

Geographic Names Standardization Policy for Egypt

United States Board on Geographic Names
Foreign Names Committee



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1. Introduction

This geographic names standardization policy has been prepared as an aid to those geographic names experts who are the working staff for the United States Board on Geographic Names (BGN) in the standardization of the geographic names of Egypt for United States Government use. The BGN and its staff work to effect consistent treatment of geographic name spellings in U.S. Government databases, publications, maps, and charts, and are intended to satisfy the statutory requirements levied upon the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in Public Law USC 80-242 to develop principles, policies and procedures for geographic names standardization, and to promulgate decisions with respect to the principles of geographic nomenclature and orthography.

2. Languages and Language Policy

a. Demographics

According to the 2010 CIA World Factbook, the Egyptian population is estimated at 82 million with 99.6% of the nation's people classified as ethnically Egyptian. The majority of the population, 90%, is Muslim (mostly Sunni), followed by 9% Coptic, and 1% other Christian. ¹

b. Languages

Arabic (ISO 639-3 code: arb) is the official language of Egypt. There are two major dialects in Egypt: Egyptian Spoken Arabic and Sa`idi Spoken Arabic. Egyptian Spoken Arabic (ISO 639-3 code: arz) is based on Cairo speech, or Cairene. This dialect is the most widely understood variety used in media. In 2006, there were approximately 53 million speakers of Egyptian Spoken Arabic. Sa`idi Spoken Arabic (ISO 639-3 code: aec) is found in Upper Egypt and is greatly influenced by Sudanese Arabic. In 2006, there were approximately 19 million speakers of Sa`idi Spoken Arabic. ²

Egypt is not a strictly Arabic speaking nation. The most linguistic diversity is found in the Upper Nile Valley. Nobiin (ISO 639-3 code: fia) is a Nilo-Saharan language spoken in the Upper Nile Valley by approximately 300K Nubians. Kenuzi-Dongola (ISO 639-3 code: kzh) is a Nilo-Saharan language spoken in the Upper Nile Valley, mostly in Kom Ombo, by approximately 300,000 Nubians. Domari (ISO 639-3 code: rmt) is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by an estimated 2.3 million Muslim Roma in Egypt. ³

c. Geographic Names Standardization

In a March 2011 publication, The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) explained that Egypt does not have a specific naming authority although the stewardship of geographic names falls under the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and

¹ Egypt. CIA World Factbook Online. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/eg.html>> 21 Mar 2011.

² Lewis, M. Paul (ed.), 2009. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, Sixteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. <<http://www.ethnologue.com/>>. 21 Mar 2011.

³ Lewis, M. Paul. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*.

Statistics (CAPMAS).⁴ Egypt, however, is an active member in UNGEGN. For the 26th Session of UNGEGN in May 2011, Egypt presented a working paper titled *Geographical Names as Part of the Egyptian Heritage* by Mrs. Eman Ahmed Orieby of CAPMAS.⁵ Orieby discussed at length the evolution of place names in Egypt, the cultural factors at work in this process, and the meaning that individuals ascribe to them. These working papers were Egypt's latest contribution to UNGEGN.

3. Toponymic Policies

a. Script and Orthography

Toponyms on official Egyptian map products are rendered in standard Arabic script and, unlike what is seen on products released by mapping agencies in other Arab countries, no allowances are made for the use of additional modified Arabic letters for the rendering of loan words or personal names of foreign origin.

Since the late 1980's, Egypt's primary survey and mapping agency, the Egyptian General Survey Authority,⁶ has been publishing map series with geographic names printed in both Arabic script and forms transliterated in accordance with an updated romanization system which blends together previous Survey of Egypt conventions with standards analogous to the United Nations and BGN romanization systems, resulting in what has been referred to as a form of the Amended Beirut System.⁷ In recent years, the Egyptian Geological Survey and Mining Authority has produced geological maps with toponyms rendered solely in this system.

b. Romanization

Policy

Approved Egyptian geographic names are to be romanized from the Arabic script renderings of toponyms as found on authoritative Egyptian source in accordance with the BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Arabic 1956 (see Appendix A). For Approved names, no concession should be made to dialectal pronunciations of geographic names, although such names may be collected as variant forms.

⁴ National Names Authorities. UNGEGN online.

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/pdf/Authorities_listMar2011.pdf> 21 Mar 2011.

⁵ Oreiby, Eman Ahmed. *Geographical Names as Part of the Egyptian Heritage*.

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/26th-gegn-docs/WP/WP6_Geographical%20Names%20AS%20PART%20OF%20the%20Egyptian%20Heritage.pdf> 28 Mar 2011.

⁶ The Egyptian General Survey Authority (GSA), also known as the Egyptian Survey Authority, was established in 1971 and is the successor agency to the Survey of Egypt, itself founded during the first decade of the 20th Century. Above all other Egyptian government agencies, the GSA is tasked with survey and mapping standardization and production. Since its establishment it has produced map products in Arabic script.

⁷ *Egypt: Policy for Geographical Names*. Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use. 23 June 1997.

Arabic script renderings of toponyms on Egyptian cartographic map products do not currently provide for the representation of loan words or foreign personal names through the use of additional modified Arabic letters. If evidence of the use of such additional characters is noted in the future, further amendment to the policy for Egyptian toponymy can be made to provide for the proper collection of names incorporating these letters.

History

The BGN's romanization of Egyptian geographic names has been undertaken according to the BGN Romanization System for Arabic since its inception in 1946. The BGN's UK counterpart, the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN), on the other hand, used toponyms romanized according to Egypt's former native romanization system, the Survey of Egypt System (SES), until 1997.⁸ Since that time, both committees have applied the BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Arabic 1956 to Egyptian toponyms. BGN's romanization policy was also at variance with policies for representation of geographic names on Army Map Service (AMS) cartographic products. The AMS, and its successor agencies, the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) and the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA), were constrained by international geographic names policy agreements, such as NATO STANAG 3689, "Place Name Spelling on Maps & Charts," which mandated use of the SES.⁹ This long-held policy by the BGN for collecting toponyms based on its own system for the Egyptian Gazetteer file was then vindicated by the widespread release in the late 1990's by the Egyptian General Survey Authority (GSA) of its 1:50,000 series, on which production had started in 1989. The GSA 1:50,000 series, and a 1:25,000 series started several years prior, showed toponyms rendered in both Arabic script and in forms romanized according to its BGN/PCGN-style system, which generally made no concessions to Egyptian dialectal pronunciations, even those most characteristic of Egyptian Arabic.

