IBGE's Coordinator of Cartography and Geodesy, Marcelo Maranhão.

The INGEMO - IP accepted the proposal to remain as Chair, which is very auspicious, since the institution is the national authority on geographical names of Mozambique. It should be noted that Brazil does not have a national authority yet and that the IBGE is not an institution dedicated only to working with geographical names.

Thus, the following initial tasks for the reactivation of the Portuguese-speaking Division were established:

- 1) Initiate contacts with other Portuguese-speaking countries, with INGEMO - IP being responsible for contacting the African countries, namely: Angola, Sao Tome and Príncipe, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea and Guinea-Bissau and IBGE with the task of contacting Timor-Leste and Portugal.
 - Deadline: November 2021
 - Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE
- 2) Share the names of the representatives of the two countries and send them to the UNGEGN Secretariat, together with a brief report on the new status of the Portuguese-speaking Division.
 - Deadline: September 3rd
 - Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE
- 3) Jointly prepare the report on the current status of the DPLP for submission to the UNGEGN Secretariat.
 - Deadline: September 15th.
 - Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE

- 4) Submit the report on the current status of the Division to the UNGEGN Secretariat, summarizing the decisions taken at the two meetings.
 - Deadline: September 15th
 - Responsible: INGEMO – IP
- 5) Hold Divisional meetings on a quarterly basis.
 - Next: November 2021.
 - Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE
- 6) Indicate focal points of institutions.
 - Deadline: August 19th (Fulfilled). Nominees: Aníbal Tiane and Ambrósio Mafumo for INGEMO - IP and Ana Cristina Resende for IBGE
 - Responsible: INGEMO - IP/IBGE
- 7) Reactivate the DPLP website (web page).
 - Deadline: February 2022
 - Responsible: IBGE
- 8) Send IBGE the necessary information to update the DPLP website (web page).
 - Deadline: As soon as there is material
 - Responsible: INGEMO – IP

In fulfilment of the tasks above listed, this report was prepared, contacts with the Portuguese-speaking countries are ongoing and the following state officials were appointed as representatives of the two countries in the Portuguese-speaking Division:

- José Jorge Mahumane, Director General of INGEMO - IP, for Mozambique;
- Ana Cristina Resende, Assistant Manager of the Geographical Names Department/IBGE, for Brazil.

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Romano-Hellenic Division

UNGE GN - Romano-Hellenic Division – 3rd International Scientific Symposium

Permanence, transformation, substitution and oblivion of geographical names
Napoli [Naples] – Italia, 22nd - 24th September 2021

The Romano-Hellenic Division (RHD) of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGE GN) held its third International Scientific Symposium, this time on “Permanence, transformation, substitution and oblivion of geographical names” hosted in Napoli [Naples], Italia, at Castel dell’Ovo, from 22nd to 24th September 2021.



Napoli [Naples]. Some of the participants in the symposium by remote access and in person.

The event was organized with close cooperation between the Italian Geographic Military Institute (IGMI) and the Regional Council of Campania – Directorate General for the Government of the Territory, and under the auspices of the National Library of Napoli, State Archives of Napoli, Italian Association of Geographers, Italian Association of Geography Teachers, Italian Cartographic Association, Italian Centre for Historical and Geographical Studies, Italian Geographical Society, Society of Geographical Studies (Italia), and Italian Alpine Club - Section of Napoli.

Due to the restrictions produced by the COVID-19 pandemic the meeting was held in mixed mode with participation in person and by remote access of some members of UNGE GN, geographers, historians, linguists, planners and cartographers from Canada, Colombia, France, Iran, Italia, Kipros, Mexico, Moldova, Romania, United Kingdom.

This year the International Scientific Symposium of UNGE GN-RHD was characterized by two side events in addition to the sessions foreseen for the presentations of the participants. The first one was a special session held before the opening session of the symposium and the second was the

cartographic exhibition titled “Naples, land and sea, from ancient to contemporary toponymy”, prepared by Andrea Cantile (Romano-Hellenic Division - Italia), and Arturo Gallia (University of Roma Tre - Italia).

The special session was reserved for Italian municipal technicians responsible for local toponymy and was focused on “Collection and treatment of geographical names: Italian rules and best practices”. It was conducted in Italian by the Chair of the Romano-Hellenic Division with the participation of architects, engineers, geologists, computer scientists, geographers and cartographers involved with local geographical names.

