

# LANGUAGE AND PLACE NAMES IN NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ATLASES. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PRACTICAL USE EXEMPLIFIED BY NEW ATLASES FROM THE EASTERN PART OF EUROPE

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## **Abstract**

National and regional atlases are mainly conceived for national use, but as map works with a representative function they address, in contrast to school atlases, also an international audience. Taking this into account, many of them use for titles, legends and explanatory texts not only the national language, but also one or more world languages or are published in different language editions.

The use of a second or third editorial language has, however, implications on the treatment of place names, especially on the use of exonyms. Another aspect deriving from the atlases' representative function is the reflection of minority names.

The paper investigates into relevant practices applied in recently published national and regional atlases from the eastern part of Europe and offers some methodological considerations as regards the use of more than one editorial language, the use of exonyms in this case as well the use of minority names.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

National and regional atlases are mainly conceived for national use. But as map works with a representative function they address, in contrast to school atlases, also an international audience. Taking this into account, many of them use for titles, legends and explanatory texts not only the national language, but also one or more world languages or are published in different language editions. The use of a second or even more editorial languages has, however, implications on the treatment of place names.

As soon as the atlas addresses more than one (the own) language community, the justification for the use of exonyms for geographical objects outside the own country is not as obvious. But it could also be argued that the use of exonyms should be extended to all editorial languages and that even for objects within the own country exonyms of the other editorial languages should be presented.

The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), the international authority in the field of geographic names, defines in its glossary an exonym as the "Name used in a specific language for a geographical feature situated outside the area where that language has official status, and differing in its form from the name used in the official language or languages of the area where the geographical feature is situated."<sup>1</sup> (Glossary 2002, p. 10). UNGEGN recommends to reduce the use exonyms, especially in international cartography (Statutes... 2002, pp. 72ff). In practice, however, exonyms are widely used, in particular by world languages.

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<sup>1</sup> The definition continues with "*Examples*: Warsaw is the English exonym for Warszawa; Londres is French for London; Mailand is German for Milano. The officially romanized endonym Moskva for Москва is not an exonym, nor is the Pinyin form Beijing, while Peking is an exonym. The United Nations recommends minimizing the use of exonyms in international usage." (p. 10)

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Another rather sensitive aspect deriving from the national and regional atlases' representative function is the reflection of official minority names. Isn't a national or regional atlas the appropriate means of communicating to an international audience the full scope of cultural identities within a country – at least of cultural groups having official status and speaking a language officially recognized?

Let us again see what UNGEGN recommends. Recommendation II/36 titled "Problems of minority languages" says "...that, where possible, the countries in question, in consultation with native speakers of the minority language: (a) Adopt a common orthography for all geographical names of the minority language; (b) Use that orthography for the standardization of the place names in the minority language in their territory; (c) Publish the standardized names in their official maps and national gazetteers" (Statutes... 2002, pp. 108f).

Again, practice contrasts widely from UN recommendations. Even in countries with an otherwise advanced minority legislation the rendering of minority names on official maps and also in official or semi-official national and regional atlases is lagging behind. This is due to the fact that the most important function of a place name is not its semantic meaning even when this meaning is transparent like with *Schönbrunn* or *Red River* (which is anyway rare enough), but its function as a symbol or a brand. Place names do not convey in the strict sense information like a sentence or a map do. Similar to coats of arms, flags and logos, place names rather represent certain ideas and notions. Their symbolic power is strongest on maps. Maps commit an impression of a phenomenon's spatial distribution at one glance. They convey an impression of the minority names' territorial spread and outline "the territory of a minority". It is for this very reason that the use of minority place names on official topographical maps and in atlases is politically sensible and is very often among the last rights granted to minorities. It arouses with majority populations (or rather their political representatives) all the animosities and fears which always appear, when minorities wish to confine their territory: fears of regionalism, autonomism, irredentism, separatism.

In the chapters to follow, by the examples of some recently published national and regional atlases from the eastern (former Communist) part of Europe it will be investigated into (1) the use of languages other than the national language by the atlas in general, (2) the use of exonyms and (3) the use of place names of linguistic minorities. In conclusion some methodological remarks regarding the use of languages and place names in national and regional atlases will be made.