Before the acquisition of the GSA's 1:50,000 series, many BGN romanized forms of Egyptian geographic names in the Egyptian Gazetteer file were collected from much older Survey of Egypt Arabic script 1:100,000, 1:500,000,¹⁰ and 1:25,000 map series, while others were attained through reverse transliterations of Survey of Egypt romanized names.¹¹ It should be noted, too, that during the 1950's BGN romanized names were in fact used by the U.S. Army Map Service in some 1:250,000 scale mapping, such as the first edition of the Al Qāhirah sheet of the *North Africa* series, which were produced alongside of maps with toponyms rendered in the SES standard.¹² Egyptian toponyms on recent cartographic products for Egypt released by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) are in BGN/PCGN romanized form.

A sizable portion of Egyptian geographic names in SES romanized form are currently incorrectly identified as Approved names within the NGA's Geographic Names Database (GNDB); given

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Romanization of Place Names in Egypt*. BGN-PCGN Conference, 19th Session. London, 27 October-6 November, 1998. Agenda Item 6a.

¹⁰ *Egypt: Policy for Geographical Names*. Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use. 23 June 1997.

¹¹ *Sources Used to Develop Names on Existing Maps and Charts of Egypt*. Defense Mapping Agency Topographic Center. Undated.

¹² *Ibid.*

future maintenance work for the country, most, if not all, of these toponyms will be recast in their BGN-Approved romanized forms where possible, based on Arabic script forms. As the native Egyptian romanization system has moved closer in line with the UN and BGN/PCGN systems it is worth noting here some of the differences that remain which would inhibit names collection from Egyptian sources containing only romanized toponyms in the Egyptian style. The following table, though not exhaustive, briefly compares some basic vowel and consonant renderings seen in the BGN/PCGN, and current and former Egyptian romanization systems.

<u>Arabic Script</u>	<u>BGN/PCGN System</u>	<u>Current GSA System</u>	<u>Survey of Egypt System¹³ (SES)</u>
اَ	ā	ā	â
إِ	ī	ī	î
أُ	ū	ū	û
أَيَّ	ay	ay	ei or ai
أَوَّ	aw	aw	ô or au
ض	ḍ	ḍ	ḍ
ح	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ
ص	ṣ	ṣ	ṣ
ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ
ذ	dh	dh	dh or z
ج	j	j	g or j
ث	th	th	th or t
ق	q	q	q or k

The GSA and BGN/PCGN systems coincide exactly with regards to long vowels, diphthongs and non-emphatic consonants, whereas for emphatic letters, the GSA system employs the SES forms of Roman letters, with under-dots as opposed to cedillas.

Like the BGN/PCGN system, no allowances are made for dialectal pronunciations of consonants, such as with the Dhāl (ذ), Jīm (ج) and Thā' (ث), unlike the SES system which made those concessions for the purposes of reproducing local pronunciations. It is observed that some general dialectal pronunciation of terms, to a minor extent, does bleed over in the process of romanization. Like the UN system, the Arabic definite article *al* (ال) is connected to the following name with a hyphen.

Unlike either system, in the GSA system, the adjectival form, the *nisbah*, which is incorporated into some toponyms, is rendered as -iyy or -iyyah, rather than iyah in the UN and BGN/PCGN systems.

¹³ Report on the Current Status of United Nations Romanization Systems for Geographical Names: Arabic. UNGEGN Working Group on Romanization Systems, January 2003.

These differences, in addition to general issues with inconsistent rendering of emphatic letters, erroneous capitalization, and quality control concerns, essentially preclude direct collection of Egyptian toponyms romanized according to the GSA system. However, the current system is considered an improvement over the SES, which was seen as being arbitrary or too loose a collection of romanization guidelines.

c. Diacritics

The following diacritics are encountered in Approved names in Egypt:

<u>Character Name</u>	<u>Character</u>	<u>Unicode Value</u>
left single quotation mark	‘	2018
right single quotation mark	’	2019
Latin small letter a with acute	á	00E1
Latin capital letter a with acute	Á	00C1
Latin small letter a with macron	ā	0101
Latin capital letter a with macron	Ā	0100
Latin small letter i with macron	ī	012B
Latin capital letter i with macron	Ī	012A
Latin small letter u with macron	ū	016B
Latin capital letter u with macron	Ū	016A
Latin small letter d with cedilla	đ	1E11
Latin capital letter d with cedilla	Đ	1E10
Latin small letter h with cedilla	ħ	1E29
Latin capital letter h with cedilla	Ĥ	1E28
Latin small letter s with cedilla	ș	015F
Latin capital letter s with cedilla	Ș	015E
Latin small letter t with cedilla	ț	0163
Latin capital letter t with cedilla	Ț	0162
Latin small letter z with cedilla	ẓ	007A+0327
Latin capital letter z with cedilla	Ẓ	005A+0327

d. Generic Terms

Generic terms are simply the essential, native language terms for geographic features. Thus, the term *wādī* in the geographic name *Wādī Umm As‘ad* defines this feature as either a seasonal watercourse that runs through a valley or ravine, known commonly as a wadi, or the valley itself. Generic terms seen in Egyptian geographic names do not necessarily conform to standard Arabic definitions of the terms, as in the case of *jazīrah*, which in Egypt can refer to both an island and a hill. Generic terms should be collected for the Approved names of any feature for which that term defines the nature of that feature. So, the generic term collected for the feature above, *Wādī Umm As‘ad*, which was previously determined to be a seasonal watercourse is, as it would follow, *Wādī*.

“False generics” are those terms which may at first appear to be generics but are in fact inherent elements of geographic names and not feature descriptors, as supported by symbology on the map sources themselves, as in the case of the populated place *Wadī az Zanbaqah*.