The cartographic exhibition was composed of historical maps from the Archives of the IGMI, the National Library of Napoli “Vittorio Emanuele III” and the State Archives of Napoli and was launched at the end of the opening ceremony of the symposium. During the coming months the exhibition will be rearranged for display in various regional locations, starting with the islands of the Neapolitan archipelago (Procida, Ischia and Capri) and continuing in the provincial capital cities of Campania thanks to the assistance and diligence of the Italian Alpine Club - Section of Napoli, in close cooperation with IGMI.

The opening session of the symposium was chaired by Dr. Ferdinando Rodriguez, Director of the Campania Region’s Geographic Information System (Italia), and was characterized by speeches of greetings by national and regional authorities.

The introductory presentations of the 3rd International Scientific Symposium of UNGE GN-RHD were made by Andrea Cantile as Chair of UNGE GN’s Romano-Hellenic Division (Italia), Helen Kerfoot as Honorary Chair of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (Canada), and Pierre Jaillard as Chair of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (France).

The first presentation, by Andrea Cantile, focused on the permanence, transformation, substitution and oblivion of geographical names, highlighted the reasons for the choice of this theme as title of the symposium, presenting some Italian toponyms as significant examples of the dynamics in toponymy. The second presentation, by Helen Kerfoot, gave a brief statement of the main points of UNGE GN’s activities from its beginning to the recent transformation, and the third, by



Pierre Jaillard, summarized the present and the future activities of the new UNGEGN.

The second session of the symposium was chaired by Domenico Proietti, University of Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli" (Italia). During this session the following presentations were made:

- *The relevance of place names as an intangible heritage*, by Cosimo Palagiano, Sapienza University of Roma, Accademia dei Lincei, Co-Chair of IGU-ICA Joint Commission on Toponymy (Italia);
- *State of the art in the IGMI and Veneto Region joint toponymic database project*, by Umberto Trivelloni, Dario Brentan and Alessandro Amoroso, Veneto Region (Italia);
- *Mapping place names in time and space: an approach for toponyms collection and analysis using historical cartography and GIS. A case study in Trentino (XIX-XXI century)*, by Elena Dai Prà, Nicola Gabellieri and Nicola Scanu, University of Trento (Italia);
- *'A passi andanti', along the River Po: cartographic and toponymic heritage (XVI-XX century)*, by Lucia Masotti, University of Verona (Italia);
- *Island place names and historical cartography. Italian small islands in the Modern Age*, by Arturo Gallia, University of Roma Tre (Italia);
- *Anti-mafia toponyms and odonyms in Italy: commemorative policies, contradictions and spatial effects*, by Giuseppe Muti, University of Insubria, and Stefano Salvucci, ISTAT (Italia);
- *A matter of springs: Storga's eternal genius loci, from the Venetian dominion to nowadays*, by Arianna Lorenzon, Ca' Foscari University of Venezia (Italia);
- *Keltai, Keltai and Galatians: a complex Celtic World in the ancient Greek sources*, by Marco Martin, Geography and Historiography in Antiquity (Italia);
- *Gela sive Philosophianis: two place names for a mansio, or a mansio for two places?* by Marco Sfacteria, University of Messina (Italia).

The third session was chaired by Peter Jordan, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Co-Chair of IGU-ICA Joint Commission on Toponymy (Austria). During this session the following presentations were given:

- *Letters from Postmasters 1905-06: providing some insight into naming Canada's communities*, by Helen Kerfoot, Honorary Chair of UNGEGN (Canada);
- *Microtoponyms as a part of the cultural heritage and a challenge for standardization*, by Peter Jordan, Austrian Academy of Sciences (Austria);
- *Indigenous toponymy in official mapping: from standardization toward reconciliation in Québec*, by Yaïves Ferland, Université Laval (Canada);

- *City-related affixes in naming patterns of Asian countries*, by Manadana Kolahdouz Mohammadi, Payame Noor University (Iran);
- *Toponymy, a powerful tool for orientation and location, but a formidable pharmakon*, by Carol J. Léonard, University of Alberta (Canada);
- *Angry river goddesses speak: river names, memory and national identity in Tess Onwueme's "Then she said it!"* by Ayokunmi Oladele Ojebode, University of Nottingham (United Kingdom).

