Andrea Cantile, Chairman of the UNGEGN, Romano-Hellenic Division (Italia)

The standardization of geographical names in Italy and the joint project IGMI - Veneto Region.

The aim of the paper is focused on the concept of standardization and its meanings in the Italian language, and on the on-going activities for the standardization of geographical names in Italy, and on principles of the cooperation project between the Italian Geographic Military Institute (IGMI) and the Veneto Region for the creation of a shared toponymy database, in compliance with regional, national and European laws and UN recommendations in this field.

Franco Alberti, Alessandra Amoroso, Mauro Bettella, Delio Brentan, Andrea Cantile, Lino Di Rienzo, Silvano De Zorzi, Umberto Trivelloni, Giacomo Turini (Italia)

Presentation of the project “The Italian Geographic Military Institute and the Veneto Region for a new geographical names database”.

The Veneto Region and the Italian Geographic Military Institute (IGMI) are developing a project for integrating and making uniform their geographical names databases. The project is based on the INSPIRE Directive and the UN raccomandations on the standardization of geographical names. The basic data of the project consist of all the geographical terms taken from the IGM database, the Veneto Regional Technical Map and the archives of various regional public institutions. In the first phase of the project, these geographical terms are merged and standardized in order to have consistent data, using semi-automatic data processing methodologies due to the dimensions of sources. At the end of this process, the up-to-date list of geographical names will be sent to all Veneto Region Municipalities for local check and, after a final data quality control, they will set up the new geographical names database.
Andrea Cantile, Chairman of the UNGEGN, Romano-Hellenic Division (Italia)
“Toponymy and Cartography between History and Geography”.
La presentazione ha lo scopo di introdurre i lavori del simposio. A tal fine saranno brevemente tratteggiati alcuni aspetti del rapporto tra toponomastica e cartografia, desumibili dalle carte dall’antichità, da quelle medievali, a quelle moderne e alle prime carte scientifiche del XVIII e del XIX secolo, quali imprescindibili fonti documentarie per la storia e la geografia.
Il discorso introduttivo al simposio si concluderà con una riflessione sul rapporto tra toponomastica e cartografia dei giorni nostri, ponendo in evidenza il problematico aspetto della perdita di conoscenze toponomastiche derivante dalle mutate relazioni tra l’uomo e il suo territorio.
The paper aims to introduce the work of the symposium. To this end, the presentation will be briefly summarize some aspects of the relationship between toponymy and cartography, which can be deduced from ancient, medieval, modern and early scientific maps of the 18th and 19th centuries, as indispensable documentary sources for the History and Geography.
The introductory speech will conclude with a reflection on the relationship between toponymy and cartography of the present day, highlighting the problematic aspect of the loss of toponymic knowledge deriving from the changed relations between Man and his territory.

Andreas Hadjiraftis, President of Permanent Committee for the Standardisation of Geographical Names of Cyprus (Kýpros)
Modern maps, Geographic Information Systems and toponymy in Cyprus.
The Government of the Republic of Cyprus invested considerably on the development and implementation of an Integraded Land Information System (LIS), along with a multi-purpose Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI), which, among others include all available INSPIRE data. An advanced geoportal has also been developed, offering direct access to authoritative geo-spatial data, which are readily available for searching, printing, downloading and direct accessing. Geographical names are embedded in the databases enriching considerably the SDI.
Interactive maps are available for many applications and uses, while the SDI is available for advanced GIS users for a variety of applications, including modern map production.
The new web services platform is a landmark in the modern history of the Republic of Cyprus, as following intensive efforts, geo-spatial information was given full access to the outside world. The Government’s target is the elimination of time-consuming bureaucratic procedures and the ease of access into core data. The currently available services will be continuously updated, through the gradual inclusion of new applications and data.

Vania de Oliveira Nagem, Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatistica (Brasil)
State of the art on the standardization of geographical names in Brazil.
The presentation aims to illustrate the activities implemented by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatistica and to show the methods and operational criteria for the standartization of geographical names in Brazil. Other items of the presentation will be the publication of the Glossary of Generic Terms of Geographical Names used in the systematic mapping of Brazil in the scale of 1: 250,000, the List of Country Names, as recommended by UNGEGN, which contains, besides the country name, the names of their capitals, and the UNGEGN & IBGE International Course on Toponymy, organized by the UNGEGN Working Group on Training Courses on Toponymy, the UNGEGN Secretariat and by the Reference Center on Geographical Names of the IBGE.
Gil Tiago, University of Brasilia and Ca' Foscari Università di Venezia (Brasil) and Vinicius Maluly Université de la Rochelle (France)

The significance of native experience in the creation of colonial toponymy in the Portuguese America.

