It is desirable that such local names be given as part of the supplementary information in a national gazetteer.

Nearly every State will have at least one minor language spoken within its borders, e.g. Canada (Eskimo), Iran (Kurdish), Japan (Ainu), Morocco (Berber), Netherlands (Frisian), Norway (Lappish), United Kingdom (Welsh). Many countries in Asia and Africa will number such languages by the score, or even, in the case of India, by the hundred.

B. All the areas mentioned under A (2) and A (3) above will therefore face, to a greater or lesser extent, the question of standardizing names from minor languages. The problems involved, which may often be extremely complex and difficult of solution, may be categorized broadly as shown below.

(1) The minor language is written:

(*a*) In the same script as the principal language, or

(*b*) In the same script as the principal language but modified in respect of diacritics and/or additional letters, or

(*c*) In a different script.

(2) The minor language is unwritten.

There is also a third problem, which though it does not affect national standardization within a country, may be of importance from the point of view of international standardization:

(3) The minor language is spoken in two or more neighbouring countries:

(*a*) And written in the same system of orthography;

(*b*) In different systems of orthography;

(*c*) Is unwritten.

Where the minor language is a written one with a stable orthography the collection of names may present no particular problem. But the question of how best to deal with such names in national mapping or in a national gazetteer will generally be one of considerable difficulty. Paradoxically, there is greater difficulty when the minor language is written in the same script as the principal language (1(*a*) and 1(*b*)) than when it is not 1(*c*). For although acceptance of minor language names without change is ideal, first from the linguistic point of view, in that it preserves the original name undisguised, and secondly from the standardization point of view, in that it keeps the number of variant spellings of the same name to a minimum, such names may be unpronounceable or incomprehensible to those unfamiliar with the minor language concerned. For example, names in the Welsh and Gaelic-speaking areas of the United Kingdom are spelled in accordance with Welsh and Gaelic orthography on Ordnance Survey maps, although the latter language in particular presents extreme difficulties of pronunciation for the ordinary English speaker; by contrast, names in Catalonia spelled in accordance with Catalan orthography on Spanish maps do not present quite the same degree of difficulty to Spanish speakers. In practice such a policy is applied only to lesser places and features, since the more important will already have established conventional names in the principal language.

The alternative solution to problems 1 (*a*) and 1 (*b*) is to rewrite the minor language name in terms of the orthography and phonetics of the principal language; this generally, although by no means necessarily, involves translating generic terms and other commonly occurring elements (e.g. old/new, upper/lower) from the minor language into the principal language, e.g. as in the Republics of the Soviet Union. This solution has the merit of making minor language names both pronounceable and comprehensible to the users of the principal language. But one particular disadvantage is that "transcription" of one language in terms of another using the same script seems more prone to arbitrary phonetic improvement and less easily susceptible to fixed rules than is transliteration from one script to another. There is often considerable difficulty in finding adequate single-word translations of generic terms from the minor language.

Whichever of these two solutions is adopted, it is essential that the national gazetteer contain, in the first case, details of pronunciation and an explanatory glossary of generic terms and meaningful elements (such as those produced by the Ordnance Survey for Welsh and Gaelic); and in the second, details of the full form of the name in the minor language.

Where the minor language is written in a script different from that of the principal language—case 1 (*c*) above—a transcription system from one to the other must be devised. The particular linguistic problems to be faced here are dealt with in another paper. From the point of view of standardization, it matters less whether the system adopted is one of strict transliteration or simple transcription than that full details of it should be given in the national gazetteer.

In the case of languages which are unwritten—(2) above—it will always be more satisfactory to collect names in a phonetic notation for analysis and subsequent consistent expression in terms of the principal language, than to record them directly in the orthography of the principal language. (For a useful illustration of what is involved in the treatment of numerous minor languages in a national gazetteer, see the appendix to *Diccionario Geográfico de Guatemala.*)

In the case of B (3), it would be desirable as far as possible where the same minor language is spoken in two or more neighbouring countries that names should be treated in the same way, but differences in culture, dialect or orthography may often be such as to render this unpracticable (e.g. Lappish names in Norway, Sweden and Finland).