See Appendix B for an extensive glossary of generic terms, with their respective feature designation names and codes. A generic term that ends with the Arabic letter *tā' marbūṭah*, such as *ḥadīqah*, a generic for “park,” will be listed as ending with –ah(t), to denote its independent and construct forms. This term as it is listed below, as Ḥadīqah(t), indicates that it would take the form Ḥadīqat when in a construct form, and Ḥadīqah, when not incorporated into a compound name.

e. Hyphenation and Capitalization

Egyptian geographic names that incorporate hyphens, especially those that may be found on larger-scale map sources, should be collected as compound names, preserving the original name structure, both in romanized and Arabic script forms.

Egyptian geographic names that incorporate additional names within parentheses should be treated as two separate names, whereby the primary, Approved name is followed by a Variant name in parentheses. For a commercial building feature in Al Jīzah, identified on Egyptian sources as Ash Shirkah al ‘Āmmah liṣ Ṣawāmi‘ (Ṣawma‘at Imbābah), the Approved name would be collected as Ash Shirkah al ‘Āmmah liṣ Ṣawāmi‘, with its Variant being Ṣawma‘at Imbābah. The same applies to its Arabic script original, الشركة العامة للصوامع (صومعة امبابة), where الشركة العامة للصوامع is collected as the Native Script, and صومعة امبابة as the Variant Script form.

Capitalization for romanized Arabic names in Egypt is undertaken in accordance with standard BGN/PCGN romanization practices. See items 1 and 4 under “Special Rules” in Appendix A.

f. Short Forms

Gazetteer Short Form names for Egyptian geographic names should be collected for Conventional and Approved names for the Egyptian state itself and for all echelons of the country’s administrative structure. Thus, the Conventional and Approved Short Form names for the independent political entity of Egypt are “Egypt” and “Miṣr,” respectively, while the Short Form name for the first-order administrative division Muḥāfazat al Qāhirah is “Al Qāhirah.” Additionally, Short Forms should be collected for the Native Script names of these features. So, for the Arabic script rendering for the second-order administrative division of Markaz Biyalā, مركز بيلا, the non-generic element of the geographic name, بيلا (Biyalā), is to be collected as the Short Form.

g. Numbers

As per established BGN/PCGN policy, cardinal and ordinal numerals incorporated into geographic names should be rendered according to their expanded forms. Thus, for the

romanized form of the populated place عزبة رقم ٤٠ ('Izbah Raqm 40), the Approved name will be 'Izbah Raqm Arba'ūn, with the Hindu numeral fully spelled out. A numeral-for-numeral variant form may be collected, in this case that being 'Izbah Raqm 40. Hindu numerals should be collected as they appear on source materials, as part of the Arabic script name. Below is a list of the numerals 0-9 for both systems.

<u>Hindu-Arabic</u>	<u>Hindu</u>
0	०
1	१
2	२
3	३
4	४
5	५
6	६
7	७
8	८
9	९

h. Abbreviations

Abbreviations are not commonly employed in medium- to small-scale Egyptian cartographic products rendered in Arabic script alone, while some may be seen in the romanized names of geographic features found on maps produced since 1986. The Arabic term *'Izbah*, which in the Egyptian context can refer equally to a farm, an estate or a rural settlement or hamlet, is typically found abbreviated as *'Iz*. While geographic names romanized in the current Egyptian fashion may be collected as variant names, all abbreviations such as these should be fully expanded.

i. Unique Linguistic Situations

The Arabic script rendering of geographic names is the only orthography to be used when undertaking the romanization of Egyptian toponyms, according to standard, classical Arabic vowel patterns, but the romanized forms on the Egyptian General Survey Authority's mapping products since the late 1980's may serve an auxiliary role in assisting with the transliteration of geographic names incorporating names and words of non-Arabic origins, that are part of the Egyptian heritage, e.g., such as those of Greek, Coptic or Turkish origins, that have essentially been Arabized over the centuries.

However, with the expanded availability of the General Survey Authority's dual-orthography 1:50,000 map series in the late 1990's, it became evident to BGN staff that the GSA's romanization for some generic terms as well as non-generics elements of toponyms did not conform with standard Arabic vowel pointing and classical vowel patterns. For example, it was noted that in its romanization the GSA was supplanting the short vowel *ḍammah* in names with the *kasrah*, and vice versa, as seen in the transliteration of the common generic term for canal, ترعة, as *tir'ah*, rather than the standard *tur'ah*.¹⁴ Likewise, the GSA was romanizing names such as Sharīf, as Shirīf.¹⁵ Another traditional voweling pattern, seen in the name of the populated place Buqayrah, is not adhered to in the Egyptian romanization, rendered as Biqayrah. The glottal stop, the *hamzah*, is not consistently accounted for and rendered, as seen in the GSA's romanization of some populated places incorporating منشأة (*munsha'ah* or *munsha'at*), where the term is rendered as *minshāh* or *minshāt*. So the geographic name Munsha'at al Jarāydah is romanized as *Minshāt al-Jarāydah*, according to the GSA's system.

These and other issues, where there are discrepancies between the Egyptian renderings and Standard Arabic voweling patterns, again illustrate the limitations of the GSA BGN/PCGN-style romanized forms as an auxiliary source for unfamiliar terms and names of non-Arabic origin, but concessions can be made to preserve these non-standard and dialectal variations as Variant names.

