



Castel Sant'Angelo, Rome (Photo: Peter JORDAN 2013)

## **First Circular and Call for Papers**

### **Symposium**

**on**

### **Place-names changes**

organised by

**Joint IGU/ICA Commission/Working Group on Toponymy  
Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei**

**Rome [Roma], Italy  
November 17-18, 2014**

**Dear colleague,**

You are cordially invited to take part in the international scientific symposium on place-names changes in Rome, 17-18 November 2014, organized by the Joint IGU/ICA Commission/ Working Group on Toponymy and the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei.

## **Topic of the symposium**

Languages are promoted by political powers and dependent on them. In a historical dimension they come and go depending on political support. Place names as elements of language are part of this historical fluctuation. Due to their symbolic role as markers of geographical features, territories and space-related identities, however, they are even more exposed to political change. Already the replacement of the dominant political or cultural force within a given society can result in place-names changes. A recent example is the rise and fall of Communism in Eastern Europe. But also the commercialisation of our societies has its impact on toponymy. New commercial names replace traditional ones prompting the question, whether place names aren't to be regarded as a part of the cultural heritage and to be protected for this very reason. Inversions of the namescape (like in South Africa) are certainly caused by a change of dominant political forces. But standardization and public recognition of place names of indigenous and non-dominant groups can also result from new cultural streams and attitudes in a given society like in Canada, where strong efforts are made to codify the languages of indigenous peoples and to display their place names subsequently in public space.

Place-names changes often affect street names and in general names in urban space, since many of them have commemorative function and are thus closely related to certain historical periods and powers. But also names of populated places and especially cities are frequently subject to names changes due to the prominence of these features and their importance in politics, culture and economy. Special cases are names of administrative units of all spatial levels. They are intimately connected with the dominant political system and accordingly exposed to change.

Thus, the topic of our symposium is highly space-related and geographical, but has also very significant historical, sociological and political dimensions, while linguistic aspects like the gradual adaptation of names by other languages, the preservation of antiquated name forms or names changes by orthographic reforms are not as much in the foreground.

**Potential subtopics** (This is not meant as a structure of the symposium, but as a list of subtopics which could be addressed by the papers – without claiming to be complete)

- Reasons and driving forces for/of place-names changes
- The meaning of place names in the political context
- Place names as identity markers
- The role of political changes/inversions with place-names changes
- New societal and cultural directions and streams as reasons for place-name changes
- Political, economic and other intentions behind place-names changes initiated by public authorities
- Commercialisation of the namescape
- Place names as cultural heritage – motives to protect them
- Names categories predominantly affected: street names, names of populated places, names of administrative units...

- Place names in urban space (e.g. street names) as subjects of change
- Change with names of subnational administrative units
- Place names change with other geographical features (populated places, seas...)
- Standardization and official recognition of place names of indigenous and non-dominant groups
- Types and directions of place-names change
- Naming motives for new names
- Legislative and other regulations as regards naming and renaming
- Commemorative naming
- Attitudes of international institutions (UNGEGN, UNESCO...) towards place-names changes
- Comparative views on place-names changes in different parts of the world (synchronic surveys)
- Comparative views on place-names changes in different periods of history (diachronic surveys)
- Effects of place-names changes on administration, education, science,...
- Attitudes and reactions of the population concerned by place-names changes (empirical studies)

## **Scientific council and paper selection committee**

Enzo CAFFARELLI, Laboratorio Internazionale di Onomastica. Università di Roma Tor Vergata

Prof. Giuseppe GALASSO, National Member of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei

Prof. Peter JORDAN, Austrian Academy of Sciences and United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN)

Prof. Cosimo PALAGIANO, Università La Sapienza, Corresponding member of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei

Prof. Paolo POCETTI, University of Rome – Tor Vergata

Prof. Domenico SILVESTRI, University of Naples “L'Orientale”

## **Venue**

Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Auditorium, Villa Farnesina, via della Lungara 230, I-00165, Roma, Italy

## **Deadlines**

**31 May 2014:** Registration and announcement of papers. No registration fee is requested.

Please, find the registration form enclosed and send it to [peter.jordan@oeaw.ac.at](mailto:peter.jordan@oeaw.ac.at) and cc to [cosimo.palagiano@uniroma1.it](mailto:cosimo.palagiano@uniroma1.it)

**15 September 2014:** Submission of abstracts (max. 400 words)

A 2<sup>nd</sup> **Circular** with a detailed programme of the workshop will follow after the deadline for registration.

Looking forward to welcome you in Rome and with kind regards

Cosimo PALAGIANO  
(IGU Chair, Joint IGU/ICA Commission/Working Group on Toponymy)

Giuseppe GALASSO  
(Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei)

Peter JORDAN  
(Steering Board Member, Joint IGU/ICA Commission/Working Group on Toponymy)

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**Registration form**

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Name.....

Affiliation.....

Country.....

Email.....

- I will **participate** in the Symposium in Rome
- I wish to **present a paper** titled (To present a paper is not a condition for participation.)

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