The examples selected are (**S 1**) the Geographical Atlas of Slovenia [Geografski atlas Slovenije], Ljubljana 1998, as well as (**S 1a**) its smaller English version titled National Atlas of Slovenia, Ljubljana 2001, (**C 1**) A Concise Atlas of the Republic of Croatia & of the Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina, Zagreb 1993, (**C 2**) the Large Atlas of Croatia [Veliki atlas Hrvatske], Zagreb 2002, (**PL**) the Atlas of Lower and Opole Silesia [Atlas Śląska dolnego i opolskiego], Wrocław 1997, and (**R**) Romania – Historical-geographical Atlas [România. Atlas istorico-geografic], București 1996.

## 2 SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THESE ATLASES AND THEIR USE OF LANGUAGES

**S 1:** The Geographical Atlas of Slovenia in its large Slovene version has been edited by a publisher and two major geographical institutes as a common effort of Slovenian geography as well as related disciplines. Its obvious intention is to document and represent a young nation state, which became for the first time independent in 1991, to its own citizens. It was favourably welcomed by the domestic market and became part of almost every educated Slovenian household's library. On 360 A3 pages, after a short series of topographic maps in the 1: 300,000 scale, thematic maps in 1: 750,000 as the main scale and with thematic representation restricted to Slovenia ("insular maps") are accompanied by texts, photos, satellite images and diagrams and make up for a rather opulent and easily comprehensible mapwork. The atlas is exclusively monolingual – in titles, map legends and texts.

**S 1a:** For international use three years later the same geographical institutes, but another publisher edited a smaller, concise English version in A4 format and with main maps in the 1 million scale. It contains on 191 pages almost all the thematic maps, but omits the topographic section and has much less texts, photos and diagrams. Also this atlas is exclusively monolingual.

**C1:** The Concise Atlas of the Republic of Croatia & of the Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina was published by the Lexicographical Institute in Zagreb, a state-owned publishing house, exclusively in English language –

obviously to present Croatia as a newly independent country to the outside world. This happened in a very critical situation, when a third of Croatia was not under the control of Zagreb, when neighbouring Bosnia and Hercegovina was a theatre of war and when the Milošević regime in Belgrade and not very much less the international community exerted some pressure on Croatia. On 159 A4 pages, after an extensive topographic map series in the 1: 500,000 scale, thematic maps in the main scale 1: 2 million, but many of them smaller and historical, are combined with explanatory texts. Thematic representation is mostly confined to Croatia, in some cases also Bosnia and Hercegovina is included.

**C 2:** The Large Atlas of Croatia has been edited by a private Croatian publisher involving some prominent university geographers. On 483 pages in A4 format it is mainly a topographical atlas in the 1: 100,000 scale, but supplemented by extensive texts and photo documentations as well as by thematic maps (main scale 1: 2,200,000; thematic representation confined to Croatia) on some basic features. It is conceived for domestic use and applies exclusively Croatian in titles, legends and texts.

**PL:** The Atlas of Lower and Opole Silesia Poland may be regarded as an indicator that Poland is again conceiving herself as a country with distinct regional identities based on cultural traditions and historical units, after in the Communist period historical and cultural identities were disguised and calmed down as much as possible. The atlas highlights a region substantially affected by population exchange and of which one could have assumed that it had lost its former identity together with its former population. The atlas has been edited by the University of Wrocław and the Wrocław department of the Polish Academy of Sciences involving the elite of modern Silesian cartographers, geographers, historians and environmental scientists. On 125 pages in a larger than A3 format it renders in a very scientific manner on 1: 500,000 as the largest scale, but also on many maps in smaller scales, the canon of regional geography, but with a strong focus on environment. What is extremely remarkable with this atlas is that it does not intend – after all that happened (war, population exchange) – to construct a new, reduced to Polish identity of the region, but that it integrates all former identities. This is also underlined by titles, legends and explanatory texts in three languages: Polish, English and German. While legends on the map face are explained only in Polish, corresponding legends in English and German can be found at the reverse side.

**R:** The Historical-geographical Atlas of Romania has been published by the Geographical Institute of the Romanian Academy of Sciences and can be understood as a kind of post-Communist update and amendment to the large Atlas of Romania, published by the Academy in 1970, to re-adjust the country's position in the new post-Communist scene. Prominent historians and geographers from the whole of Romanian academia have authored the maps. On 157 pages in the A4 format by thematic maps in the main scale of ca. 1: 2.2 million mostly historical and ethnological features are highlighted, while the usual geographical canon of a national atlas is reduced to a minimum. Only with historical maps thematic representation covers the whole map face. Substantial texts accompany the map sheets. The atlas uses four languages (Romanian, French, English, German) in titles, legends and texts. All texts are fully translated. Legends appear on the map only in one language (mostly Romanian, but with facsimiles of historical maps also in another language) and are translated into the other three languages on the reverse side.