4. Political Geography Policy

a. Country Name and Capital

Country Name

Conventional Long Form:	Arab Republic of Egypt
Conventional Short Form:	Egypt
Approved Long Form:	Jumhūrīyat Miṣr al 'Arabīyah
Approved Short Form:	Miṣr
Native Script Long Form:	جمهورية مصر العربية
Native Script Short Form:	مصر

Capital

Conventional Name:	Cairo
Approved Name:	Al Qāhirah
Native Script Name:	القاهرة

¹⁴ *Romanization of Place Names in Egypt*. BGN-PCGN Conference, 19th Session. London, 27 October-6 November, 1998. Agenda Item 6a.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

b. First-order Administrative Divisions

Egypt is composed of 27 governorates, or *muḥāfaẓāt* (singular: *muḥāfaẓah(t)*). Conventional names for certain seats of first-order administrative divisions are in parentheses. An administrative map of Egypt will be provided pending release by the GSA of an updated administrative map for the full extent of the Egyptian state, in light of the restructuring of several first-order administrative divisions in April 2011.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Generic</u>	<u>Seat</u>	<u>FIPS 10-4</u>	<u>ISO 3166-2</u>
1	Ad Daqaḥlīyah الدقهلية	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Maṣṣūrah المنصورة	EG01	EG-DK
2	Al Baḥr al Aḥmar البحر الأحمر	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Ghardaqaḥ الغردقة	EG02	EG-BA
3	Al Buḥayrah البحيرة	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Damanhūr دمنهور	EG03	EG-BH
4	Al Fayyūm الفيوم	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Fayyūm الفيوم	EG04	EG-FYM
5	Al Gharbīyah الغربية	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Ṭanṭā طنطا	EG05	EG-GH
6	Al Iskandarīyah الإسكندرية	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Iskandarīyah (Alexandria) الإسكندرية	EG06	EG-ALX
7	Al Ismā‘īlīyah الإسماعيلية	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Ismā‘īlīyah (Ismailia) الإسماعيلية	EG07	EG-IS
8	Al Jīzah الجيزة	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Jīzah الجيزة	EG08	EG-GZ
9	Al Minūfīyah المنوفية	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Shibīn al Kawm شبين الكوم	EG09	EG-MNF
10	Al Minyā المنيا	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Minyā المنيا	EG10	EG-MN
11	Al Qāhirah القاهرة	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Qāhirah (Cairo) القاهرة	EG11	EG-C

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Generic</u>	<u>Seat</u>	<u>FIPS 10-4</u>	<u>ISO 3166-2</u>
12	Al Qalyūbīyah القليوبية	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Banhā بنها	EG12	EG-KB
13	Al Wādī al Jadīd الوادي الجديد	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Khārijah الخارجة	EG13	EG-WAD
14	Ash Sharqīyah الشرقية	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Az Zaqaẓīq الزقازيق	EG14	EG-SHR
15	As Suways السويس	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	As Suways (Suez) السويس	EG15	EG-SUZ
16	Aswān أسوان	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Aswān أسوان	EG16	EG-ASN
17	Asyūṭ أسيوط	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Asyūṭ أسيوط	EG17	EG-AST
18	Banī Suwayf بني سويف	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Banī Suwayf بني سويف	EG18	EG-BNS
19	Būr Sa‘īd بور سعيد	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Būr Sa‘īd (Port Said) بور سعيد	EG19	EG-PTS
20	Dumyāṭ دمياط	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Dumyāṭ (Damietta) دمياط	EG20	EG-DT
21	Kafr ash Shaykh كفر الشيخ	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Kafr ash Shaykh كفر الشيخ	EG21	EG-KFS
22	Maṭrūḥ مطروح	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Marsá Maṭrūḥ مرسى مطروح	EG22	EG-MT
23	Qinā قنا	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Qinā قنا	EG23	EG-KN
24	Sūhāj سوهاج	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Sūhāj سوهاج	EG24	EG-SHG
25	Janūb Sīnā’ جنوب سيناء	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Aṭ Ṭūr الطور	EG26	EG-JS

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Generic</u>	<u>Seat</u>	<u>FIPS 10-4</u>	<u>ISO 3166-2</u>
26	Shamāl Sīnā' شمال سيناء	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al ‘Arīsh العريش	EG27	EG-SIN
27	Al Uqṣur الأقصر	Muḥāfaẓat محافظة	Al Uqṣur (Luxor) الأقصر	EG28	EG-LX

c. Conventional and/or Anglicized Names

Conventional Names

Conventional Name	UFI	UNI	Designation
Libyan Plateau	-3169386	-4474981	PLAT
Suez Canal	-303685	-473795	CNL
Gulf of Sollum	-303547	-473535	GULF
Siwa Oasis	-303535	-473485	OAS
Sinai Peninsula	-303465	-473323	PEN
Arabian Desert	-302060	-470788	DSRT
Rosetta Mouth	-301184	-469059	STMM
Rosetta	-301180	-469052	PPL
Rosetta Branch	-301179	-469050	STM
Suez Bay	-300915	-468488	BAY
Qattara Depression	-300787	-468211	DPR
Euhemeria	-300719	-468073	HSTS
Nile River	-300347	-467240	STM
Nile	-300347	14443494	STM
Nile Delta	-300346	-467239	DLTA
Little Bitter Lake	-299547	-465756	LK
Great Bitter Lake	-299546	-465753	LK
Bitter Lakes	-299536	-465742	LKS
Pyramid of Userkaf	-299443	-465592	PYR
Step Pyramid of Zoser	-299328	-465394	PYR
Mitla Pass	-299224	-465184	PASS
Lower Egypt	-299118	-464970	RGN
Heliopolis	-299116	-464967	PPLX
Libyan Desert	-298066	-462854	DSRT
Pyramid of El Lahun	-298023	-462764	PYR
Philoteris	-297552	-461746	RUIN
Mount Catherine	-297455	-461642	MT
Pyramids of Giza	-296343	-459587	PYR
Gidi Pass	-296103	-459284	PASS
Pyramid of Hawara	-295366	-457945	PYR

Conventional Name	UFI	UNI	Designation
Western Desert	-294669	-456468	DSRT
Philae	-294491	-455845	ISL
Arab Republic of Egypt	-293336	-451924	PCLI
Egypt	-293336	14033825	PCLI
Damietta Mouth	-293285	-451804	STMM
Damietta Branch	-293283	-451801	STM
Damietta	-293282	-451799	PPLA
Port Said	-292710	-450616	PPLA
First Cataract	-291758	-448777	RPDS
Aswan Dam	-291538	-448381	DAM
Suez	-291531	-448369	PPLA
Upper Egypt	-291439	-448259	RGN
Luxor	-290821	-447320	PPLA
Cairo	-290692	-447175	PPLC
Ismailia	-290266	-446696	PPLA
Alexandria	-290263	-446691	PPLA
Aswan High Dam	-290200	-446595	DAM
Temple of Abu Simbel	-289276	-445270	RUIN
Sanctuary of the Sun God	-288820	-444476	RUIN
Sphinx	-288412	-443708	MNMT
Lake Nasser	-11964	-18613	RSV

