

The rendering of Greece in Dutch school Atlases

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Abstract: Because of the classical focus in Dutch education, from the first school atlases onwards these contained separate atlas sheets on Greece, even before its independence. The first school atlas, produced by Sepp in the tradition of the Enlightenment, was proof of an editing process in which the special requirements of educational material were taken into account; a practice forgotten in most of the 19th century.

At the end of the 19th century the largest educational publishing house in the Netherlands, J.B.Wolters in Groningen, was able, after much competition, to control the school atlas market with its school atlas by P.R.Bos, and since the early 20th century it had the virtual monopoly. The rendering of Greece could be followed subsequently in the successive editions of Bos'atlas (published since 1877). As this atlas was used together with geography manuals, reference is made to them as well.

Comparison of the maps of Greece in the consecutive 54 editions of this atlas shows how its rendering was influenced by the views of its successive editors, the extension of the knowledge available regarding Greece (such as hypsographic and hydrographic information), of course by the changes in the Greek landscape and by the exigencies of the geography curriculum in the Netherlands.

The first Dutch school atlas: *Atlas des Enfants*

One of the first school atlases produced should be attributed to Christiaan Andreas Sepp, (Goslar 1710 - Amsterdam 1775) who designed a children's atlas for which he drew and engraved 22 small, 'blind' maps; blind in the sense that they contained no names, but only letter and number symbols. Each map was accompanied by a series of questions and answers that could be studied when looking at the map.

This atlas was published as *Geographische oefening* ('Geographical exercise') with a Dutch text in 1758 in Amsterdam by Frans Houttuyn, who sold the plates in 1760 to Jan Herman Schneider, who extended the number of plates and produced an edition in French the same year: *Atlas des Enfants*, an enormously successful work. It had many editions and was much plagiarized (by publishers as Vlam, Bruyset, Benoit LeFrancq, Gulick and Honkoop e.g.); some of those editions had much larger maps, engraved by Cornelis van Baarsel, which made the work more atlas-like.

To get an idea of Sepp's formula, with questions (Q) and answers (A), we will look at those relating to map no 19, European Turkey (*Europisch Turkyen*, see also figure 1):

- Q. Which part of Europe is rendered on this map? A. European Turkey, being the part of the Turkish Empire which extends over Europe.
- Q. What are the divisions of European Turkey? A. It is divided into Turkey proper, coloured red on this map; Greece, which is coloured yellow; and Small Tartary, which is coloured green.
- Q. How is Turkey proper subdivided? A. Into 4 main parts, being I Romania, II Bulgaria, III Walachia and IV Moldavia.
- Q. What are the subdivisions of Greece? A. It is divided into 5 main parts, being V Macedonia, VI Albania, VII Thessaly, VIII Livadia and IX the peninsula Morea
- Q. Which are the main cities in European Turkey? A. They are indicated by small numerals, as follows: 1 Constantinople, the capital and metropolis of all Turkey and the residence of the Turkish Emperor; 2 Adrianople, in Romania; 3 Sophia, the capital of Bulgaria; 4 Bucharest, the capital of Walachia; 5 Jassy, the capital of Moldavia [now Iași]; 6 Salonika, formerly Thessalonika, the capital of Macedonia; 7 Durazzo, the capital of Albania, 8 Larissa, the capital of Thessaly; 9 Lepanto, the capital of Livadia; 10 Athens, 11 Corinth, the capital of Morea; 12 Backchysarai, the capital of the Crimea; 13. Azov; 14. Perekop; 15. Ochakiv; 16. Bender.



Figure 1: The map of European Turkey in Sepp's atlas *Geographische Oefening* (1758), published by J.H. Schneider as *Atlas des Enfants* from 1760 onwards.

Rivers. Q. Are there any important rivers in European Turkey? A. Yes, there are 6, that is: a. the Danube; b. the Dnieper (Nieper); c. the Don; d. the Dniester; e. the Bug; f. the Pruth

Islands: Q. Which islands belong to this region? A. They are numerous. The main ones will be indicated by Roman letters, as follows: a. Korfu; b. Cefalonia; c. Zante; d. Kandia; e. Negroponte; f. Lemnus; g. Mitilene; h. Scio; i. Samos; k. Patmos.

