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SIXTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
New York, 25 August-3 September 1992
Item 12(b), 6(c) of the Provisional Agenda*

TOPONYMIC EDUCATION AND PRACTICE AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:
TRAINING COURSES IN TOPONYMY;
TOPONYMIC DATA FILES:
AUTOMATED DATA PROCESSING (ADP) SYSTEMS;

Innovations in the Pretoria Training Course on Toponymy -
Computerized Toponymic Data Files, Geographic Information
Systems (GIS), Cartography and Toponymic Research

(Submitted by Israel)**/

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**/ Prepared by Prof. Naftali Kadmon, Convenor, UNGEGN Working Group
on Toponymic Terminology

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Items 12 (b): Training Courses in Toponymy
and 6 (c): Automated Data Processing
of the provisional agenda

INNOVATIONS IN THE PRETORIA TRAINING COURSE ON TOPONYMY -
COMPUTERIZED TOPONYMIC DATA FILES, GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
SYSTEMS (GIS), CARTOGRAPHY AND TOPONYMIC RESEARCH

Paper presented by Israel*



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Naftali Kadmon, Israel

The first training course in toponymy for Southern Africa under the auspices of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names was held at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, in cooperation with the Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa, from 29th June to 9th July, 1992. However, while taking into account experience of previous courses, this was not just another training course in the standardization of geographical names, being distinguished by a number of innovations.

The organizing committee consisted of Prof. P.S. Hattingh, Head, Department of Geography, University of Pretoria (logistics, venue, general running of the course); Prof. Naftali Kadmon of Jerusalem, Israel, Convenor of UNGEGN's Working Group on Terminology, Chairman of the Eastern Mediterranean Division and member of the Commission on Education and Training of the International Cartographic Association (course programme); Dr. Peter E. Raper, Head of the Onomastic Research Centre of the Human Sciences Research Council and Chairman of UNGEGN (attendance, research and field trip); and Dr. L. Moeller of the HSRC. In addition to these, lecturers included Prof. F.J. Ormeling, jr., the Netherlands, Chairman of the ICA's Commission on Education and Training and Convenor of training courses in toponymy; Ms. Helen Kerfoot, Canada, Executive Secretary of the Canadian Permanent Commission on Geographical Names and Vice-Chairperson of UNGEGN; as well as a number of South African specialists.

Modular Programme

The course was attended by some 35 toponymists, cartographers and linguists from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Bophutatswana, Venda and Lebowa, representing numerous African languages with their specific problems of recording geographical names in Roman script, apart from general problems such as standardization and the setting up of national toponymic authorities.

In order to enable participants to attend lectures and exercises in those topics which are of particular interest to them, the program was organized in nine daily "topical" modules, in addition to a field module. Notwithstanding this arrangement, most participants elected to attend the entire course. Accommodation was provided in the comfortable students' hostels of the University of Pretoria where meals were also taken, within 10 minutes walking distance of the on-campus venue of lectures and exercises.

Innovations

Besides the modular organization of the course and the core subjects of standardization and national names authorities, a number of innovations regarding contents were introduced. Since many toponymists have only a vague idea of the theory and practice of defining location, especially of geographical objects which are subject to naming procedures, lectures were presented on the topic of nominal, ordinal and quantitative methods of defining location. These included talks on cartographic projections, the geographical graticule of latitude and longitude, and topographic (plane) grids such as the UTM. As a related modular topic, names placement in maps was introduced in a methodological form. In both subjects, practical exercises were carried out by the participants. Indeed, exercise sessions, held usually in the afternoon, formed an important constituent of the course; out of 11 exercises handed out, an average of 8.8 exercises per person were returned.

Moreover, probably for the first time in such a course, research in toponymy was dealt with, both in methodological lectures on African languages and in a particular case study. The latter dealt with the distribution in Southern Africa of Biblical and Hebrew place names in a joint research project by the Chairman of the Eastern Mediterranean Division of UNGEGN and the Head of the Department of Geography at the University of Pretoria.