Thus, the selection comprises a set of rather different atlases: atlases from four different countries (Slovenia, Croatia, Poland, Romania), the modern and popular version of a typical national atlas (**S 1**) as well as a classical regional atlas (**PL**), variants of national atlases with a larger topographic and historical section (**C 1**), a very extensive topographical section (**C 2**) and a very extensive historical section (**R**), atlases for domestic use (**S 1**, **C 2**), international use (**S 1a**, **C 1**) and both domestic and international use (**PL**, **R**), monolingual (**S 1**, **S 1a**, **C 1**, **C 2**) and multilingual (**PL**, **R**) atlases.

### 3 USE OF EXONYMS

**S 1:** The monolingual Slovene Geographical Atlas of Slovenia practises an extensive use of Slovene exonyms for geographical features outside Slovenia. On a “physical map of Europe” in the 1: 15 million scale (pp. 14-15) probably all physical objects (landforms, waters, islands, caps, natural landscapes) as well as cultural landscapes, for which the Slovene language has exonyms in current use, are indicated by exonyms. This includes composita with generics translated into Slovene (e.g. *rt Finisterre* for Cap Finisterre [Cabo de Finisterre]) and morphological adaptations to Slovene (e.g. *Loara* for Loire, *Rona* for Rhône or *Šampanja* for Champagne) as well as different words (e.g. *Ture* for Tauern), although not necessarily differing in semantics. Larger cities featuring on the same map for orientation are also indicated by exonyms, e.g. *Lizbona* for Lisbon [Lisboa], *Pariz* for Paris, *Dunaj* for Vienna [Wien] or *Carigrad* for Istanbul [Istanbul]. Also endonyms of very prestigious

languages like English or French are frequently substituted by Slovene exonyms. No attempt is made to relate the exonyms to endonyms, e.g. by adding endonyms in brackets.

On its “political map of Europe” in the same scale (pp. 16-17) the atlas uses exclusively Slovene exonyms only for country names and physical features, while Slovene exonyms of capitals and other larger cities are added to endonyms in smaller letters. The latter practise (endonym plus Slovene exonym in smaller letters) is applied to all geographical features on a geographical map in the 1: 3 million scale showing the wider neighbourhood of Slovenia (p. 18) as well as in a topographical survey over Slovenia (1: 500,000, pp. 22-23) and a map series in the 1: 300,000 scale (pp. 24ff).

**S 1a:** The only map of the monolingual English version featuring also territories outside Slovenia is a topographical survey over Slovenia in the 1: 1 million scale (p. 21). In contrast to the topographical survey over Slovenia in the Slovene atlas version it uses English country names (e.g. Austria instead of *Österreich* and *Avstrija*) and the English name for the Adriatic Sea, but the endonym and the Slovene exonym in smaller letters for all other features. English exonyms apart from country names do not occur (e.g. *Julian Alps* for Julijske Alpe), not even translations of generic terms. Instead, a glossary of “geographical terms” in the atlases’ appendix (pp. 185-187) translates transparent Slovene geographical terms not only into English, but also into German, French and Spanish. This enables the reader to conclude that *Slovenske gorice* means *Slovenian Hills* and that *Bela Krajina* means *White Land*. This method of translating transparent Slovene geographical terms into several major languages may be regarded as expanding the atlases’ use beyond the English language community.

**C 1:** The monolingual English Concise Atlas of the Republic of Croatia & of the Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina conceived for international use indicates on a political map of Europe (pp. 10-11) countries, islands, peninsulas, caps, landforms and waters by English exonyms (seas are also named in English), while capitals and other larger cities are indicated by the endonym in the first position and the English exonym in brackets, e.g. *Roma (Rome)*. Croatian exonyms are not used.

On a geographical survey over Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina in the 1: 1,750,000 scale (pp. 12-13), countries are indicated by their English exonyms (e.g. Hungary, Italy, Slovenia), while settlements are named by endonyms in the first and the Croatian exonym in the second position (e.g. Pécs/Pečuh, Trieste/Trst). A Croatian exonym, however, is only indicated with larger cities. The Adriatic Sea is named Croatian in the first and English (in brackets) in the second position. The same principles are also applied to the series of topographic maps in the 1: 500,000 scale (pp. 16ff), should territories of foreign countries be portrayed. Even there, smaller settlements in neighbouring countries appear without Croatian exonyms.

