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Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda

MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TRAINING COURSES
IN TOPONYMY

A Japanese Edition of the Textbook

“Toponymy – The Lore, Laws and Language of Geographica Names”*

A JAPANESE EDITION OF THE TEXTBOOK
"TOPONYMY – THE LORE, LAWS AND LANGUAGE OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES"

The textbook "Toponymy – The lore, laws and language of geographical names" by Naftali Kadmon was published in 2002 in New York by the Vantage Press Inc., 419 Park Ave., New York 10016. It included 18 chapters, arranged in five main parts, with 34 illustrations, 317 notes on source material, and the full "Glossary of terms for the standardization of geographical names."

In 2002 the Geographical Survey Institute (GSI) of Japan, the national mapping organization of this country, asked the Japan Map Center (JMC) of Tokyo to translate "Toponymy" into Japanese, as Mr. Seiichi Tanioka, Director of the Topographic Department of the GSI, saw the book at the 8th United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names held in Berlin in 2002, and "found it to be an excellent textbook for his staff". The GSI therefore asked the Japan Map Center to translate the book into Japanese, in order to make it available to readers of this language. After receiving the requisite permission from the copyright holder the task of performing the translation was undertaken by Mr. Nobuo Nagai, Director of Research of the Japan Map Center. Within several months the translation was effected, and within exactly one year the complete book appeared in print.

The Japanese edition of "Toponymy", produced by the Japan Map Center and printed on quality paper, conforms in every way to the original English version, including the multicolor cover. Its physical dimensions are slightly smaller than those of the original and the number of pages is 386, as against the former's 330. The Japanese edition was printed in 2000 copies, to be sold at 3,300 Japanese Yen (plus 5% Sales Tax).

In a letter to the author the translator, Mr. Nobuo Nagai, wrote that among other difficulties of translating a rather technical western work into Japanese he enjoyed translating the "topolimericks" and the "Game of the Name", and that it was fun to find appropriate Japanese words while keeping the rhythm. We wonder whether this is the first time that limericks, those humorous five-liners invented by Edward Lear in the 19th cent., have been translated into an eastern language.

The undersigned, author of the original work, was unable to proof-read the book, but noted the quality of the translation by checking the precision of the reproduction of all non-Japanese script – Arabic, Hebrew, Roman, Cyrillic, Greek, Persian, Thai, Inuktitut and others. This was very good, and is proved e.g. by the proper inclusion of diacritics.

Whereas some publications emanating from or recognized by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names have been translated into various languages, such as the "Glossary of terms for the standardization of geographical names" translated into German and some other languages, besides including the translation into the remaining five official languages of the United Nations (French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Arabic) – the Japanese edition of "Toponymy" seems to be the first in this language, and is a valuable addition to toponymic training material. Moreover, there exists now a Japanese version of the "Glossary of terms for the standardization of geographical names".

The Japan Map Center is to be congratulated on both the quality and the speed with which this volume has been produced.