The goal of this paper is to present a study of the native toponymy present in Portuguese America (currently Brasil) between the 16th-18th centuries. We will take advantage of the georeferenced database of the "Digital Atlas of Portuguese America", a tool created in our laboratory that works as an interactive map of that region at that moment. It includes information concerning places, paths and native groups.

We hope to identify the significance of indigenous toponymy in the construction of colonial space, especially of its hydrography, using modern digital cartographical systems. It is opportune to question which of the native groups (amongst the hundreds that existed at the time) predominated in the construction of the Portuguese toponymy and under which circumstances this occurred. In addition, we intend to observe the change of toponymy over time, verifying variations in the use of indigenous names in intensity, quality and distribution in space.

Cosimo Palagiano, Sapienza Università di Roma, Accademia dei Lincei (Italia)


The birth of the IGU-ICA Commission dates back to the late 2000s, when with the help of Helen Kerfoot, Georg Gartner and Peter Jordan at the New York branch of the UNGEGN, we decided to set up a Commission in the IGU to objective of studying toponymy from the dual aspect of geography and cartography. For my part I had tried to create a study project on geographical names with the help of some linguists at the headquarters of the Geographic Society in Rome. This project was then in talks with Ron Aber and Mike Meadows during the 30th General Assembly of ICSU in Rome in September 2011. In the same year, in Santiago del Chile, Ron Aber, Paulo Menezes, Peter Jordan and me (the founder fathers), we decided to set up a joint IGU-ICA Commission on place names.

This Commission was approved during the Cologne International Geographical Congress in 2012. Since then the Commission has participated and promoted several regional and international congresses both in geography and in cartography. The most discussed topics are: (i) Geographical names on geographic and atlas maps from Ptolemy to the modern age, (ii) changes in geographical names; (iii) geographical names as a brand.

The impact of toponymy in discussions during congresses and meetings is not always significant. In conferences held in areas where minorities prevail and identity values are strong, as in the recent IGU conference in Québec, the participants' interest is very high with about one hundred participants. This is a topic to consider in the next conferences.

The Commission has edited a volume of acts of the Symposium of Rome in 2014, held at the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. This volume was excellently edited by Peter Jordan, one of the most active members of the Commission. His contribution of ideas is to be emphasized. Many other contributions by members of the Commission are published in prestigious international journals.
Helen Kerfoot, Honorary Chair of the UNGEGN (Canada)

Where are you flying? On-board airline magazines and their route map toponymy.

From UNGEGN’s formation, emphasis has been on standardizing the written form(s) of names. To fulfill the “dream” of global standardization, every country needs to take responsibility for recording, authorizing and maintaining its toponymic records, and making them easily accessible for world use. Implied in this ideal situation is that users respect the toponyms standardized by each country! For government and public institutions, legislation may ensure conformity. However, for private organizations such restrictions are less common. We know that Google includes names not accepted by national authorities; that crowd sourcing introduces “other” names; that historians need to use former names; that media may well include exonyms in news coverage … and so on. In this paper, I review maps included in on-board magazines produced by various world airlines, comparing some published in the 1950s/1960s with some from 2017/18. Although comments may be made about changes in cartographic style over 60 years, the emphasis will be on the position airlines were taking and are now taking with regard to the use of toponyms on these maps.

Alberto Nocentini, Università di Firenze, Accademia della Crusca (Italia)

Preservation vs. innovation in the toponymy of Europe.

A large scale survey of European toponymy, which takes into account main rivers and capital cities, leads us soon to conclude that continuity and preservation clearly prevail over innovation and discontinuity. In general the current geographical location of place names mostly mirrors the distribution of European populations during Middle Ages and ancient times. Wars, invasions, revolutions and border shifts, that have upset the history of Europe, seem to have left only surface tracks on its toponymy.

Laura Cassi, Università di Firenze (Italia)

Territorial Identity and Place Names.

Though territorial identity is very difficult to define, this report tries to do it by investigating place names, considering both of them as dynamic phenomena. Many different research fields can apply to territorial identity, but surely the toponymic ones can 'say' much about it, mostly referring to ancient and densely populated areas like ours.

Examples will be discussed, with reference to Tuscany, showing the great content value of the Topographical Map of Italy edited by the Italian Geographic Military Institute to highlight historical population dynamics as well as social and economic features which have characterized the territory over centuries.