Another important aspect of the course was the activity initiated by Dr. Raper to establish a South African geographical names dictionary unit, and this brought together toponymists of widely differing background, approach and attitude.

Exercises in Computerized Processing of a Toponymic Data Base

Perhaps the most important innovation, both methodologically and from the viewpoint of participants from developing (and also developed) countries, was the introduction of the computerized handling, or rather processing, of geographical names in a geographic information system (GIS). After introductory talks by UNGEGN experts, participants of the course were seated at 30 computer terminals - many of them for the first time in their life - in a very well equipped computer classroom at the University of Pretoria. The staff of the Geography Department then instructed the attendees in the operation of a (networked) PC-AT, all instructions and computer statements appearing also on a large central screen. As a first step, a toponymic data base of Khoekhoen (Hottentot) place names was queried and statistical data were extracted. This made participants aware in a practical way of the



Ms. I. Booyesen and assistant instructing in the processing of a toponymic data file.

problem of name attributes in a toponymic data base, which has been subject to much discussion by UNGEGN. As a second stage these data were displayed by each participant in a gridded map on his or her screen, and were then overlaid with various human and physical geographic factors. Finally, maps were produced of correlations between the distribution of these names and the different geographical factors such as rainfall, river location and the historical boundaries of human settlement. Detailed instructions, including all computer steps, were also distributed as handouts, as well as black-and-white printouts of all mapping steps and their results.

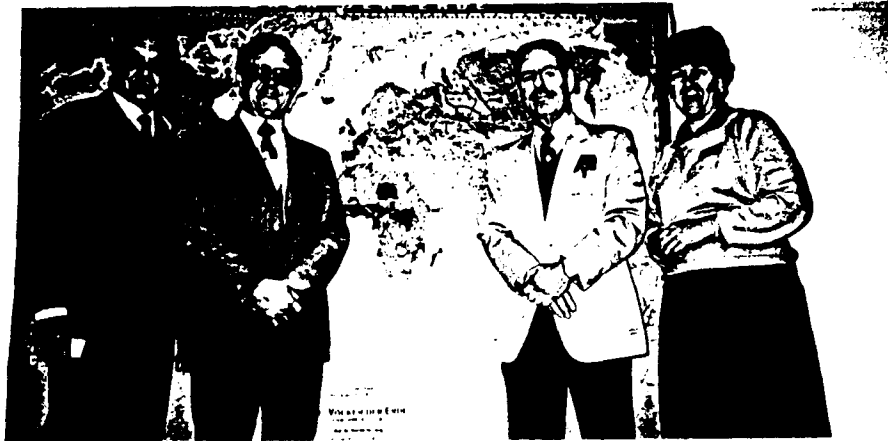
Field Collection of Names in a Game Reserve

The mid-course weekend was devoted to a pleasant field trip to the Songimvelo private game reserve in the Eastern Transvaal. Here the participants were instructed in the collection of indigenous geographical names in the field, and in inserting them in 1:50,000 scale topographic maps after filling suitable questionnaires.

An Introductory Text in Toponymy

On registration, each participant was handed a copy of an introductory text written especially for this course by Prof. N. Kadmon. Named "An Introduction to Toponymy - Theory and Practice of Geographical Names", this presents, apparently for the first time, an overview of nearly all aspects of the discipline in very brief and concise form, though including examples from 11 languages and scripts. It also includes the new "Glossary of Toponymic Terminology", Version 1.2, prepared by UNGEGN's Working Group on Terminology. This limited volume served both as background text for frontal lectures presented, and as reference material for the practical exercises; it may also serve for future reference.

Also distributed during the course were the "Canadian documents for U.N. toponymy training courses" which elaborated on some of the topics dealt with by the Pretoria course, as well as others.



L.t.r.: P.S. Hattingh & P.E. Raper (South Africa), N. Kadmon (Israel) and H. Kerfoot (Canada) at the Pretoria course

A publication of all lectures presented at the Pretoria course is in preparation.