Anglicized Variant Names

Name	UFI	UNI	Designation
North Sinai	-301990	-467341	ADM1
South Sinai	-296177	-473560	ADM1
Damietta	-293286	-451016	ADM1
Port Said	-292712	14838156	ADM1
Suez	-291530	14838155	ADM1
New Valley	-290840	-467198	ADM1
Cairo	-290691	14838154	ADM1
Giza	-290324	14833338	ADM1
Ismailia	-290265	-459002	ADM1
Alexandria	-290262	14833335	ADM1
Red Sea	-289850	-469143	ADM1
Luxor	10744130	14833339	ADM1

d. Disputed Territories

Note: For the latest country specific boundary dispute information, consult the US Department of State Office of the Geographer and Global Issues.

Tiran and Sanafir Islands

Saudi Arabia claims Egyptian-administered islands of Tiran and Sanafir in the Red Sea.¹⁶

Hala'ib Triangle, Bir Tawil "administered" lines

Sudan claims but Egypt de facto administers security and economic development of Hala'ib region north of the 22nd parallel boundary; geographic features that fall within this area are currently identified as being under Sudanese sovereignty. Although Egypt no longer shows its administration of the Bir Tawil trapezoid in Sudan on its maps,¹⁷ features within this area in turn are identified as Egyptian.

Wadi Halfa salient

Egypt's longest boundary, which extends 1,273 kilometers, is with Sudan. In accordance with the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement of 1899, this boundary runs westward from the Red Sea along the twenty-second parallel, including the Sudanese Nile salient (or Wadi Halfa salient), and continues along the twenty-second parallel until it meets the twenty-fifth meridian. The Sudanese Nile salient, a finger-shaped area along the Nile River north of the twenty-second parallel, is now nearly covered by Lake Nasser, which was created when the Aswan High Dam was constructed in the 1960s. An "administrative" boundary, which supplements the main Egyptian-Sudanese boundary permits nomadic tribes to gain access to water holes at the eastern end of Egypt's southern frontier. The administrative boundary departs from the international boundary in two places; Egypt administers the area south of the twenty-second parallel, and Sudan administers the area north of it.¹⁸

5. Source Material

a. Preferred Sources

The Egyptian General Survey Authority (GSA), the Egyptian Directorate of Military Survey, the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and the Egyptian Geological Survey and Mining Authority, in that order, are the preferred authorities for Egyptian map and geospatial products. What follows is a comparatively inclusive list of authoritative map and other geographic data sources released by these bodies as well as non-authoritative sources produced by third-parties. They are listed in order of preference based on their authoritativeness, presence of Arabic script toponyms, scale, and utility.

Primary Sources

Topographic Line Maps

- Egyptian General Survey Authority

¹⁶ Egypt. CIA World Factbook Online. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/eg.html>> 24 Mar 2011.

¹⁷ Egypt. CIA World Factbook Online. 24 Mar 2011.

¹⁸ Egypt Country Study. U.S. Library of Congress Online. <<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+eg0058%29>> 24 Mar 2011.

- 1:25,000 series, 1986-Present. Coverage for Egypt's northern coast to the Delta, and the Canal zone to Al Ismā'īlīyah.¹⁹ Mapping over the Nile Delta area was recently completed. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script and in Egypt's BGN/PCGN-style General Survey Authority romanized forms. Availability is extremely limited.
 - 1:50,000, 1989-2010. Covers the land mass from east of Al Wādī al Jadīd and through the Nile Delta to the Eastern Desert and down to the southern border.²⁰ Four-hundred thirty-seven map sheets have been produced. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script and in BGN/PCGN-style General Survey Authority romanized forms.
 - 1:50,000, 1971-1976. Covers areas of the Nile Delta and Northern Sinai and the northwest branch of the Red Sea. Extremely limited availability.
- Egyptian Directorate of Military Survey
 - 1:250,000, 1975-1986. Covers approximately 60% of the land mass of Egypt. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only. Fifty map sheets are currently available.
 - Egyptian General Survey Authority
 - 1:100,000, 1970-1978. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only. Six maps only are currently available, but should complement larger- and smaller-scale sources.

Administrative Maps

- Egyptian General Survey Authority and Egyptian Directorate of Military Survey
 - 1:100,000 – 1:1,250,000, 1993. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only. Maps for 20 of Egypt's first-order administrative division are currently available.

Miscellaneous City Maps

- Egyptian General Survey Authority
 - Cairo, 1:20,000, 2010. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script, while a separate English-language translation is also currently available.
 - Al Quşayr/Marsá 'Alam, 1:10,000, 2000. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script and in BGN/PCGN-style General Survey Authority romanized forms, with some names of features translated into English.
 - Būr Sa'īd, 1:15,000, 2000. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script and in BGN/PCGN-style General Survey Authority romanized forms.
 - Cairo, 1:15,000, 1986. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only.

¹⁹ *Al Jihāz al Markazī lit Ta'bi'ah al 'Āmmah wa al Iḥṣā'*. Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). <<http://www.capmas.gov.eg>>

²⁰ *Al Jihāz al Markazī lit Ta'bi'ah al 'Āmmah wa al Iḥṣā'*. Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). <<http://www.capmas.gov.eg>>

- Alexandria, 1:15,000, 1979. Geographic names are rendered in Arabic script only.

Road Maps

- Egyptian General Survey Authority
 - 1:400,000, 1987. This two-part map set depicts the major motorways throughout the entirety of Egypt, through the inclusion of several insets of various scales, with the central plates centered on the road network of the Nile Delta through Upper Egypt. Geographic names are rendered scale in Arabic script.

