

NSSA Newsletter

FROM THE EDITORS

Dear NSSA members,

Greetings to you all!!

It is with great pleasure that we are sending out our 2016 newsletter edition as a way of rounding off the year. The year 2016 has been a busy one for our society and in this edition we wish to share with everyone what has been taking place. As you all know, the Society held its 19th Biennial Congress from 20 – 22 September in Bloemfontein hosted by the University of Free State's Unit for the Language Facilitation and Empowerment. To those who did not make it to the conference, please have a feel of what we experienced in Bloemfontein from the congress report in this issue which also includes a picture tale.

To those who made it to the congress, the report should remind you of the beautiful experience we had in Bloemfontein which was made possible by the host Professor Theodorus du Plessis and his hard working team. Included in this issue is also a special report on past and 2016 NSSA Honorary Life Membership awardees. The awardees' impressive profiles, in our view, show how the Society has been blessed with hardworking academics who have been committed, from the beginning, to raising the flag of the Society within the region and beyond. It is our hope that a rundown of their profiles will also serve as inspiration to young onomasticians (who stand as the future of the Society).

For your information you would also find a section on recent topics on postgraduate researches in onomastics, mainly at PhD level. As part of our jobs we are also expected to contribute research papers not just to our journal *Nomina Africana*, but to also other onomastic journals; to that effect we have included a section on call for papers that you may be interested in responding to.

In this issue we also have a section on news from members. We want to thank the two contributors to this section; Professor Elwyn Jenkins and Mr. Sambulo Ndlovu for sharing their stories. On that note we would like to remind you all that the 'life' of the newsletter depends on such contributions. We would like to invite you to start submitting your own stories for our next issue.

Have a pleasant reading.

Enjoy the coming Christmas break and wish you a successful coming year.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- A report of the 19th NSSA Congress
- Adrian Koopman, Bertie Neethling and Noleen Turner were honoured with NSSA Life Membership Awards
- Recent onomastics postgraduate studies by Zvinashe Mamvura and Masechaba Mahloli M.L. Mokhati-Mbhele

19TH 2016 NSSA BIENNIAL CONGRESS IN BLOEMFONTEIN, UFS, SOUTH AFRICA



Prof Adrian Koopman receiving his NSSA Honorary Life Membership Award



Prof Bertie Neethling receiving his NSSA Honorary Life Membership Award



Prof Noleen Turner also received the NSSA Honorary Life Membership Award

The 19th NSSA Congress held from 20 – 22 September 2016, running under the theme “Symbolism and Instrumentality in Naming” was organised and hosted by the South African University of the Free State’s (UFS) Unit for the Language Facilitation and Empowerment. Professor Theodorus du Plessis (who hosted) did put a team of good people (who included Dr Chrismi-Rinda Loth (conference co-ordinator), Dr Senekal and Mrs Lange (conference assistants) who made sure that we had a wonderful time in Bloemfontein during the congress. 44 delegates from South Africa (25), Zimbabwe (11), Lesotho (5), Taiwan (2), Zambia (1) and Germany (1) attended the congress and presented 39 papers. This record of congress attendance was a significant drop from the previous 18th congress held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe and hosted by Great Zimbabwe University, where around 60 delegates attended and 64 papers were presented. Papers presented at the 18th congress in Victoria Falls, as Adrian Koopman later reported, were ‘a greater number of papers than had ever before been presented at the Society’s Congress’. Like in the Victoria Falls Congress, where we had two presentations coming from the USA and Romania, this time around, NSSA saw its influence crossing unfamiliar sea waters to Taiwan. Chiung Wi-vun of National Cheng Kung University of Taiwan attended the conference and presented a paper on ethnonyms and politics, while Peter Kang of the same university presented on the naming of the Dutch on the landscapes of the 17th century Taiwan. From Bremen University of Germany, where she is doing her postdoctoral research, the Zimbabwean scholar (current NSSA Deputy President), Tendai Mangena also attended the congress in Bloemfontein.