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A P P E N D I X A

Programme of the Pretoria Training Course on Toponymy

Module 1 (29 June 1992): Introductory

Registration

Opening ceremony: Dr. J.G. Gabers, Director-General, Department of National Education

- (1) Prof. N. Kadmon: Toponymy - an introduction.
- (2) Prof. F.J. Ormeling: The importance of geographical names.

Exercises: Topic 1.

Module 2 (30 June 1992): Names Recording, Storage and Dissemination

- (3) Prof. N. Kadmon: Recording and storage of geographical names. Map projections and topographic grids.
- (4) Prof. P.S. Hattingh: Coordinate systems in South Africa.
- (5) Ms. H. Kerfoot: Dissemination of geographical names.
- (6) Ms. H. Kerfoot, Prof. N. Kadmon, Dr. L. Moeller: Name lists and gazetteers.

Exercises: Topics 3, 4, 6.

Module 3 (1 July 1992): Languages, Scripts and Names Conversion

- (7) Prof. N. Kadmon: Languages and scripts of the world.
- (8) Prof. N. Kadmon: Names transformation - endonyms, allonyms, exonyms, translation, transcription, transliteration, romanization.
- (9) Prof. F.J. Ormeling, Dr. P.E. Raper: The use of exonyms in the world and in South Africa.

Exercises: Topics 7, 8.

Module 4 (2 July 1992): Standardization of Geographical Names

- (10) Prof. F.J. Ormeling: National standardization.
- (11) Prof. F.J. Ormeling: Minority names.
- (12) Prof. E.B. van Wyk: Standardization of names from African languages.
- (13) Dr. P.E. Raper: International standardization and the implementation of UNGEGN resolutions.
- (14) Prof. N. Kadmon: Standardization of toponymic terminology.

Module 5 (3 July 1992): National Names Authorities

- (15) Ms. H. Kerfoot: National names authorities - development, roles, responsibilities.
- (16) Prof. E.B. van Wyk: The National Place Names Committee of South Africa.
- (17) Prof. F.J. Ormeling: Names collecting in the field and in the office.

Field Module (4-5 July 1992): Collecting Names in the Field

(18) Prof. F.J. Ormeling, Ms. H. Kerfoot, Dr. L. Moeller: Field work.
Exercises: Topic 18.

Module 6 (6 July 1992): Names Placement in Maps; Toponymic Guideelines

(19) Prof. F.J. Ormeling, Ms. I. Booysen: Names placement in maps -
theory and practice.
(20) Mr. K.J. Lester: South African cartography and geographical names
(21) Dr. P.E. Raper: Toponymic guidelines.
Exercises: Topic 19.

Module 7 (7 July 1992): Research in Toponymy

(22) Dr. L. Moeller: Methods of toponymic research: documentation and
literature.
(23) Dr. B.A. Meiring: Syntax and semantics of geographical names.
(24) Panel discussion: Research into geographical names from African
languages.
(25) Prof. N. Kadmon, Prof. P.S. Hattingh: Research on Biblical place
names in Southern Africa.
Exercises: Topic 25.

Module 8 (8 July 1992): Toponymic Data Bases and the GIS

(26) Prof. F.J. Ormeling, Prof. N. Kadmon: Introduction to Geographic
Information Systems.
(27) Panel discussion: Toponymic data bases.
(28) Ms. I. Booysen: GIS data base operation at computer terminals -
theory and practice.
(29) Ms. H. Kerfoot: Elements of data bases and records maintenance.
(30) Ms. I.M. Dippenaar: National terminology services.
Exercises: Topic 28.

Module 9 (9 July 1992): Place Names in Southern Africa

(31) Panel discussion: Coordination of place names surveys.
(32) Mr. C.C. Smith: Street names.
(33) Dr. P.E. Raper: Establishing a South African geographical names
dictionary unit.

Closing ceremony.