

**Twenty-sixth session
Vienna, 2-6 May 2011**

Item 20 of the provisional agenda

Other toponymic issues

**“Name & Place
Contributions to toponymic literature and research”
Launch of a new toponymic book series**

Submitted by Austria*

* Prepared by Peter Jordan (Austria), Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Urban and Regional Research, and Austrian Board on Geographical Names, and Paul Woodman (United Kingdom)

‘Name & Place Contributions to toponymic literature and research’

Launch of a new toponymic book series

The edition of the volume “Trends in Exonym Use. Proceedings of the 10th UNGEGN Working Group on Exonyms Meeting, Tainach, 28-30 April 2010” marks the launch of a new toponymic book series “Name & Place: Contributions to toponymic literature and research” edited by Peter JORDAN and Paul WOODMAN (publisher Dr. Kovač, Hamburg, www.verlagdrkovac.de).

Name & Place is a twice-yearly book series devoted to toponymy, the science of place names, geographical names or toponyms. This science is in one sense a sub-discipline of onomastics, the science of proper names in general. However, toponymy may equally well be regarded as a science in its own right, located at the intersection of several acknowledged disciplines: notably linguistics, geography and cartography, but also historical, cultural and juridical research.

The location of toponymy at the intersection of better-known disciplines has resulted in the subject enjoying only a low level of academic institutionalisation. There are very few university chairs devoted exclusively to this field, and dedicated academy institutes and the like are rare. Toponymy is at present usually pursued by academics as a sideline alongside their main role in one of the established sciences. Yet this lack of academic institutionalisation is not a valid indicator of the vital importance of place names. Toponyms are symbols, like flags and coats of arms, and as part of the intangible cultural heritage they possess – in addition to their more practical functions of identification and orientation – also a political significance. At the symbolic level they can often represent conflicts with deep roots in society.

The United Nations recognised the significance of toponymy as early as 1967, when it established an expert group in this field (the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, UNGEGN) – one of just six active permanent expert United Nations groups. Many countries have also recognised the subject’s significance by establishing national or regional boards on geographical names. Within the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS), too, toponymy is attracting increasing interest, as indeed it is within the basic disciplines involved in onomastic research, especially linguistics, cartography and geography.

The absence of an established academic niche for toponymy is perhaps the reason why a book series in the subject has so far been lacking. Toponymic publications have certainly become more numerous in recent times, but they are presently scattered across various journals and book series, making it difficult for those interested to acquire a comprehensive awareness of the subject and its scope. It is for these reasons that we consider this book series to be of timely benefit.

Name & Place is open to all types of contributions to toponymic research and literature; these should be sent to the editors (peter.jordan@oeaw.ac.at, woodman@litstad.u-net.com). Monographs as well as proceedings of meetings and conferences will find their home here. Young researchers and their doctorate theses are also very welcome. It is hoped that this series will prove to be a treasure trove of knowledge and inspiration on the fascinating relationship between name and place.