Online Resources

As Egyptian government departments and agencies evolve and expand their online presence and capabilities, websites for Egypt's mapping, statistics and survey, the Egyptian GSA, CAPMAS and the Egyptian Geological Survey and Mining Authority, will prove to be crucial resources for accessing large-scale map products as well as databases and GIS tools in the process of construction, as in the case of CAPMAS. Other general government sites, and the websites for the majority of Egypt's governorates will likewise be vital stops for basic geospatial products and toponymic information.

- *Al Hay'ah al Miṣrīyah al 'Āmmah lil Misāḥah*. Egyptian General Survey Authority. <www.esa.gov.eg>
- *Al Jihāz al Markazī lit Ta'bi'ah al 'Āmmah wa al Iḥṣā'*. Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). <<http://www.capmas.gov.eg>>
- Egyptian Mineral Resources Authority - Egyptian Geological Survey and Mining Authority. <www.egsma.gov.eg>
- *Al Hay'ah al 'Āmmah lil Isti'lāmāt*. Egypt State Information Service. <<http://www.sis.gov.eg>>
- *Bawwābat al Ḥukūmah al Miṣrīyah*. The Egyptian Government Portal. <<http://www.egypt.gov.eg>>
- *Bawwābat Ma'lūmāt Miṣr*. The Information Portal of Egypt. 1 Oct. 2011. <<http://www.eip.gov.eg>>
- Egyptian Governorate sites:
 - Ad Daqahlīyah < <http://www.dakahliya.gov.eg> >
 - Al Baḥr al Aḥmar < <http://www.redsea.gov.eg> >
 - Al Buḥayrah < <http://www.behera.gov.eg> >
 - Al Fayyūm < <http://www.fayoum.gov.eg> >
 - Al Gharbīyah < <http://www.gharbia.gov.eg> >
 - Al Iskandarīyah < <http://www.alexandria.gov.eg> >
 - Al Ismā'īlīyah < <http://www.ismailia.gov.eg> >
 - Al Jīzah < <http://www.giza.gov.eg> >
 - Al Minyā < <http://www.minia.gov.eg> >
 - Al Qāhirah < <http://www.cairo.gov.eg> >

Al Qalyūbiyah	< http://www.kalyobiya.gov.eg >
Al Wādī al Jadīd	< http://www.newvalley.gov.eg >
Ash Sharqīyah	< http://www.sharkia.gov.eg >
As Suways	< http://www.suez.gov.eg >
Aswān	< http://www.aswannews.gov.eg >
Asyūṭ	< http://www.assiut.gov.eg >
Banī Suwayf	< http://www.benisueif.gov.eg >
Būr Sa‘īd	< http://www.portsaid.gov.eg >
Dumyāṭ	< http://www.domyat.gov.eg >
Kafr ash Shaykh	< http://www.kafrelshiekh.gov.eg >
Maṭrūḥ	< http://www.matrouh.gov.eg >
Qinā	< http://www.kena.gov.eg >
Sūhāj	< http://www.sohag.gov.eg >
Janūb Sīnā’	< http://www.southsinai.gov.eg >
Shamāl Sīnā’	< http://www.northsinai.gov.eg >
Al Uqṣur	< http://www.luxor.gov.eg >

Secondary Sources

- Egyptian Geological Survey and Mining Authority
 - o 1:100,000 – 1:250,000. 1999-2005. Geographic names are rendered according to the current General Survey Authority’s BGN/PCGN-style romanization system.

Tertiary Sources

- Survey of Egypt
 - o 1:100,000, various separate series, 1930-1952. Geographic names are rendered according to the former Survey of Egypt romanization system.
 - o 1:500,000, 1942-1945. Geographic names are rendered according to the former Survey of Egypt romanization system.
- U.K Directorate of Military Survey
 - o Egypt, 1:100,000, 1930-58.
 - o Egypt, 1:500,000, 1941-48.
- Clyde Surveys, Ltd. Egypt, 1:1,000,000, 1972.
- GEO Projects (Beirut) and Oxford University Press. The Oxford Map of Egypt, 1:1,000,000, 1981.

Appendix A. Glossary of Generic Terms

Generic	Designation Name	Designation Code
'Ajrah(t)	hill	HLL
'Alam	cliff(s), hill	CLF, HLL
'Alāwī	hills, island(s)	HLLS, ISLS
'Ayn	spring(s), well	SPNG, WLL
'Idwah(t)	mountain	MT
'Ilw	hill, island, mound(s), plateau, upland	HLL, ISL, MND, PLAT, UPLD
'Ilwah(t)	hill, island, mound(s)	HLL, ISL, MND
'Irq	dune(s), escarpment	DUNE, SCRP
'Iyādah(t)	clinic	HSPC
'Izab	farms	FRMS
'Izbah(t)	farm	FRM
'Ujayrah(t)	hill, mountain	HLL, MT
'Ujrah(t)	hills, mountain	HLLS, MT
'Ushash	huts	HUTS
'Uyūn	spring(s)	SPNG
'Urf	hill	HLL
Abār	water tank, well	RSVT, WLL
Akādīmīyah(t)	school, technical school	SCH, SCHK
Ashtūm	inlet	INLT
Atallah	hills	HLLS
Athār	ruin(s)	RUIN
Aṭlāl	ruin(s)	RUIN
Bāb	gate, stream mouth(s)	GATE, STMM
Baḥr	bay, canal, channel, intermittent lake, lake, marsh(es), navigation canal(s), sea, section of lake, stream	BAY, CNL, CHN, LKI, LK, MRSH, CNLN, LKX, SEA, STM
Bank	bank	BAN
Barr	bar, island, shore	BAR, ISL, SHOR
Başṭat	tower	TOWR
Bī'r	abandoned well, water tank, well(s)	WLLQ, RSVT, WLLS
Birkah(t)	lake, marsh(es), pond, section of lake	LK, MRSH, PND, LKX
Blāj	beach	BCH
Būghāz	channel, harbor(s)	CHN, HBR
Buḥayrah(t)	bay, intermittent lake, lake, marsh(es), salt lakes	BAY, LKI, LK, MRSH, LKSN
Būr	port	PRT
Bu'rah(t)	bay	BAY
Burj	tower	TOWR