Capes. Q. How many capes or terrestrial corners protruding into the sea can be found in European Turkey? A. Quite a few. But one of those, the most outlying corner of Morea, deserves to be named. It is called *Cape Matapan, and forms the most southerly point of [mainland] Europe.

Then questions are following about the boundaries of European Turkey, showing the adjacent countries and seas, such as A. the Sea of Azov; B. the Black Sea; C. the Sea of Marmara; D. the 'Levantine Sea' or 'Sea of the Archipelago'[the Aegean]; E. the Mediterranean; F. the Adriatic Sea. To the North, the area is bounded by G. Hungary; H. Poland and J. Russia.

In the more extended follow-up editions questions were added about the climate of the region, the manner of government, the religion of its inhabitants, and also questions regarding the character of the Turks. Both the use of the term Greece (Griekenland) and the extent of the area that was regarded in Western Europe as Greece are noteworthy: it included the whole of Albania, Livadia, Thessaly, the Peloponnesus peninsula, Macedonia and the islands. New editions and pirate versions of the atlas by Sepp/Schneider continued to be published well beyond 1800, but did not survive the French occupation of the Netherlands (1810-1813).

19th Century school atlases

It took a generation for new school atlases to emerge in the Netherlands, after the French occupation, but by 1839 a couple of them were on the market, such as the School atlases of all parts of the Earth (*School-atlas van alle deelen der aarde*) either by Josef Arnz or by Adolf Baedeker, both German publishers that had settled in the Netherlands. By that time the educational landscape was more regulated due to French influences; in 1801 primary education had become obligatory and the curriculum of the grammar schools ('gymnasia'), that existed already since the Middle Ages, had been defined in order to better prepare for academic studies. It was for these grammar schools and for the as yet unregulated schools for commerce (*handelsscholen*), that Arnz and Baedeker catered with their atlases, quite different from the work by Sepp and Schneider. Gone were the clear map image and the reduction of the information to what was absolutely necessary! Hachures had been added showing caterpillar-like mountain ranges, and place names as well

as names of mountains, rivers, regions, capes, gulfs and islands. Instead of the 25 cypher and letter symbols on the map of European Turkey by Sepp, Baedeker's map of the same area was adorned with over 180 toponyms. This is not any more a map to structure the elementary topographic knowledge deemed necessary, it has become a reference map.



Figure 2: Detail of the map sheet on European Turkey and Greece from Arnz' School atlas of all parts of the Earth (1839).

In figure 2, the political situation from 1760 is still largely recognizable, with Moldavia, Walachia, Bulgaria, Romania (now rendered as Rumelia), Macedonia, Albania and Thessaly still Turkish-held, but Livadia, the Peloponnesus peninsula (the traditional name Morea has not been shed as yet) and the Cyclades now independent under a new government in Athens. The Ionian Islands now belong to a British protectorate (with Cerigo or Kythira used by them as a place of exile), Crete is still

Turkish. Apart from the region names in Dutch (Griekenland, Macedonië, Albanië, Livadië, Thessalië, Archipel, Cycladen, Ionische Eilanden, Sporaden), and the classical names (Athens, Corinth, Thebes, Marathon, Thermopylae), Greek names form a minority, while foreign names abound (Italian exonyms in Albania, Greece, Crete and the Archipelago and Turkish names in Macedonia). In figure 8 this place name analysis is continued. The placenames entered in Greece largely reflect those that figured in the war of Greek Independence. like Modon (Methoni), Coron (Koroni), where the French expeditionary force landed, Maina (Maini, where the Maniotes came from), Navarino, where the Turkish-Egyptian fleet was beaten, Tripilitza (the first major town occupied by the insurgents), Missolonghi, Lepanto (Naupaktos), Nauplia (Navplion) and Hydra that had held out against Turkish sieges. Beyond independent Greece, Turkish mountain names (Despoto Dag, Egrisu Dag), place names (Uskub, Basar Djedid, Auret Hissar, Tikmesch, Naslidsch, Karaferia) and river names (Karasu) abound.