The fourth session was chaired by by Cosimo Palagiano, Sapienza University of Roma, Accademia dei Lincei, and Co-Chair of IGU-ICA Joint Commission on Toponymy (Italia). During this session the following presentations were made:

- *Toponymy and "longue durée": Terra di Lavoro from late antiquity to the present day*, by Domenico Proietti, University of Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli" (Italia);
- *Continuity and novelty in the toponyms of the Terra di Lavoro territories from 1860 to today*, by Simonetta Conti, University of Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli" (Italia);
- *A short history of Napoli through the affirmation of its toponym in historical cartography*, by Silvia Siniscalchi, University of Salerno (Italia);
- *Leonardo's toponymy for the reconstruction of the historical landscape of Tuscany in the 16th century*, by Lucrezia Iacuzzi and Martina Simeone, Landscape studies (Italia);
- *Invented toponymy for invented lands. Placenames and reclamation in the Emilia-Romagna Sector of the Po River Delta (Northern Italy), 1920s-1960s*, by Stefano Piastra, University of Bologna (Italia);
- *Mapping the Walser toponymy in the western Italian Alps. State of the art and project proposals*, by Guido Lucarno, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart – Milano (Italia);
- *Rewriting the territory. The use of toponymy in the dynamics of dominion, the Italian experience*, by Andrea Masturzo, Italian colonial studies (Italia).

The traditional souvenir photo of the participants was taken by joining the participants in person at the closing session of the symposium to some of the participants with remote access to remember the difficult organization of the event, which ended with everyone's appreciation.

As usual, the proceedings of the symposium will be published by IGMI and should be available next year.

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FROM THE COUNTRIES

Historical dimension of geographical names in Suriname and Influence of equivalent international multilingualism visibility

This report addresses the historical origins of geographical names in Suriname related to the colonial history and the origin of ethnic groups from the European, African and Asian continent who contributed to the multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic and multi-cultural society of Suriname. The origins of geographical names in Suriname goes back to the English and Dutch colonization in the period 1667–1975 which paved the way for a multi-ethnic society, the unlocking of the Interior, the scientific expeditions and geomorphological exploration of the country. Most of the ethnic groups: the indigenous tribes (native Amerindians), other tribes (descendants of African slaves) Marroon diaspora, the European diaspora (Dutch descendants), Javane's diaspora (descendant Indonesia) and Hindostani diaspora (descendants of India) identify themselves with the Surinamese toponymy territory. Identification is also evident through historical (discovery and expeditions), symbols, remembrance, geographical names and tangible (culture) objects on the map of Suriname.

The greatest contribution of these ethnic groups is the preservation of cultural values, norms and traditions, by mental programming of the seed to the multi-ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic diversity of Suriname. The dialects of the ethno linguistic culture groups have over time survived in regions, because they are hardly isolated and protected. They have exercised their influence in geographical names.

Geographical names have an important function in the daily lives of Suriname. People interact with other people, places, and things almost every day of their lives. They travel from one place to another; they communicate with each other; and they rely upon products, information, and ideas that come from beyond their immediate environment. Places are the basis in spatial interaction, education,

guidance of tourists, logistic services, transport and trade. For individuals, businesses, institutes and students toponymy knowledge is important in spatial orientation and spatial interaction. Toponymy is concerned with the linguistic evolution (etymology) or geographical names and the motive behind the historical and geographical aspects of naming of the place. Most toponymic studies, however, have concentrated on the etymological study of habitation names, often neglecting the study of feature names and the motive behind the naming of the place.

Toponymy also involves the study of geographical names within and between languages. Studies within a language usually follow three basic assumptions: every geographical name has a meaning, including geographical names derived from personal names; geographical names describe the site and record some evidence of human occupation or ownership; Once a geographical name is established or recorded, its phonetic development will parallel the language's development.

This report shall examine the origin of some of these geographical names in Suriname in the context of ethnonyms:

- 1) hydronym
- 2) oronym
- 3) or antroponyms
- 4) and the origin of equivalent geographical names (in Suriname) and on other continents, with the intention not be complete all places in this analysis.

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Overview of Geographical Name Standardization in Zambia

Zambia is made up of 73 ethnic languages and dialects which are clustered around seven national languages namely, Bemba, Kaonde, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Nyanja and Tonga. Zambian Sign Language was recently added to the list as the eighth national language. English, a legacy of British colonisation, is the official language. This diverse linguistic heritage is also visible in geographical names.

Administration of geographical names in Zambia is decentralised in city/town councils. Administratively, the 752 618 square kilometres country of about 18 million inhabitants is divided into ten provinces and 116 towns, 156 constituencies and 1626 wards. The ward councillors discharge local government functions in the lowest unit – the ward. These elected officials work together with their respective mayors (for large or medium size cities/towns) or council chairpersons (for small towns). Of these towns, six have attained city status. Each city or town council has its own method of geographical name administration. There is no national geographical name authority in Zambia; city/town councils take charge.