EXPERIENCE IN THE TREATMENT OF NAMES IN MULTILINGUAL OR LINGUISTIC MINORITY AREAS

Paper presented by Switzerland[1]

Since Switzerland has three official languages, French, German and Italian, plus a fourth recognized principal language, Romansch, it has had a great many problems to contend with. Some of the solutions found for these problems, and some of the experience acquired, are described below.

The territorial principle is generally recognized. Hence it is mainly a matter of settling the problems that arise along the language boundaries and in the zones of transition between two principal-language areas. If we consider the situation at the level of the smallest administrative

[1] The original text of this paper, submitted in French, appeared as document E/CONF. 53/L.77.

divisions, the communes, we find the language areas very sharply differentiated, particularly in the countryside, whereas mixing has often gone further in the towns and industrial areas.

Although the cantons are free to solve these problems as they see fit, it is found that two principles are generally applied. First, the choice of language for a place name rests entirely with the commune. Secondly, the language adopted for the name of a commune in a transitional zone is the mother tongue of the majority of the population, as recorded in the latest federal census; nevertheless, if there is a sizable linguistic minority in a commune, it is accorded special rights, which may take any of the following forms:

Under a federal decree of 31 May 1963, a minority of more than 30 per cent may request that the name of the commune should be displayed in both languages on the road signs at the entrance to the commune: for example Fribourg/Freiburg; however, such an arrangement does not necessarily correspond to official practice in naming the commune;

Quite a number of communes have chosen to retain both forms for historical reasons (e.g. "Breil"/"Brigels" and "Biel"/"Bienne"), for touristic reasons (e.g. "Schuls"/"Scuol" and "Segl"/"Sils"), or for other reasons;

The two-name system is also applied, for example, to mountains which are known by different names on different sides (e.g. "Piz Sardona"/"Surenenstock" and "Sex des Molettes"/"Wetzsteinhorn"); such compromise arrangements doubtless cause some minor inconvenience in practice, but they keep the linguistic peace;

As to names of places within a commune, names that are known only in one or other of the two languages are often kept in their original form; for example, the Italian dialect name for a *mayen* situated in the territory of an exclusively Romansch-speaking commune has been preserved because the *mayen* is inhabited for only part of the year and only by people from an Italian-speaking commune. Every effort is made, in close consultation with local users, to find a form acceptable to all.

Generally speaking, minority groups in the transitional zone enjoy more favourable treatment than similar groups speaking the principal language, i.e. German. After years of naming places on a commune-by-commune basis, it may be said that the boundaries between language areas have remained very stable.

Annex

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON GLOSSARIES PUBLISHED[2]

GLOSSARIES

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[2] The original text of this note, submitted in French, appeared as document E/CONF.53/L.78.

NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION

Paper presented by France*

Among the problems of place names that must be dealt with by the National Geographic Institute (IGN) in the publication of maps, the first one to be considered will be that affecting the commune names which, as a rule, have an official written form that has been adopted for use in the documents published by the Ministry of the Interior.

These documents consist of the population census results and are published after each census in the form of large volumes comprising a list of all the communes and the number of their inhabitants. The IGN has adopted as its basic document the population census of 1946, which, since that year, has been kept carefully up to date.

An accurate check of the 1962 census results with those of 1946 (as brought up to date), which was carried out by the Michelin mapping service and IGN, working in close co-operation, brought to light a fairly large number of discrepancies: approximately 700 for the 37,962 communes which now exist. The information resulting from this check has just been submitted to the Ministry of the Interior, and it is expected that after these discrepancies have been reconciled it will be possible to revise the latest census results, which will then serve as the basis for future work.

That does not mean, however, that there will not be any more problems with the names of communes. For example, the census results refer to "Rochefort" whereas the official local usage as well as the name used by the P.T.T. is "Rochefort-sur-Mer". There are, incidentally, twelve communes in France with the name of "Rochefort", and ten of these have been given a second element which makes it possible for them to be differentiated.

To cite another example, there is a commune in Gers which is designated as "Saint-Loube-Amades" by the municipal authorities on the basis of a Royal Ordinance of 1823, but this does not prevent the Ministry of the Interior from calling it simply "Loube". Also in Gers, we were informed by the Prefect that the spelling "Mongauzy" should be used for the name of a commune which has been recorded as "Mongausy" in the last three censuses. There are dozens of similar cases which could be cited.

The second problem concerning place names is somewhat different because here, apart from exceptional cases,

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