Andrea Masturzo, Università di Bergamo (Italia)

Toponymy and colonization, the case of Italian colonial villages in Libya.

The Italian demographic colonization in Libya was realized for the most part between 1938 and 1940; it saw the construction of more than thirty colonial villages where part of the derelict Italian agricultural population was transferred for the cultivation of those territories. As we can find in the maps of the time, the new territorialisation of the colonial area obviously involved new names for these villages, entitled to more or less famous men of Italian history. Starting from a brief excursion on the debate on the denomination of new colonization territories occurred in colonial and geographic societies, the essay aims to examine the "new toponymy" created by the Italian colonizer through a semiotic analysis and for this way reconstruct the identity characteristics of a colonial project that was based on the values of nationalism, “risorgimento”, irredentism, colonialism and fascism.
Stefano Piastra, Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna (Italia)

Urban Toponymy in Shanghai and Tianjin before the Rise of the People’s Republic of China. The Presence of Italian Road Names

In the period encompassed between the First Opium War (1839-1842) and the rise of the PRC (1949), China experienced a quasi-colonial régime in several cities, where foreign concessions were located. These were the cases of Shanghai and Tianjin: the so-called ‘Paris of the East’ saw the institution of British, American and French concessions, while the second urban area, between the late 19th and the early 20th centuries, was opened to the establishment of eight foreign settlements. In Shanghai, through the decades, there was a development of a small Italian community, mostly from Lombardy, focused mainly on silk production and trade: the traditional good relations between France and Italy and some cultural aspects in common (e.g. Catholic religion) put the basis for some official road names related to Italy in Shanghai’s French concession. In Tianjin, Italy gained a formal concession after having joined the Eight-Nation Alliance in the framework of the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901): here the official toponymy was completely in Italian language, as a reflection of the Italian power over it. In both cases, the Italian road names underwent a drastic removal after the rise of the People’s Republic of China. The paper will discuss geo-historical issues related to this peculiar Italian toponymy established in the Far East, and its present-day situation.

27th September 2018
15:00’ Second session chaired by Laura Cassi, Università di Firenze (Italia)

Élisabeth Calvarin, Chair of the UNGEGN, French-speaking Division (France)

Dialectical terms and geographical locations.

Naturally, we name things, everything around us. Place names are a language at a given moment, that is, a meaning by means of agreed words of the space in which one lives. Generations pass, languages evolve. Names given to places do not always follow the evolution of language. At some point, they stop being used for what they mean, freeze and may lose their meaning or their nature. A toponym is a reflection of life.

Lorenzon Arianna (Italia)

Vernacular places names in the Venetian cartography (XVII-XVIII century): a case study.

I will examine a section of the XVII and XVIII centuries’ Venetian cartography, which mapped the Serenissima’s Mainland for political purposes, specifically as aid for collecting taxes. These maps show a rationalisation in the territory’s representation, because of the necessity to display the legal partition of the land. Furthermore, data about the place and the owners had to be included in the corresponding registers.

In the documents of Treviso’s land valuation (1680-1720 ca.), the permanence of the places’ vernacular names can be seen. The etymology of these toponyms recalls both the sites’ natural and morphological characteristics, as well as their historical and economic uses or connection with religious traditions.

Although they were eliminated from the Napoleonic and Austrian Cadastres’ maps, they are still in use. Indeed, by means of a diachronic stratigraphy that can be built, we can try to recover the historical identity of the various villages.
Silvia Siniscalchi, Università di Salerno (Italia)

The transformations of the place names of Naples in historical and contemporary cartography, between landscape changes and territorial identity.

Naples, a city with a powerful identity, is become the emblem of the whole of Italy: our nation, under many features (from music, to art, to gastronomy), is internationally known thanks to the symbols of the Neapolitan cultural heritage. The place names of the city, rich in stratifications and multiple influences (coming from both the East and the West), manifest this complex territorial identity, enhancing its geomorphological characteristics (with the mythical volcanic nature) and its landscape peculiarities, object of a long process of “territorialization”. This latter underwent an epoch-making change at the end of the nineteenth century and then went through a phase of profound transformation following the Second World War. The place names of Naples are evidence of it: their disappearance or persistence, in fact, highlighted through a diachronic comparison between historical and modern cartography (supported by an appropriate bibliography), accurately reflects the landscape changes of the Neapolitan urban area in the last two centuries.

Furio Ciciliot, Società Savonese di Storia Patria – Progetto Toponomastica Storica (Italia)

The precise toponymy of descriptive cadastre (before XVIII Century).

