

NATIONAL ATLAS OF VIETNAM-1995 PROCESS OF ESTABLISHMENT

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Abstract

The National Atlas of Vietnam has been expectation work of Vietnamese for long time. Because of many reasons, only this year the Atlas is being published. This article gives the main steps and process of it's establishment, supplies the general information of the first Atlas of Vietnam.

Through the Atlas the authors' collectives want to show the achievement that marks an important point in the development of Geography and Cartography of Vietnam.

1 The beginning of Atlas construction.

In 1995 the National Atlas of Vietnam is going to be published. It's the second National Atlas after the Atlas Hong Duc (in the 15 century) but the first in the meaning of dimension of organization, scientific content, historical and practical signification.

The publication of this Atlas named " Atlas 1995 " finished the long process of data collection, analysis calculating statistics and thematic mapping based on many National research project during last forty year. In compiling the Atlas did involve over 50 ministries, National Scientific Institutes, organizations and establishments.

The first idea of its construction had been discussed since 1974. However, due to the war and difficulty of that time, only the plan and program were decided. In 1981, National Center for Scientific Research (now for Natural Science and Technology - NCST) was in charge of fulfilling five - year state project of Atlas construction and Institute of Geography became main organizer who completed the project. The Academy of Geography of the Soviet Union gave great support to Vietnamese specialists in mapping process during the period from 1981 to 1985.

In four phases of project many investigations and research on natural conditions, resources, planning, regional development and environmental protection were organized for whole territory of Vietnam. Many thematic maps has been made for the first time. The Project Committee held series of workshop conferences in order to evaluate and admit the accomplishing maps. In this period, the participation of cartographers was highly appreciative. They took part in map design and presentation. They had close relationship with geographers and others specialist to make map more precious and valuable.

In the end of 1985, all the maps of Atlas were finished. After two years of preparing, in 1987, the first exemplar of Atlas was carried out. It was the gross Atlas with format of 44 x 64 cm, two hundred papers and weight in 7kg. The main scales of map were 1:2 000 000 and 1:3 000 000. The Atlas composes four large parts with 19 chapters covered all subject in the relation " Nature-- Human and Society ".

The first part presents Vietnam on the World and South East Asia maps.

The second part shows the historical process of Vietnam from the stone era up to 1945 - the date of foundation of Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The third part - physical map, gives the thematic map on natural condition and resources such as: geology, relief, climate, hydrology, flora, fauna ...

The last part presents the maps and documents of demography, the main branches of economy and the social service problem.

The atlas - 1987 was high-performance product of authors' collective and Project Committee. It has reflected the level of territory monitoring and research for 40 years. In general, all the physical maps presented perfectly the nature of Vietnam. The economical and social maps gave the detail and exact practical picture of the country at that time. Atlas supplied much information for country study.

However, some defect was noticed in the Atlas. It was lack of some important synthetic maps, not very high accordance of one chapter with the other. But it didn't reduce the quality of the Atlas. Unfortunately it wasn't publish at that time.

2 Atlas 1995

In the beginning of this decade, understanding the importance and value of Atlas for decision making, solving practical problem and developing project, Vietnamese government officially decided to publish New National Atlas based on Atlas 1987.

Obtaining this task, Vietnamese cartographers had great technical and scientific difficulties. The scientific value and actuality of atlas 1987 are reduced because of long time delay. Many new idea discoveries and theories appear, especially in the field of economy and human science. Other part, the map content of atlas and scales map and format, page proportion between maps, and illustrations were not reasonable. Therefore the new Atlas 1995 had following changes.

- The format was reduced to 37 x 40 cm.
- Main map scales are 1:2 500 000 and 1:4 000 000
- The number of chapters are 14 instead of 20
- The total pages are 160, in which the text pages are 42.
- The new set of data was supplied for all the maps of population and socio-economy.
- The two languages : Vietnamese and English are used in atlas.

The main contents of Atlas are as follows.

	Number of map	Number of page
Introduction	6	9
Chapter 1-- Geology	8	11
Chapter 2 --Relief	6	7
Chapter 3 --Climate	7	7
Chapter 4 --Hydrography	11	7
Chapter 5 --Pedology	4	3
Chapter 6 --Flora	6	5
Chapter 7 --Fauna	5	5
Chapter 8 --The East - sea	11	11
Chapter 9--Demography and Ethnic population	8	10
Chapter 10-- Agriculture	11	11
Chapter 11 -- Industry	9	11
Chapter 12 -- Communication Transportation, Post Telegraphy and Trade	6	7
Chapter 13 --General Economy	2	3
Chapter 14 - Education, Health, Care, Cultural and Spot Text	7	7
		42

During the pre-printing process in Cartographic Mapping Institute in Hanoi, the new printing technology is applied to provide higher quality of maps.

3 Conclusion.

Though there was much difficulty, at last the National Atlas of Vietnam is coming out.

It has to resolve different conflict and situation appeared during the economical change in Vietnam, so there will be some influence of it on the map too.

First Atlas is a great effort and contribution of Vietnamese Cartographers. It will be a valuable guide -- book for all who wants to know about Vietnam.

References

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