

# Talking Atlases in SE Asia



The ICA Commission on National and Regional Atlases last reported in these pages in May 2008, when discussion centred on the creation of a 'cookbook' for national and regional atlas editors, the importance of effective geographic name handling (both within and outside the atlas arena), and the role of the national atlas as a portal, possibly to contemporary formal SDIs.

## Worldwide Remit

The Commission clearly has a worldwide remit; over recent years it has organised meetings in a number of places, including Romania, Algeria and Chile. In co-operation with the Faculty of Geography, University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and other Indonesian institutions, the

Commission will hold its next workshop in Yogyakarta, Indonesia from 20th to

23rd October 2010, where presentation will take place of Part II of The National Atlas of Indonesia. The workshop will be devoted to two main topics: recent directions in national atlas cartography; and national, regional, city and school atlases as the expression and carriers of space-related identity.

ICA recognises the significant impact of national and regional atlases on national identity, but also on national economic, environmental and social development. The role of cartography in the wider world is clearly apparent through this form of mapping and this meeting will help develop such ideas further.

## Identity and Self-image

The second topic relies on the assumption that not only national and regional, but also city and school atlases provide both a means of communication and instruction, and represent and provide a vehicle for space-related identity, that is to say the self-image of nations, regions or cities. Atlases assist in space-related image building through the selection and sequence of themes and by highlighting special aspects of great significance to a country, region or city. But also very indicative in this respect is the layout of an atlas, its furnishing with national and regional symbols, and even the use of languages in titles, legends and texts and place names. The workshop will investigate historical and more recent atlases and whether they deviate from the usual thematic scope of regional geography by presenting maps and place-specific themes, stressing typical identities.

Subtopics to be addressed are:

- internal and external views of space-related identity building via editorial concepts
- effect of external demands (licensing authorities, financiers) on space-related identity building
- comparative surveys of national atlases as regards space-related identity building
- enhancing space-related identity building using atlas cartography and other editorial means
- nation-building and regional identity in national atlases
- other issues: branding and decentralisation as reflected in national, regional and city atlases.

## Learn More

Social and cultural events in this exciting location will be offered. Updated information about contributing to and participating in the workshop can be obtained from the Commission website (1) or by contacting the Commission chair, [eter.jordan@oeaw.ac.at](mailto:eter.jordan@oeaw.ac.at).