The practical value of toponyms decreases when the territory detection systems acquire technical tools for localization that can be used as easily as maps and, today, GPS surveys. Before the capillary diffusion of the figurative cadastre - indicatively in the second half of the eighteenth century, even if there are earlier ones - the toponyms marked in descriptive cadastre were fundamental for locating and defining the uniqueness of properties, together with other complementary guarantees such as the name of the owner, the size, the intended use and the borders.

As a reliable historical source, the value of a toponym decreases progressively from when, for the dissemination of the figurative cadastre, a name of a place no longer serves as a precise and sustainable legal guarantee to locate a territorial particle and becomes an "accessory" with modest practical implications, as happens today.

Giuseppe Scanu (Coordinator), Cinzia Podda, Caterina Madau, Salvatore Lampreu, Università di Sassari (Italia)

Geo-cartographic aspects of the toponymy of Sardinia between conservation and enhancement.

The analysis of the toponymy of Sardinia, an island characterized by a minority language albeit with different dialectal varieties, involves the realization of a specific Toponymic Atlas with which to verify the cultural overlaps/substitutions that have marked its territory and its history; collect the old toponyms and understand their disappearance and/or evolution; catalogue, classify and disseminate the heritage systematically collected in the numerous cartographies in particular the topographical ones.

The aim of this contribution is to observe how Sardinian toponymy still awaits the valorisation and preservation policies to bring this language, with all its specificity, to be effectively considered a living reality and fully rooted in the island, able to overcome the attacks of globalization on the condition that the trace will not be lost. This can be possible by a structured process of collecting, analysing and systematizing toponyms, as only a modern Toponymic Atlas can do.
Elena Dai Prà, Università di Trento (Italia)

Place names as sources to identify landslides risk areas: a diachronic approach to the Trentino case study.

The potentialities of the analytic study of place names to identify and locate geo-morphological, cultural or economic features of the past have been highlighted by historical geographic research starting from the fortunate definition of Gelling (1978). This work aims to assess in a diachronic perspective the dynamics that have affected the Trentino place names using the terms related to landslides phenomenon as case study. The contribution describes a method of investigation divided into two step: the identification of toponyms that can be related to landslides in the place names database of the current Carta Tecnica Provinciale; the regressive comparison with previous cartographic documents with provincial coverage, such as the 1920s IGMI and the Catasto Fondiario Austriaco (1853-1861). The assessment will allow to identify persistence and discontinuity in the historical toponymic substratum and the formation of "neotoponyms" in recent times.

In conclusion, this contribution has a double objective: first, to test the ability of toponymy to record and fix the historical memory of events of landslides in the Trento Province; second, to improve a geographic-historical method with a strong teleological and apply output, as the enrichment of the Trentino Place Names Dictionary promoted in recent decades by the Superintendency for Cultural Heritage of the Autonomous Province of Trento.

Ayokunmi Ojebode, Redeemer's University, Ede, Osun State (Nigeria)

Toponymy, History and Geographical System of Selected Place Names in the Cognomen of the Alaafin of Oyo.

Like a treasure map the cognomen of the Alaafin will be scope for a Socio-semiotic exploration of some five place names in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria, Africa. The Alaafin is a titular name for the paramount ruler in Oyo town, and he has a unique cognomen that traces his ancestry to some renowned towns in Nigeria. Cognomens can be chanted, recited and sung to eulogise the bearer of a name. In this respect, the researcher will explore the selected town names using Halliday’s contextual models of culture and situation cum interviews to aid meanings and implications of the study to the history of Oyo, a former empire in Africa where Alaafin is monarch. In this study, the paramount ruler will be examined as an arbiter, promoter and preserver of the culture and traditions of the Yoruba race. Our data for analysis are: Koso, Bara, Iseke, Owinni and Apaara.

28th September 2018
11:00’ Third session chaired by Élisabeth Calvarin,
Chair of the UNGEGN, French-speaking Division (France)

Marcos Pavo Lopez, Instituto Geográfico Nacional (España)

A gazetteer in the 2nd century: Claudius Ptolemy’s Geographia.