**C 2:** The monolingual Croatian Large Atlas of Croatia uses exclusively official names except on one single map showing the sheet line system of the topographic map series and at the sheet margins of the topographic map series itself. There, foreign countries are named by the endonym in the first position and the Croatian exonym in the second (e.g. Italia/Italija). On the map showing the sheet line system, in Austria and northern Italy - rather unconventionally - with settlements Slovene (!) exonyms are added to endonyms (e.g. Klagenfurt/Celovec, Udine/Viden), while waters are named exclusively Slovene (e.g. *Vrbsko jezero* for Wörther See, *Nadiža* for Natisone, *Zilja* for Gail). This may well have happened by mistake.

The topographical map series 1: 100,000 renders on sheets covering neighbouring countries very precisely the official place names systems including standardized minority names, but with the exception of Hungary. This means to show in parts of Slovenia also the Hungarian and Italian minority names and in parts of Italy the Slovene. In Hungary, where minority names, even Croatian minority names, have also been standardized, minority names are missing.

**PL:** While in the Atlas of Lower and Opole Silesia map sections focused on Lower and Opole Silesia show exclusively endonyms except Polish country names (this refers to Poland, the Czech Republic and Germany), two surveys over Poland and its location in Central Europe (pp. 3) in the 1: 3 and 1: 5 million scale, respectively, represent also other categories of Polish exonyms: with waters as well as cities the Polish exonym is added to the endonym in brackets, islands are named exclusively in Polish (e.g. *Wyspy Fryzyjskie* for Frisian Islands [] or *Rugia* for Rügen). Seas and other maritime features are also named Polish.

**R:** The quadrilingual Historical-geographical Atlas of Romania can in respect to the rendering of exonyms only be classified according to its first four maps showing Romania’s location in the world (plate 1) and in Europe (plate 2) as well as Romania’s general geographical (plate 3) and administrative (plate 4) structure, while the comprehensive part of historical maps (partly facsimiles) must be regarded under different aspects and cartographic representation on geographical maps is restricted to Romania. These first four maps show the common attitude to use exclusively Romanian exonyms for country names and land forms, Romanian names



<b>S 1</b>	national	domestic	Slovene	on small-scale maps: only exonyms; on larger-scale maps: added to endonyms	on small-scale maps: only exonyms; on larger-scale maps: added to endonyms	mostly added to endonyms	no	yes
<b>S 1a</b>	national	international	English	English exonyms	Slovene exonyms added to endonyms	Slovene exonyms added to endonyms	on a single thematic map	-
<b>C 1</b>	national	international	English	English exonyms	on small-scale maps: English exonyms; on larger-scale maps: English exonyms added to endonyms	on small-scale maps: English exonyms added to endonyms; on larger-scale maps: Croatian exonyms added to endonyms	no	no
<b>C 2</b>	national	domestic	Croatian	added to endonyms	on small-scale maps: Slovene (!) exonyms; on larger-scale maps: endonyms	on small-scale maps: Slovene (!) exonyms added to endonyms; on larger-scale maps: endonyms	on a small-scale topographic, but not on thematic maps	yes
<b>PL</b>	regional	international + domestic	Polish, English, German	Polish exonyms	on 2 small-scale survey maps: islands - only in Polish, rivers - Polish exonyms added to endonyms	on 2 small-scale survey maps: Polish exonyms added to endonyms	-	-
<b>R</b>	national	international + domestic	Romanian, French, English, German	Romanian exonyms	Landforms: Romanian exonyms, rivers: endonyms	Romanian exonyms added to endonyms	-	-

## 5 METHODOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 Treatment of exonyms/endonyms

As regards methods related to the treatment of exonyms/endonyms in national and regional atlases a principal distinction has to be made between monolingual and multilingual atlases, i.e. between atlases using one single editorial language in titles, legends and texts and atlases using more than one, notwithstanding whether they address a domestic or an international audience.

- (1) In **monolingual atlases** either for domestic or for international use it is recommendable to use exonyms corresponding to the editorial language, provided that these are exonyms in current use and not historical exonyms. This makes an atlas linguistically homogeneous and information easier accessible for readers of the editorial language (For a comprehensive list of benefits of exonym use see JORDAN 2000).