Two conference keynote papers were presented by Professor Thenjiwe Meyiwa (who is the current Durban University of Technology Registrar) and Professor Peter Raper (who is Professor Extraordinaire and a Research Fellow in the Unit for Language Facilitation and Empowerment of UFS, and also a member of the joint International Geographical Union’s Com-

mission on Toponymy) on the first day of the conference. Thenjiwe’s presentation entitled “Naming is to Gender as Gender is to Naming: Emerging Onomastics Scholarship”, was later complemented by a significant number of presentations with a clear focus on gender and naming practices from varied standpoints. Peter’s presentation set the tone of the conference, since his presentation “Symbolism and Instrumentality in Southern African Naming” invoked the general theoretical framework of the conference as outlined in the conference theme.

Delegates also had an opportunity to listen to an interesting presentation made by Vincent Sithembiso Khetha during the conference dinner at New York Restaurant (A New York restaurant in Bloemfontein, South Africa reminds of the significant concept of ‘names travelling’). Vincent’s interesting presentation was on the political dynamics of place name changes during political transitions. All other papers presented during the congress fell into the usual major onomastics categories; toponymy, anthroponomy, names in liter-

“...as shown by the various approaches of name studies discussed during the three conference days, onomastics still remains a rich research area.”

ature and names in business. Outside these usual onomastic categories, delegates had an opportunity to listen to a unique and interesting talk by Adrian Koopman on “Avian nomenclature”. Clearly, as shown by the various approaches of name studies discussed during the three conference days, onomastics still remains a rich research area.

On the second day of the Congress, as is the tradition for NSSA, an Annual General

Meeting was held, co-chaired by the President (Professor Nhlanhla Mathonsi) and his Deputy (Dr. Tendai Mangena). Professor Adrian Koopman (the retired editor) gave a report on the status of the Society's journal, *Nomina Africana*, which marked his last official duty as editor, apart from completing the editing of *Nomina Africana* 30(2). His report included, among other things, information that NISC would take over as the *Nomina Africana* publisher, once the deal is sealed through contract signing. In view of that, members were informed that the Executive Committee, in accordance with items 2.5, 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 of the NSSA Constitution, had appointed Dr Maleshoane Rapeane-Mathonsi for a period of six months as an interim editor of *Nomina Africana*,

starting from the 19 September 2016. Dr Maleshoane is currently working with the outgoing editor to prepare Volume 31(1) for February 2017 since the Executive Committee is still actively seeking a suitable candidate to replace the retired editor. In line with NISC's requirements, the constitution was amended to do away with the Editorial Secretary post, and on that note, the then Editorial Secretary, Professor Nobuhle Hlongwa was thanked for her work in this position since her election in 2014.

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Conference dinner: Guest speaker Vincent Khetha



Conference dinner

NEW NSSA HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Adrian Koopman, Bertie Neethling and Noleen Turner were honoured with NSSA Life Membership Awards during the 19th (2016) NSSA Congress dinner at New York restaurant in Bloemfontein, South Africa. 5 other known NSSA members have received the award in the past. As informed by Adrian Koopman, at the 6th NSSA (then NSA) Congress Dinner at Berg-en-Dal at the Kruger National Park, in South Africa, in 1991 Dr Jack Skead was honoured with the Honorary Life membership of the NSSA (then NSA). Dr Jack Skead was honoured in recognition of his contribution of a considerable number of articles on Xhosa place names, Xhosa animal names, birds names, not just to *Nomina Africana* but to South African scholarship generally. At the 16th NSSA (then NSA) Congress Dinner at Langebaan in the Western Cape, in South Africa, in 2010, four members of the Society were awarded Honorary Life Membership: Prof Peter E. Raper, NSSA Vice-President and President for many years, certainly the most productive toponomastics scholar in the country by a long way, known in fact all over the world, ex-Chairman of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and currently a member of the joint International Geographical Union's Commission on Toponymy; Dr Lucie Moller, Guest Editor of *Nomina Africana*, productive onomastics scholar, reviewer of articles, and doing much background administrative work (Secretary/Treasurer for many years) for the NSSA; Dr Barbara 'Babs' Meiring, a productive onomastics scholar, reviewer on *Nomina Africana* manuscripts for many years, Editorial Secretary of *Nomina Africana* for many years; and Prof Elwyn Jenkins, highly productive onomastics scholar, reviewer of *Nomina Africana* manuscripts for many years and Assistant Editor of *Nomina Africana* for a number of years. All the four members honoured with the Life Membership award in 2010, have been, and still are, on the *Nomina Africana* Editorial Board. This year's awardees of this prestigious award have each impressive academic records.