Generic	Designation Name	Designation Code
Būz	cape, point, spit	CAPE, PT, SPIT
Ḍahr	hill, island	HLL, ISL
Dākhilah(t)	inlet	INLT
Darb	pass, road, trail	PASS, RD, TRL
Ḍarīḥ	shrine, tomb(s)	SHRN, TMB
Dayr	monastery	MSTY
Dirāʻ	ridge(s)	RDGE
Fāliq	cliff(s)	CLF
Farʻ	canal, section of stream	CNL, STMX
Farsh	peak, plateau, plain(s), ridge(s)	PK, PLAT, PLN, RDGE
Farshat	plateau	PLAT
Funduq	hotel	HTL
Gharrāqah(t)	lake, marsh(es)	LK, MRSH
Ghubbah(t)	bay, cove(s)	BAY, COVE
Ghurūd	dune(s)	DUNE
Habr	sand area	SAND
Ḥadāʻiq	park	PRK
Haḍabah(t)	plateau	PLAT
Ḥadīqah(t)	park	PRK
Ḥajr	rock	RK
Ḥalq	channel, cove(s), lake channel(s), marine channel	CHN, COVE, CHNL, CHNM
Ḥamrāyah(t)	desert	DSRT
Ḥanak	point	PT
Ḥaql Ghāz	gasfield	GASF
Haram	pyramid	PYR
Ḥaṭīyah(t)	scrubland	SCRB
Ḥawḍ	drainage basin, irrigated field, oasis(- es), well	BSND, FLDI, OAS, WLL
Ḥawīs	canal, lock, well	CNL, LOCK, WLL
Ḥayy	section of populated place	PPLX
Iskān	section of populated place	PPLX
Istād	stadium	STDM
Istirāḥah(t)	resthouse	RHSE
Iyādah(t)	clinic	HSPC
Jabal	cliff(s), escarpment, hill(s),mountain(s), peak, plateau, ridge(s), upland	CLF, SCRP, HLLS, MTS, PL, PLAT, RDGE, UPLD
Jabbānah(t)	burial cave(s), cemetery	BUR, CMTY
Jāmiʻ	mosque	MSQE
Jāmiʻah(t)	college	SCHC

Generic	Designation Name	Designation Code
Jannābīyah(t)	canal, drainage canal	CNL, CNLD
Jawz	dune(s)	DUNE
Jazā'ir	islands	ISLS
Jazīrah(t)	hill, island, peninsula	HLL, ISL, PEN
Jibāl	hills, mountains	HLLS, MTS
Jumhūrīyah(t)	independent political entity	PCLI
Jūnah(t)	bay	BAY
Jurf	ridge(s), slope(s)	RDGE, SLP
Jurfah(t)	ridge(s)	RDGE
Juzur	islands	ISLS
Kanīсах(t)	church	CH
Karm	garden(s), orchard	GDN, OCH
Kathīb	dune(s), hill	DUNE, HLL
Kawlah(t)	hill	HLL
Kawm	hill, mound(s)	HLL, MND
Khalīj	bay, canal, stream	BAY, CNL, STM
Khīrbah(t)	ruin(s)	RUIN
Khashm	hill, mountain, peak, spur(s)	HLL, MT, PK, SPUR
Khawr	wadi	WAD
Khazzān	dam, ditch	DAM, DTCH
Kūbrī	bridge	BDG
Kullīyah(t)	college	SCHC
Kullīyāt	colleges	SCHC
Kullīyat az Zirā'ah	agricultural school	SCHA
Lujjah(t)	bay, lagoon	BAY, LGN
Ma'bad	ancient site, temple	ANS, TMPL
Ma'had	college, research institute, technical school	SCHC, ITTR, SCHAT
Mā'	spring(s)	SPNG
Madāfin	cemetery	CMTY
Madāris	schools	SCH
Maḍīq	strait	STRT
Madrasah(t)	school	SCH
Maḥaṭṭah(t)	railroad station, subway station, transit terminal	RSTN, SUBS, TRANT
Maḥaṭṭat Miyāh	water pumping station	PMPW
Maḥaṭṭat Kahrabā'	power station	PS
Maḥaṭṭat Muḥawwilāt	power station	PS
Maḥaṭṭat Qiṭār	railroad station	RSTN
Maḥaṭṭat Raf' Miyāh	water pumping station	PMPW

Generic	Designation Name	Designation Code
Maḥaṭṭat Ṭulumbāt	water pumping station	PMPW
Maḥjir	quarry(-ies)	MNQR
Maḥkamah(t)	courthouse	CTHSE
Makhzan	reservoir(s)	RSV
Maktab Barīd	post office	PO
Mallāḥah(t)	lagoon, marsh(es), pond, sabkha(s), salt area, salt lake	LGN, MRSH, PND, SBKH, SALT, LKN
Mamarr	pass	PASS
Manājim	abandoned mine, mine(s)	MNQ, MN
Manāmat	tomb(s)	TMB
Manārah(t)	lighthouse	LTHSE
Manjam	abandoned mine, mine(s)	MNQR, MN
Maqābir	cemetery	CMTY
Maqām	shrine, tomb(s)	SHRN, TMB
Maqṭaʿ	channel, lake channel(s)	CHN, CHNL
Markaz	second-order administrative division	ADM2
Markaz al Buḥūth	research institute	ITTR
Markaz at Taʿlīm	school	SCH
Markaz Ṭibbī	medical center	CTRM
Marsá	anchorage, cove(s), inlet	ANCH, COVE, INLT
Masākin	house(s), section of populated place	HSE, PPLX
Maṣāniʿ	factory	MFG
Masjid	mosque	MSQE
Maṣnaʿ	factory	MFG
Masrab	channel	CHN
Maṣraf	canal, ditch, drainage canal,	CNL, DTCH, CNLD
Maṣīf	resort	RSRT
Maydān	square	SQR
Mayyah(t)	spring(s), water tank	SPNG, RSVT
Mazraʿah(t)	farm	FRM
Mīnāʿ	anchorage, quay, harbor(s), port	ANCH, QUAY, HBR, PRT
Minqār	cliff(s), peak	CLF, PK
Minṭaqah Ṣināʿiyah	industrial area	INDS
Minṭaqah(t)	section of populated place	PPLX
Misak	well	WLL
Masqaṭ	irrigation ditch	DTCHI
Miyāh	spring(s), water tank, well	SPNG, RSVT, WLL
Muḥāfaẓah(t)	first-order administrative division, administrative facility	ADM1, ADMF
Muḥīṭ	canal, ocean	CNL, OCN

