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THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
Athens, Greece
17 August - 7 September 1977
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN GREECE

Work carried out since the Second United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names, 1972-1977

PAPER PRESENTED BY GREECE

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GREEK GOVERNMENT REPORT

1.- Since the 2nd United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names considerable work has been carried out in Greece in the fields of collection, office treatment and standardization of geographical names. The main agencies involved were:

The Center for the Historical Dictionary of the Greek Language, and the Mediaeval Hellenism Research Center, both of the Academy of Athens; the Departments of Linguistics of the Universities of Athens, Thessaloniki, and Ioannina; the Army Geographical Service; the Hydrographic Service; the Committee of Toponyms in the Ministry of Interior and, the National Statistical Service.

2.- In the field of the collection of geographical names, specialized personnel of officers and civilians of the Army Geographical Service continued, each year, the field collection of names.

Assisted by community secretaries, archaeologists, teachers, country guards, forest rangers and even shepherds, they have collected new names of inhabited regions, mountains, hills, rivers, lakes, springs, valleys e.t.c., as well as ancient Greek toponyms, and names of new artificial works. All names thus collected are verified through cross-references before they are entered on maps. A similar approach is employed by the Hydrographic Service, whose specialized personnel works closely with local fishermen, islanders as well as officers of the local Coast Guard units. The Centers of the Academy of Athens and the Departments of Linguistics of the Universities continued their programs for the collection of geographical names from specialized treatises on the toponyms of various localities of Greece, from various publications of general interest as well as manuscript collections of toponyms submitted by individuals to the institution concerned, and finally by contributions of participants to the annual competition held by the Linguistic Society of Greece.

In addition, trained personnel of the Academy of Athens and the Universities conduct each summer on-the-spot collection of names based on a long-term program covering all the regions of Greece. In the past five years more than 20.000 new geographical names have been collected annually by the various institutes and specialized agencies.

3.- All geographical names thus collected are transferred on individual cards, their proper spelling is verified by trained linguistics, and finally arranged in alphabetical order, ready to be used in the gazetteers. Final decisions on the proper orthography of names are reached at the level of the Committee on Toponyms of the Ministry of Interior.

The geographical names thus adopted are then published in the gazetteers of the National Statistical Service, which is made available to the mapping services of Greece, for proper use on maps.

4.- Turning to the sphere of specialized publications, the following activities should be noted:

---The Center for the Historical Dictionary of the Greek language of the Academy of Athens, continued the preparation of the Etymological Dictionary of toponyms and proper Greek names. Its director, Dr. D. Vayacacos, continued the publication of the bibliography on Greek Toponyms and proper Greek names for the period 1963 - 1976, which appeared, in Onoma (Vol. 1963-1976)

---Professor M. Setatos of the University of Thessaliniki, completed the modern Greek version of the "Glossary of Technical Terminology for Employment in the Standardization of Geographical Names."

---The Army Geographical Service prepared a two-volume gazetteers of Greek geographical names contained in the maps of the 1:50,000 scale. The first volume has already been published, while the second is in the final stages of publication.

---The Hydrographic Service has also prepared a gazetteers of the coastal topographical features of Greece which appear in the four volumes of the Sailing Directions for the Greek Coasts.

---Similarly the Hydrographic Service, within the frame-work of the construction of the bathymetric charts of 1:250.000 scale for the Mediterranean and Black Seas under the aegis of Unesco, has compiled a gazetteers for names and positions of submarine features.

---The National Statistical Service of Greece published the following:

a)" The Gazetteers of Municipalities, and Communities and Localities of Greece Athens 1971 pp. 339 (in Greek).

b)" Population of Greece based on the census of March 14 1971. De Facto Population by Department (Nomoi) Eparchies Municipalities, Communities.

c) 54 maps of the 1:200.000 scale for each Nomos of Greece (published 1971).

d) Under publication is a volume entitled "Results of the census of 1971 (which includes all changes of geographical names adopted during the period 1961-1971).

The National Center for Social Research has published (between 1973-1976) a three volume work by M. Chouliarakis. of the National Statistical Service entitled "Geographical administrative and population evolution of Greece 1821-1971". The author has prepared two more studies, now under publication, under the titles, "Oikismois tis Ellados" and "Istorikon Lexicon Oikismon tis Ellados 1821-1971".

5.- Finally, in accordance with there solutions of the 2nd UN Conference on Geographical Names, the Ministry of Culture and Sciences in cooperation with the Government of Cyprus prepared and will submit to the present Conference a romanization system for the Greek alphabet. The issue was discussed during the fifth and sixth sessions of the Group of Experts held in New York. A detailed report will be given during the discussion in the appropriate committee of the Conference.