In 1946, the British Army compiled the first Northern Rhodesian geographical names gazetteer (included in the East Africa Index Gazetteer). This was followed by the 1956, 1972 and 1983 gazetteers published by the US Army and US Department of Interior – the first one for Northern Rhodesia, and the last two for independent Zambia. Then, the Northern Rhodesian (Federal) and Zambian governments published the 1959 and 1966 gazetteers, respectively. The information contained in these gazetteers included geographical names and their coordinates. These data were both for major toponyms such as lakes, rivers, towns, other populated places and neighbourhoods, and for microtoponyms such as roads, mountains, buildings, and other landmarks.

The 1966 Gazetteer of Geographical Names in the Republic of Zambia by the Ministry of Lands and Mines contains 35,000 names. In the 1990s, the government of Zambia planned to increase the number of entries/names in the national gazetteer to 45,000; but these plans were impeded by lack of funds.

As in other postcolonial states, Zambia's process of national rebranding started at independence with name change from Northern Rhodesia. Further, the names of many districts were localised. These included *Abercorn* (now *Mbala*), *Bancroft* (*Chingola*), *Feira* (*Luangwa*), *Fort Jameson* (*Chipata*) and *Fort Rosebury* (*Mansa*). Other public places included *Johnston Falls* (*Mumbuluma Falls*).

Other places have still remained unchanged, such as *Livingstone*, *Rhodes Park*, *Stephenson Road*, *Victoria Falls*, to name but a few.

Moreover, the Lusaka Street map book (popular in the 1970s and 1980s) had names of places and streets. It promoted the new name replacements in an effort to wipe out the colonial heritage. Although they were used actively by the general public in the 1970s, these names are only known by few people at present and are used as alternate non-official names. Examples are:

- *Kapila* (alternate name) – *Rhodes Park* (official name)
- *Mabula* – *Olympia Park*
- *Chakunkula* – *Chelston*

Interestingly, there is also a phenomenon in some towns in which some streets are popularly addressed by letters rather than their full names. Below are examples from Luanshya town in the Copperbelt Province:

- B – Refers to *Buntungwa Avenue*;
- I – *Independence Avenue*;
- E – *Eucalyptus Avenue*;
- C – *Cheswa Avenue* or *Chisokone Avenue*;
- Z – *Zaone Avenue*, and so on.

Other non-official names are the sign language versions of nearly all places.

Ambiguity in Names

The problem of absence of names of roads and other public places is not only in low-income residential areas but, it is also in low density neighbourhoods – though the two are incomparable. In all, there are some areas that do not have road names or road signs. In Lusaka, for instance, many roads in a Woodlands Extension neighbourhood are called “Off Buluwe Road”, while several roads in Emmasdale are simply called “Off Vubu Road”. Many residents do not know the names of their roads. It is also common in some neighbourhoods to only name one major street and call the rest by referring to it, as “off So-and-so Street”.

Although the problem of lack of street signs is prominent, not all roads whose names are unknown to residents do not have street names. City councils usually have names for some of the places and streets, even in the absence of street signs.

Generally, due to disorganisation in addresses, it takes abnormally long in many cases to receive mails or



packages from the post office. It is a common experience for packages in Zambia to be delivered several weeks, months or years late, or be lost at the worst. For other courier companies, even when a package was paid for to reach its final destination, recipients in many neighbourhoods usually receive phone notification of the arrival of their packages and go to collect from the courier.

Even when the core of a city initially had an organised addressing system, sprawling brought about by high population density happened too fast for naming to keep pace. According to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) Toponymical Training Manual of 2017, by the year 2005 fifty percent of urban centres in Sub-Saharan Africa had no addressing system. Confirming this, a 2009 sector report indicated that Lusaka District had an official 800 km of road network, as opposed to non-official stretch of 1600 km and, on the contrary, according to GIS, 2,800 km.

National Addressing and Postcode Project

Notably, a pilot postcode and addressing system project was launched in 2014 by the Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority (ZICTA). This project sought to make uniform addresses which were also easily traceable using the Geographical Information System (GIS). The pilot neighbourhoods were selected from four cities namely, Kabwe (Central Province), Kitwe (Copperbelt), Lusaka (Lusaka) and Ndola (Copperbelt).