Generic	Designation Name	Designation Code
Muqābir	cemetery	CMTY
Mushāsh	waterhole(s), well	WTRH, WLL
Mustashfá	hospital	HSP
Mustashfá Bayṭarī	veterinary facility	VETF
Mustawda'	storehouse	SHSE
Mustawda'āt	storehouse	SHSE
Mustawṣaf	clinic	HSPC
Muṭḥaf	museum	MUS
Nafaq	tunnel	TNL
Naqb	pass	PASS
Nuqrah(t)	cove(s)	COVE
Nuqṭat Itfá'	fire station	FIRE
Nuqṭat Shurṭah	police post	PP
Nuṣb	monument	MNMT
Nuwaybi'	spring(s)	SPNG
Qā'in	mud flat(s)	LFTM
Qabr	shrine, tomb(s)	SHRN, TMB
Qal'ah(t)	fort	FT
Qalt	water tank, well	RSVT, WLL
Qanāh(t)	canal	CNL
Qanāṭir	dam	DAM
Qārah(t)	depression(s), hill	DPR, HLL
Qarn	point	PT
Qaṣr	palace	PAL
Qaṭ'	channel, marine channel, strait	CHN, CHNM, STRT
Qaṭṭār	spring(s)	SPNG
Qawz	dune(s)	DUNE
Qulayb	mountain	MT
Ra's	cape, hill, mountain, peak, point	CAPE, HLL, MT, PK, PT
Radīm	breakwater	BRKW
Ramlah(t)	sand area	SAND
Raswah(t)	anchorage	ANCH
Rawḍ	valley, wadi	VAL, WAD
Rayyāḥ	canal, navigation canal(s)	CNL, CNLN
Rīḍān	orchard(s)	OCH
Ruwaysah(t)	mountain	MT
Ruwaysāt	hills	HLLS
Sabkhah(t)	sabkha(s)	SBKH
Sadd	dam	DAM
Sahl	plain(s)	PLN

Generic	Designation Name	Designation Code
Şaḥnah(t)	depression(s)	DPR
Sakan	house(s), section of populated place	HSE, PPLX
Sakināt	house(s)	HSE
Sāniyat	water tank, well	RSVT, WLL
Şawwānat	plain(s)	PLN
Sha'b	reef(s)	RF
Sharm	bay, inlet	BAY, INLT
Shāṭī	beach	BCH
Shibh Jazīrah(t)	peninsula	PEN
Sifārah(t)	diplomatic facility	DIP
Sijn	prison	PRN
Sujūn	prison	PRN
Sūq	market, shopping center	MKT, SHOPC
Ṭabaqah(t)	mountain, plateau	MT, PLAT
Ṭābiyah(t)	fort	FT
Taḥwīlat	canal	CNL
Tal'ah(t)	hill, slope(s), mountain	HLL, SLP, MT
Tall	hill, mound(s)	HLL, MND
Tallah(t)	hill, mountain	HLL, MT
Tallāt	hills	HLLS
Ṭarīq	road	RD
Ṭawwāl	lagoon, strait	LGN, STRT
Thamīlah(t)	well	WLL
Tilāl	hills, mountain	HLLS, MT
Tirsānah(t)	dockyard	DCKY
Ṭulumbāt	water pumping station	PMPW
Ṭūr	hill	HLL
Tur'ah(t)	canal, irrigation canal, navigation canal(s)	CNL, CNLI, CNLN
Wādī	valley, wadi	VAL, WAD
Wāḥah(t)	oasis(-es)	OAS
Ẓahr	hill	HLL

Appendix B. “Romanization of Place Names in Egypt,” 19th BGN-PCGN Conference

19th BGN-PCGN Conference, London

27th October - 6th November 1998

Agenda Item 6a

Romanization of Place Names in Egypt

BGN Staff

US military mapping policy for geographic names applied to products covering Egypt is governed by NATO Standardization Agreement 3689 “Place Name Spelling on Maps & Charts.” This STANAG specifies use of the Survey of Egypt romanization system, a policy that may stem from now defunct bilateral agreements with Egyptian authorities. The Egypt Gazetteer (database), however, was always published according to BGN. It was initially thought that since Egypt is an Arab country, there would be no problem in following the BGN system of transliteration. It turned out that most names in Egypt were not of Arabic origin, and, therefore, not readily recognized by Egyptians when rendered in BGN. At the time, Egyptian authorities were not receptive to BGN transliteration mainly because: one, Egyptian maps and charts followed the Survey of Egypt, and two, phonetically speaking, names in BGN did not sound similar to the Egyptian dialect, as in Arab countries of the Levant. It should be noted here that in a 1973 conference, Egyptians recommended and decreed the use of BGN on their products. Apparently, this was never implemented until the production of 1:50K series that covers most of the Nile valley. Refer to attached index.

These recently published, bilingual maps (437) produced by Egypt in the mid 1990s, show that BGN is gaining favor with the mapping authorities. BGN, however, is not used in the strict sense of the word; subdots are still used instead of cedillas, so are hyphens following the definite articles, and dialectic spellings of some names rather than modern standard Arabic. Ex: Tir‘at instead of Tur‘at, Shirīf instead of Sharīf, etc... Egyptians have the tendency to use kasrah where dammah is used and vice versa. Refer to attached maps. Since the latest maps are bilingual, this is no longer a problem.

Because all NIMA maps and charts are done according to Survey of Egypt system, it would be a monumental task to change over to BGN. Since the NIMA names database is already in BGN (variant, in Survey of Egypt), the problem in this area would be minimal.

GIMSE (Names Branch) recommends to go with the BGN system, however, if exceptions to the BGN system are encountered due to the presence of non-Arabic names in certain areas and the impracticability of using BGN, names then should be transliterated as shown on the native maps.