- a. This means that an atlas in Slovene (like **S 1**) or Croatian (**C 2**) for domestic use is recommended to use Slovene and Croatian exonyms, respectively. This is indeed practised by **S 1**, but only to a minor extent by **C 2**.
  - b. This means that for a Slovenian (like **S 1a**) or a Croatian atlas in English (**C 1**) for international use it would be justified to use English exonyms. This is practised by **C 1** rather than by **S 1a**.
  - c. English (and not the national language) as the atlases' editorial language would also justify English exonyms in current use for geographical features in the editorial country, i.e. in Slovenia and Croatia. This is not practised by any of the two atlases in question.
  - d. However, the recommendation to use exonyms does not mean to exclude endonyms. The official name remains always important, even if it is difficult to pronounce for the editorial language's reader or if it is just transliterated from another script. It is therefore recommended to add the endonym, whenever an exonym is used. This refers also to country names. The endonym can be placed below the exonym. When the reader meets a couple of names, he/she knows that the upper one is the exonym. When he/she finds only one name, he/she understands that this is the endonym and an exonym is not given. The principle of presenting exonym plus endonym is practised in **C 2**, while **S 1** renders endonyms only in larger scales, **S 1a** in other names categories but country names and **C 1** only in other names categories than country names and in larger scales.
- (2) **Multilingual atlases** for domestic and international use address a multilingual audience. This has the consequence that either exonyms are to be avoided or exonyms of all editorial languages are to be used simultaneously. The latter may, however, easily overburden a map, especially, when in addition to the endonym three (**PL**) or even four (**R**) exonyms are to be displayed. This principle cannot be traced in any of the two atlases in question (**PL**, **R**). Both of them use at least partly exonyms in only one of the editorial languages (the national language of the editorial country).

## 5.2 Treatment of minority names

- (1) Place names used by linguistic minorities are indispensable in national and regional atlases since these atlases are to provide for a complex, comprehensive and representative picture of a country or region. They are to convey an impression of the cultural variety and to symbolize the presence of cultural subgroups (For all the reasons supporting the use of minority names see ORMELING 1983).
- (2) It may, however, be justified to confine the use to names belonging to official minority languages and/or to standardized names, i.e. to names approved by the relevant public authority. Not confining the use to official/standardized names would mean to enter a field of never ending discussions and unsolved nationality problems.
- (3) It could also be regarded appropriate to restrict the representation of minority names in national and regional atlases to larger-scale topographical maps and to thematic maps showing a relevant topic (e.g. languages, ethnic structures).

These principles can well be traced in **S 1** and **C 2**, but not at all in **C 1**. The Polish and the Romanian atlas are both out of *obligo*, since no standardized minority names existed, when these atlases were published.

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## **PETER JORDAN: CURRICULUM VITAE**

Born 15/11/1949 in Hermagor/Carinthia/Austria. 1970-1979 studied geography and ethnology at the University of Vienna with a specialisation on cartography. Doctor thesis on "The Problem of International Symbol Standardisation in Cartography" supervised by Erik Arnberger, PhD 9/7/1979.

Since 1977 working at the Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies as a map editor of the Atlas of the Danubian Countries under Josef Breu as the editor-in-chief. 1979-1989 continued cooperation in the Atlas of the Danubian Countries as a map editor, partly also as thematic author of its maps. Since 1979 Deputy Head, Geographical Department of the Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies. Geographic research on the impact of tourism on the northern Croatian coast. Publications in the fields of the geographies of tourism and transportation, regional geography of Central Europe and the Danubian countries, cartographic semiotics and toponomastics. Member of the Austrian Board on Geographic Names, Austrian delegate to the sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographic Names (UNGEGN). Numerous paper presentations, mainly on cartographic topics and on topics related to the geography of tourism and regional, political, ethnic and environmental geography of Central and Southeast Europe. Since 1987 council member of the Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies.

Since 1989 Head, Geographical Department of the Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies. Concept and editor-in-chief of the Atlas of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, since 1989 published by the Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies as a map series (so far 25 installments have been published). Geographical editor of the "Österreichische Osthefte". Member of the editorial boards of the periodicals "Turizam" (Zagreb) and "Tourism and Hospitality Management" (Opatija). Intensification and extension of research activities in and into the fields of regional, ethnic, political and environmental geography of Central and Southeastern Europe with regional focuses on former Yugoslavia and Romania.

Since 1997 Deputy Director, Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies.

25/5/1998: Venia docendi (habilitation) at the University of Klagenfurt for "Geography with special regard to regional geography and cartography" after having submitted the research work "Contributions to the geography of tourism of the northern Croatian coast" followed by courses at the universities of Vienna, Klagenfurt, Innsbruck, Rijeka and Cluj-Napoca.

Since 2002 Director, Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies.

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