

Commission on National and Regional Atlases

A short report of the past four years (2007-2011)

www.univie.ac.at/cnra/

Following many successful years of Timothy TRAINOR's chairmanship, the chair of the Commission passed on to Peter JORDAN at ICC Moscow in 2007. The main intention in this new period was to elaborate and, if possible, to complete and publish a "cook book" for atlas editors. While an editorial board has been established, a detailed list of contents has been set up after intensive discussions, authors for all chapters could be engaged and several chapters have indeed been written, the book lacks still some contributions and could thus not be completed so far. Prospects are good, however, to have it completed rather early in the next period of office.

What – thanks to Alexander PUCHER from the University of Vienna – actually could be established, is a Commission website. It remains of course a permanent task to develop this website further and especially to supply it with an atlas inventory. An important step into this direction will be the pre-conference workshop of the Commission in Paris, 2 July 2011, where new atlases and atlas versions are to be presented and information on them will be displayed on the Commission website.

Milestones of commission work are certainly always meetings and workshops. Besides the usual business meetings at the conferences in Moscow and Santiago, the two Commission workshops in Timișoara (Romania) and Yogyakarta (Indonesia) stand out in this context:

Workshop in Timișoara, 9-13 September 2008

This was a joint meeting with the Working Group on Exonyms of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) hosted by the West University in Timișoara and discussing the topic of geographical names and their different modes of use as well as the general structure of the "cook book".

48 colleagues from 18 countries and 4 continents attended the workshop. UNGEGN experts contributed essentially to the discussion on the "cook book" chapter which is to render also the topic of geographical names.

During the workshop essential progress was made as regards defining the structure of the "cook book" for atlas editors. In-depth discussions resulted in a 10 chapter structure. For most of the chapters authors could be found.

Workshop in Yogyakarta, 20-21 October 2010

The meeting had been organised by the National Coordinating Agency for Survey and Mapping, Indonesia, and our Commission in cooperation with the Faculty of Geography of the Gadjah Mada University of Yogyakarta, the Indonesian Cartography Association, the Indonesian Geography Association and the Association of Geographers of the Gadjah Mada University. Very helpful was Diah Kirana KERAWATI from the National Coordinating Agency for Survey and Mapping, who functioned as the principal local organizer. The meeting was composed of two sessions, of a workshop titled "Atlases as expressions and carriers of space-related identity" (20 October) and of a seminar titled "The strategic role of maps in

development” (21 October). The meeting was also used as an occasion to present Volume II of the National Atlas of Indonesia. The more than 150 participants came certainly to a larger part from this university, but also from many other parts of Indonesia. The whole event received a wide echo in Indonesian media.

The Commission functioned also as co-organizer of some other meetings and conferences, e.g., of the **3rd Conference of the Adriatic Forum, Vienna, 23-24 September 2010**. The thematic focus of this meeting was regional development and regionalisation in the Adriatic space (in a wider sense), but also atlases as means of representing regional development were on the agenda. The conference had 85 registered participants from 15 European countries. Its proceedings will be published as a volume of the book series “ISR-Forschungsberichte”, edited by the Institute of Urban and Regional Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Referring to the terms of reference of our Commission, the following progress can be stated

1. **Produce a cookbook for the production of (digital) national and regional atlases:** strong efforts, but not yet completed
2. **Promote and support the design, production and use of national, regional, city and thematic atlases and atlas information systems:** effectuated by workshops and personal consultations
3. **Conduct workshops and/or seminars that present recent and potential atlas developments and innovations:** 2 workshops organized
4. **Document guidelines and procedures for the design, production and use of national, regional, city and thematic atlases:** will be effectuated by the cook book
5. **Elaborate and maintain an electronic inventory of national, regional, city and thematic atlases containing the main characteristics of these map works as well as relevant addresses in order to support information exchange between atlas editors as well as to disseminate information on atlases to a wider public:** part of the website, but still in the beginnings of its development; the pre-conference workshop in Paris is to contribute; considerations to devote a diploma work to this topic.
6. **Maintain a commission website and update it regularly with the major aims of providing for information exchange between commission members and disseminating information on activities in this field to a wider public:** a website was newly established and has further been developed
7. **Encourage efforts for integrating data for the development of electronic atlases and national and regional atlas information systems by**
 - evaluating metadata standards as they apply to atlas design, creation and dissemination
 - acknowledging requirements for diverse geographic and temporal data themes
 - identifying and exploring various alternatives to data integration issues: will partly be covered by the cook book.

Peter Jordan, Chair, ICA Commission on National and Regional Atlases