See more on page 4

NSSA HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Adrian Koopman

Adrian Koopman is one of the members who founded the society in 1981. Prof Raper, Dr Moller and him are the only surviving of the founder members. Adrian was the Chairman of the Natal Branch of the NSA in the late 1990s. He later served as the Society's Vice-president from 2002 to 2006. In 2006, he took over the Presidency from Peter Raper, and left this office in 2014. He has made an immense contribution to *Nomina Africana*, initially as its Editorial Secretary from 1995 to 2002, then as editor from 2002 to 2016. To date Adrian is contributor of more articles to *Nomina Africana* than any other scholar. He has also been on the Editorial Board of the Society's journal since the mid-1990s. Adrian has also served in various offices in the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS), to which he has been a member since 1995. He was a member of the Executive Board of ICOS from 2005 to 2008, and becoming its Vice President from 2008 to 2011. Adrian is a member of the Editorial Board of the ICOS journal *Onoma* who Guest edited the journal's special issue Vol. 44 on African Onomastics in 2009. Adrian has attended and presented papers at many onomastics international conferences. Significant to note is how Adrian has been to every NSSA Congress since the first one in 1981, EXCEPT the 2nd Congress in Windhoek in 1983, and the 4th Congress in Stellenbosch in 1987. In addition to his several journal articles, Adrian is the author of *Zulu Names* (2002, University of Natal Press) and *Zulu Plant Names* (2015, University of KwaZulu-Natal Press).

Bertie Neethling

Neethling specialised in Xhosa Linguistics from his first degree up to his PhD. He joined the Society just after its formation in 1981. Bertie served as the Society's Vice-President from 2006 until 2014. To date he has many articles published in various names journals which include the Society's *Nomina Africana*, *Names* (the Journal of the American Names Society), *Onoma* and others. A significant number of these articles were invited contributions. Recently he was invited to write two chapters for the prestigious *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming* which was published in 2016. The chapters are: "Street Names: A Changing Urban Landscape" (this is an analysis of street name changes in some South African cities like Pretoria, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein, Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Cape Town) and "Names in Songs: A Comparative Analysis of Billy Joel's *We Didn't Start The Fire* and Christopher Torr's *Hot Gates*." (Both songs consist nearly entirely of names [places, persons, brand names] and contribute to the connotative meanings which enrich the artistic experience)

Bertie's interests in onomastics are varied. They include anthroponymy, toponymy, names in the economy (NITE), shipping names, and animal names. Bertie's main publication was the 2005 monograph on Xhosa naming - *Naming among the Xhosa of South Africa* (Mellen Press, USA). The monograph was voted the best monograph alongside another by the Faculty of Arts of the University of the Western Cape in 2006.

Noleen Sheila Turner

Noleen Sheila is married to Sid Turner, a Consulting Engineer and the couple has three children. Noleen began her academic career working at the then University of Durban Westville in 1985, lecturing in the field of Second Language Acquisition, and later moved on to teaching language and linguistics to first and second language speakers. She developed an interest in Zulu Oral Studies in which field she is widely published and then in Onomastics. Noleen was promoted to an Associate Professor in 2006 and became Head of the Department at the University of KwaZulu-Natal from 2012 - 2014. She took on the position of Editorial Secretary of the Names Society of South Africa from 2003 till 2015. Noleen is also a past president of the Southern African Folklore Society (SAFOS). She has authored over 35 articles published in accredited journals. She is currently working with Adrian Koopman on a Zulu Bird Names project which will result in the publication of a book and several articles.