Ptolemy’s Geographia (2nd century) is the most influential work in the history of cartography. Not only set the basis for scientific cartography by defining cartographic projections and coordinates as the only means to draw rigorous maps, but also meant the "official" image of the known world in scholar circles until 16th century. Although it has already drawn the attention of scholars in several disciplines (cartography, geography, history, arts, etc.), it features an aspect not always properly highlighted: it is the oldest extant geographic gazetteer in a modern sense, that is, a list of place names with a set of geographical coordinates longitude and latitude. Given the great number of place names contained (some 8,000), it was also considered a priceless geographical guide to the ancient world at the beginning of the Renaissance and its legacy is fundamental in understanding the Age of Discoveries.
The greek ethnonym Romanoi in the Administrando Imperio of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

The Greek ethnonym Romanoi, unique of its kind with the meaning of Latin settlers of Dalmatia is quoted in the Administrando Imperio of Constantine Porphyrogenitus many times and it is used in a very different way compared to the name Romaioi, used, as well known, for all the subjects of the whole Byzantine Empire. The Romanoi are the colonists sent by Diocletian from Rome to Dalmatia and this Latin identity is confirmed in the history until the Venetian domination and the last years of Austro-hungarian administration of Dalmatian coast.

So examples of this Italo-Venetian culture are the observations of German historian Theodor Mommsen and Italian scholar of Linguistic Matteo Bartoli between XIX and XX century. It is also interesting to point out that Yugoslavian Nobel Prize 1961 Ivo Andrić in his famous novel The Most on the Drina (Na Drini Ćuprija) speaks about Dalmatian stone-cutters called by Muslim people of Bosnia by the old name of Roman Masters.

The cadastral particle toponymy of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.

In this paper, through the combined analysis of textual and cartographic documentary sources, the precise geographical boundaries of placenames in the Community of Montescudaio area have been identified, at the date of the activation of Ferdinandeo-Leopoldino Land Registry. The recent account and examination of previously unpublished archive sources has in fact allowed the identification of new and useful toponymic documents that have been georeferenced, using GIS systems. After converting in vector maps all the cadastral parcels reported on the georeferenced maps in the context of the CASTORE project, the placenames identified in the Preparatory Tables were then linked to the polygons and then overlapped to the Tuscan toponymy layer, called RETORE.
Nicola Gabellieri, Università di Trento (Italia)
Place names as historical products: boundary conflicts and toponyms disputes in XVIII c. Liguria.
This work presents a cartographic document produced in the 1759 by Matteo Vinzoni and by the Hearl of Exilles to solve some boundary conflicts arisen between the communities of Seborga, Vallebona and San Remo in western Liguria. The maps represents the territory of Seborga; for a number of border sites, Vinzoni recorded the descriptions of both Seborga inhabitants and Vallebona and San Remo ones. Both description are often different or even opposite; and places names are especially debated.
The map has been geo-referenced; place names have been vectorised, and compared with following maps as the 1851 “Gran Carta degli Stati Sardi”.
To conclude, this paper has objectives: first, to underline the great number of places names recorded in XVIII c. maps, which have not been registered in following maps; second, to shows the difficulty to locate place names in pre-existing cadastre or IGMI maps age; third, to sheds new light on the historical processes which influenced local places names, which involved also jurisdictional conflicts.

Lucrezia Iacuzzi, Martina Simeone, Università di Firenze (Italia)
Phitonyms, phitotoponyms and landscape’s history. The case of the municipalities of Borgo San Lorenzo and Vicchio.
The aim of the research was to verify the correlation between phitonyms and phytotoponyms in an area located between the municipalities of Borgo San Lorenzo and Vicchio in Tuscany and characterized by a mountainous, hilly and plain landscape.
After a preliminary census of the phitotoponyms reported in the Lorenense Cadastre and in the Italian official maps, the study has been supported by appropriate verifications of the etymology of each toponyms, analysing the correlation between their widespread name and dialects. In examining the original meaning of each toponym, the research supposed that they could describe the species from which the toponym originates, without excluding the possibility that some exceptions could occur.
The paper finally identifies congruent cases between phitonyms and phitotoponyms, underling the link between the botanical species and the local place names as well as their inconsistency in the case in which the phitotoponym does not reflect the species of reference. In these cases, the study proposes hypothesis regarding the genesis of the phitotoponyms mismatch.

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Scientific Committee of the symposium
Andrea Cantile, UNGEGN-RHD, IGMI, Università di Firenze (Italia)
Helen Kerfoot, Honorary Chair of the UNGEGN (Canada)
Peter Jordan, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Institut für Stadt- und Regionalforschung (Österreich).
Carla Marcato, Università di Udine, Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti (Italia)
Alberto Nocentini, Università di Firenze, Accademia della Crusca (Italia)
Cosimo Palagiano, Sapienza - Università di Roma, Accademia dei Lincei (Italia).