Now in full implementation phase, the comprehensive National Addressing and Postcode Project is in a quest to fulfil ZICTA's function of promoting universally accessible postal and courier services that are responsive to consumer needs. In addition to developing a public, web-based database of addresses, the project involves the actual installation of addressing infrastructure including street name signage and house numbers in collaboration with local authorities.

The project's key deliverables include:

- Street-Naming & Numbering
- Signage Installation
- Database with GIS
- Addressing Standards
- Public Awareness

The councils are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that areas are named. Stakeholders include the members of the community being named, civic leaders and, if applicable, the sponsors of the program.

More recently, streets have been named systematically in some neighbourhoods after prominent politicians and

others after the former soccer stars, Chipolopolo, who perished in a plane crash in 1993, in PHI and Bauleni neighbourhoods, respectively. Streets named after women are likely to be names of those related to powerful men.

Lack of National Policy Framework

At the moment, each council is expected to formulate guidelines on how they will conduct street addressing. There is currently no national document that guides the process. A draft policy is being worked on, pending approval by responsible government officials. To implement ZICTA's project, the beneficiary councils came up with street naming guidelines.

The Lusaka City Council, which was accessible prior to the writing of this article, has a brief policy document for street naming and numbering which clearly spells out the rules governing geographical name administration.

Challenges in Achieving Standardization of Geographical Names

To sum up, the major challenges in Zambia are:

- Lack of a National Policy to guide on the process
- Disjointed databases among various public entities which have addressed properties differently
- Lack of prioritising addressing by councils especially for the recently built-up areas
- Financial challenges due to constrained budget

Zambia's Involvement in UNGEGN

Zambia has not participated in the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) sessions since 2002. However, involvement in UNGEGN would provide Zambia with opportunities for possible meeting participation and access to web resources such as training, policies and manuals. This would translate into significant improvement in the capacity for administration of geographical names at both national and local (council and ward) levels. Therefore, there must be establishment of a multi-stakeholder national geographical names authority and coordination between the Department of National Planning (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in communicating with UNGEGN.

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SPECIAL PROJECTS AND NEWS ITEMS



UNGE GN collaborates and delivers webinar on: “Geographical names standardization supporting national development”

The Regional Committee for UN-GGIM Americas-CARIGEO, the UNSD- Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGE GN) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC), jointly staged the webinar **Geographical names standardization supporting national development** on Tuesday 31 August 2021, for two and a half hours.

CARIGEO is a collaborative effort of the Regional Committee of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas (UN-GGIM: Americas), the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC or CEPAL), the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGE GN), public agencies of Member States and Territories within the Caribbean, geospatial private sector organizations, academic institutions and civil society representatives.

UNGE GN's national geographical names authorities' records as at December 2019 indicated that, of the 30 Member States and territories in the Caribbean, only Cuba, Jamaica and Suriname have geographical names authorities. The webinar sought to build awareness of geographers, geospatial professionals, linguists, cartographers and cultural historians across the Caribbean on the importance of geographical names standardization and the principles and techniques of geographical naming with a special focus on cultural heritage and practices and procedures in creating and managing a geographical names authority.

The webinar was attended by a global audience of over 105 persons, from almost 39 countries; there were nine countries from the Caribbean, eleven from the Americas,

five from Africa, seven from Europe and seven from Asia and the Pacific.

The core content of the webinar was delivered by the chair of the UNGE GN working group on Training Courses in Toponymy, Mr. Peder Gammeltoft, Scientific Manager, Norwegian Language Collections, University of Bergen (Norway) and his colleague UNGE GN member, Dr Johnny Grandjean Gøgsig Jakobsen, Associate Professor of Name Research at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. The items covered were: a) the significance and benefits of geographical names – language, culture, history, tourism, b) framework for effective names standardization, c) legal and Administrative requirements d) effective communication and awareness raising strategies and e) an overview of UNGE GN and CARIGEO was delivered by a representative from the UNSD.

The webinar was a successful representation of global and regional collaboration across the UN system - UN Headquarters, UN Regional Commission for the Americas, ECOSOC subsidiary bodies- UN-GGIM – [UNGGIM Americas - CARIGEO - (private sector, academia, NGO's)] and UNGE GN, all working together to increase and strengthen awareness on the benefits of national names standardization and what is needed to create national names authorities.

The power point slides presented, and the recording of the webinar are available on the UNGE GN website at [UNSD — United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names](#).

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