Peter Raper, Theo du Plessis, JC van der Merwe, Nhlanhla Mathonsi and Thenjiwe Meyiwa

19TH 2016 NSSA BIENNIAL CONGRESS IN
BLOEMFONTEIN, UFS, SOUTH AFRICA



Conference lunch crowd



Conference Dinner at the New York Restaurant

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Changes in store for the Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape Geographical Names Committee is considering changing some prominent geographical names in the province: Uitenhage to Qhagqiwa, Port Elizabeth to Gqeberha, and Port Elizabeth Airport to Siphon Hashe Airport. Public consultation was due to start after the local elections on 3 August. (News24)

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RECENT ONOMASTICS POSTGRADUATE RESEARCHES

Zvinashe Mamvura of University of Zimbabwe, graduated with a Doctor of Literature and Philosophy from the University of South Africa (UNISA) in 2014. His thesis on “A Sociolinguistic Analysis of School Names in Selected Urban Centers in Colonial Zimbabwe, (1890-1979)” was supervised and co-supervised by Professor D. E. Mutasa and Professor C. Pfukwa respectively.

Thesis Abstract

This study analyses the different social variables that conditioned the naming of schools during the colonial period in Rhodesia (1890-1979). The study analyses the use of place names in their written form in the public sphere, especially on public signage. This makes the study a linguistic landscape study of place names. Place names turned places into texts to be read. The study collects and analyses the names given to schools in Salisbury (including Chitungwiza), Umtali and Fort Victoria during the colonial period. The study adopts Geosemiotics, a theory propounded by Scollon and Scollon (2003), together with insights from Semantics, Semiotics and Pragmatics in the analysis of school names. Critical Discourse Analysis is used as a method of data analysis. Names collected from textual sources are put into nine categories. One of the main findings of the study is that place names are discourses of power which are used to express and legitimise power because they are part of the symbolic emblems of power. It was possible to ‘read’ the politics in Rhodesia through the place names used in the colonial society. Both Europeans and Africans made conscious efforts to imbue public places with meanings. Overall, people who have access to power have ultimate control over place naming in any society. In this case, they manipulate place naming system in order to inscribe their own meanings and versions of history in the toponomastic landscape. The second observation is that place names are critical place-making devices that can be used to create imagined boundaries between people living in the same environment. Place names are useful discourses that index sameness and differences of people in a nation-state. The findings, analysed within the framework of Geosemiotics, indicate that place names derive much of their meaning from where they are placed in the material world and that a place is an aggregate of discourses. Place names exist in interaction and kinship with other discourses in making places and imposing an identity on the landscape. Semiotics, Semantics and Pragmatics are instrumental in the appreciation of the meaning conveyed by school names. This study makes an important contribution to onomastic research in the sense that its findings can be generalised to other place naming categories during the colonial era in Zimbabwe. This study provides background information on how place naming was done in Rhodesia, a colonial state. This makes it significant because it provides insights on place naming in other states that went through the colonial experience, in Africa or elsewhere in the world.

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Masechaba Mahloli M.L. Mokhathi-Mbhele of National University of Lesotho was awarded a PhD in Applied Linguistics / Linguistics in 2014 by University of the Western Cape (UWC). His thesis entitled “Independent Clause Sesotho Personal Names as Texts in Context: A Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach,” was supervised by Professor Felix Banda. Between 2015 and 2016 Mokhathi-Mbhele also managed to write 5 papers, on Sesotho names based on the thesis, and has a forthcoming monograph tentatively entitled Sesotho Personal Names as Minimal Pairs.

Thesis Abstract

This study sought to examine independent clause Sesotho personal names as authentic social discourse using the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory. It sought to analyze their structure and map them to social functions to demonstrate that they are enacted messages in socio-cultural context of Basotho. It used a form-meaning approach to interpret Sesotho names in socio-cultural contexts of use (cf. Halliday 1994, 2001, Eggins, 1996, 2004 and Martin & Rose 2007) as an alternative to the current formalist approach to onomastica interpretation. The SFL analysis was compared and contrasted mainly with the formalist syntactic specific and semantic specific analyses currently in use by Guma, Sesotho Academy and subsequent authors of Sesotho grammar and other linguists.

The purpose of displaying these names as texts in social context enfolded the intent to reflect a systemic interface of lexico-grammar and social activity. The study used the clause-text-culture paradigm to explore Sesotho names as texts or semantic units. The idea was to access their ‘meanings beyond the clause’ (Martin & Rose 2007).

Data was collected from national examinations pass lists, admission and employment roll lists from Public, Private, Tertiary, Orphanage institutions. Other data was identified in Telephone directories and Media. The purely linguistic lexico-grammatical analysis of the structure of names was supplemented by interview data from real interpretations from families, owners and senior citizens who have social and cultural knowledge of the meanings of some names.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Geographical names new and not so new

In all the fuss over the incorporation of Vuwani into a new municipality, not much attention has been paid to the name of the municipality. It is called the Collins Chabane Local Municipality. This is in keeping with a trend in the naming of local authorities. When they were first established in 2000 very few were named after people; but since then when municipalities have changed their names or new ones have been formed more individuals have been commemorated in this way.

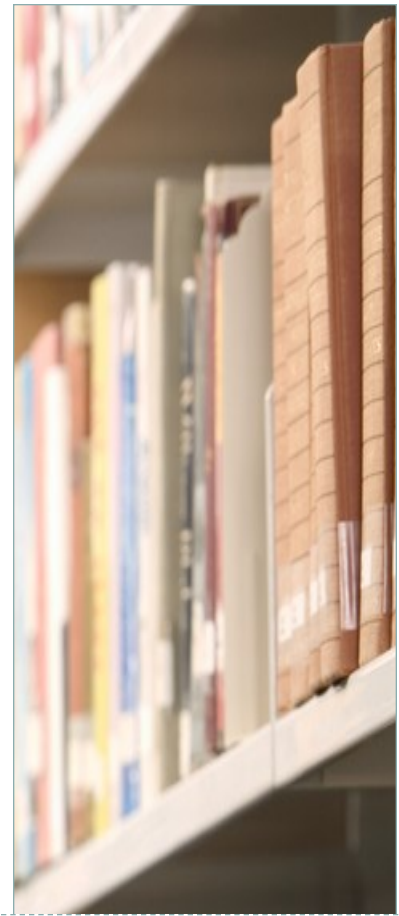
The South Africa public is slow to use new geographical names. Even official bodies and the media, which use the names all the time and should be particular about them, apparently couldn't care. Here are just two relatively recent examples of prominent names.

The South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL), in a glossy publication of the

Department of Transport, can't even get the name of Mbombela right. Investing in Road Infrastructure (Nov. 2015) reports on 'a major makeover of the road which connects Polokwane with Nelspruit'. I hope the road reaches the right destination, because the name of the city was officially changed to Mbombela by proclamation in the Government Gazette 16 October 2009. After a legal challenge, the North Gauteng High Court confirmed the name Mbombela in 2014.

And here's the Sunday Times of 10 January 2016, in a report by Thembaletu Zulu and Pericles Anetos: 'Mafikeng, where most of the affected victims [of heat exhaustion] were referred to....' The spelling was changed to Mahikeng by proclamation in the Government Gazette of 29 January 2010.

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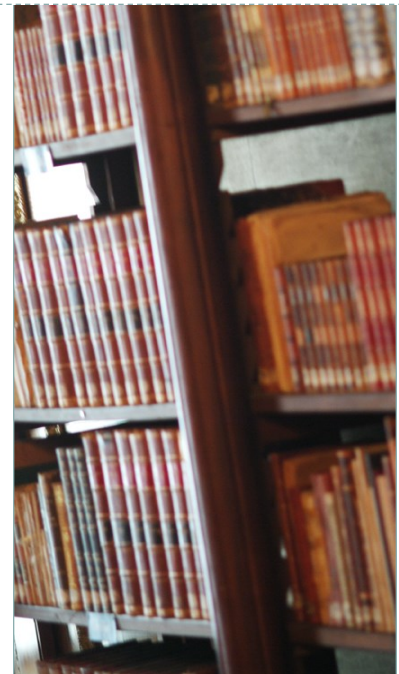
"The South Africa public is slow to use new geographical names. Even official bodies and the media, which use the names all the time and should be particular about them, apparently couldn't care."

Moniker War in the Zimbabwean Entertainment Industry

The Zimbabwe Herald newspaper of 9 November 2016 reported of a bitter war raging in the entertainment industry over a name. The war could be a good response to the Shakespearean question "what is in a name?" The name at the centre of this nomina-war is "Mambokadzi", a name adopted from the Shona term for queen. Mambokadzi is a popular female dance group in Zimbabwe formed in 2005 by its lead dancer Enisia Mushusha. However, in 2013 one Rhoda Mandaza registered an entertainment company called Mambokadzi African Media and Entertainment. Mushusha responded to the new use of the name 'Mambokadzi' and claims that this seeming name duplicity confuses customers, donors, and causes material,

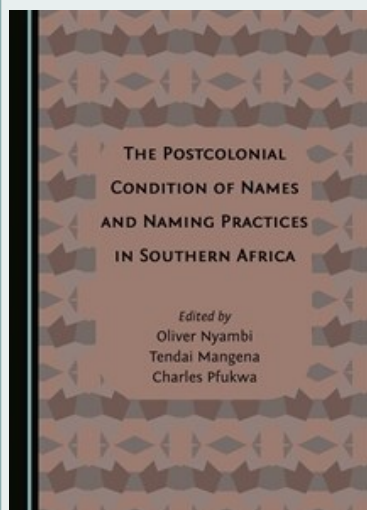
psychological and financial harm to her dance group. On the other hand, Mandaza counters by claiming to have registered her company under the Mambokadzi moniker in South Africa in 2003, earlier than the formation of Mushusha's dance company. The Herald further quotes Rhoda claiming that mambokadzi is a universal word that can be used by anyone. This piece of news is indeed of onomastic interest and a starting point for an onomastician thinking of a paper on brands and patents in onomastics and I am sure there are many of these nomina-wars in different nations at different times.

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NEW BOOK

*The Postcolonial Condition
of Names and Naming
Practices in Southern Africa*



Editors: Oliver Nyambi, Tendai Mangena, Charles Pfu kwa

ISBN: 978-1-4438-9691-7

Website

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Reviews

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CALLS FOR PAPERS (CONFERENCES AND JOURNALS)

Onomastica Canadiana Journal

<http://www.americannamesociety.org/call-for-papers-onomastica-canadiana/>

ANS Calls for Papers: Special Issue of NAMES devoted to Indigenous Names and Toponyms

The American Name Society is inviting abstracts for scientific papers providing an analysis and discussion of indigenous names and toponyms found in former European colonies in the Americas, Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Antipodes. Any area of the use of indigenous names may be the subject of analysis. Suggested issues for discussion include, but are by no means limited to the following: the transcription (spelling) of indigenous names and/or determining their meanings, indigenous naming practices, indigenous names as identity markers, the reinstallation of indigenous toponyms, the reclamation of indigenous language and culture through their names, and the appropriation of indigenous names, etc.

Proposal submission process

1. *Proposals should include a précis of no more than 500 words and a 50-word biographical sketch of the author including the author's name, affiliation, onomastic interests, and email.*
2. *All submissions must follow the Journal's official stylistic and grammatical regulations, see: <<http://www.maneyonline.com/ifa/nam>>*
3. *Proposals should be sent via email attachment in a doc or docx format to Dr. I. M. Nick at <mavi.yaz@web.de>, with "Indigenous Names and Toponyms" in the subject line.*
4. *Proposals must be received by 1 February, 2017.*
5. *All submissions will be subjected to a blind peer review process.*
6. *Notification of acceptance will be announced on or about 31 March, 2017*
7. *Final submissions due for publication 31 July, 2017.*
8. *For questions, please contact Dr. I. M. Nick at the above email address.*

Fourth International Conference on Onomastics Name and Naming

The North University Centre of Baia Mare (Technical University of Cluj-Napoca) announces its Fourth International Conference on Onomastics Name and Naming (ICONN 4), which will be held in September 5-7, 2017, in Baia Mare under the theme "Sacred and Profane in Onomastics". More information can be found on the website through the following link: <http://onomasticafelecan.ro/iconn4/>

2017 International Symposium on Place Names

Call for proposals is announced for the 2017 International Symposium on Place Names, under the theme "Critical toponymy: Place names in political and commercial landscapes". This conference is jointly organised by the Joint IGU/ICA Commission on Toponymy, the UFS, and University of Namibia and will be held in Windhoek, Namibia from 18 – 20 September 2017.

More information can be obtained through the following link [http://www.ufs.ac.za/
conferences/conference/2017-international-symposium-on-place-names](http://www.ufs.ac.za/conferences/conference/2017-international-symposium-on-place-names)