In 1863 a new Secondary Education Act was passed in the Netherlands, in order to found a new school type: the country needed engineers and the gymnasia with their focus on classical education would not prepare for that. The new school type (HBS) introduced by this law had a curriculum in physics, chemistry, biology, extensive mathematics and geography, apart from modern languages (French, German and English). It was not meant for the elite that still visited the gymnasium before going to university for degrees in law, medicine or theology, but prepared for polytechnic schools or technical universities instead, meant for producing engineers. And the new curriculum also required geography teachers, so in 1864 a special training for them was set up, outside the university (Heslinga 1971). One of the first to follow this course was a certain P.R.Bos (a geography teacher in the far north of the country) who, dissatisfied with the lack of teaching material, wrote a geography manual for use at this new school type, the *Leerboek der Aardrijkskunde* (1875). It sold very well, so the publisher, J.B.Wolters, asked him to also produce a school atlas to be used with this manual. He did and the atlas was launched in 1877. When it came out, there were 12 competing school atlases on the small Dutch educational market, and this for a population of scarcely 4 million. Not because of its superior cartography, but perhaps because of a policy to reduce the information meant for students to the essentials, and certainly because Wolters was the largest educational publishing house, it was this *Schoolatlas der geheele aarde* that in the 1920s ended up as the only remaining Dutch school atlas on the educational market: it had gained the monopoly.

In the meantime, in 1873 a geographical society had been founded in the Netherlands, and in 1877 (enabled by the 1876 Higher Education Act) the first geography chair was initiated at the Municipal University of Amsterdam, from where the condensed training course for geography teachers was forthwith organised as well.

Greece in consecutive editions of the Bosatlas

When we look in figure 3 at the map of Greece in the fourth edition of the atlas by P.R.Bos (forthwith it will be called the ‘Bosatlas’) from 1882, the Ionian Islands have already been reunited with the rest of the Kingdom, as has Thessaly. Athens as the capital with 50 000 inhabitants by now probably has become the largest town again (though Thessaloniki in Turkey at the time is much larger (>80 000); it is linked by the railway line completed in 1869 to Piraeus. The names on the map are still mostly Italian exonyms for the islands, and there are quite a number of name variants rendered: Neokastro (Navarino), Iri (Eurotas), G. of Argos or Nauplia; Roefia (Alpheus); Kuluri (Salamis), Liakura (Parnassus), Lefkada (Santa Maura); Thiaki (Ithaca), Zakyntho (Zante); Dili (Delos); Hellada (Spercheus), Mendeli (Pentelikus), Trelo Vuno (Hymettus).



Figure 3: Detail from the map of Greece in the 1882 edition of the Bosatlas.

Missolonghi is described in contemporary Dutch geography manuals as: “A fortress in the midst of marshy rice-fields, because of which it is also called ‘Little Venice’, on a muddy inlet of the Gulf of Patras (heroic but fruitless defence against the Turks 1826)” (Dornseiffen 1886). The letter abbreviation M stands for Mycenae. Although not located in its correct position, the ruins of Troy can be found as well: in 1873 Heinrich Schliemann was supposed to have excavated Troy and in 1876 Mycenae (M on the map). Santorin (Thera) is rendered as, because of the

1866 eruption, it had been all over the news in Europe. In Thessaly and Macedonia most names are unfamiliar: Salambria for the Pineios, Kissowo for Ossa. Platamonas, which became again a frontier stronghold in 1881, is indicated in the Tempe valley; it would again become a battle site in 1941. The pass sign northwest of the Oeta refers to Thermopylae, on the ‘Gulf of Zeituni’.

To get to that Gulf of Zeitun or Zeitoun, the *New Sailing Directions for the Mediterranean Sea*, by John William Norie (1841) say: “Between the northern part of the Islands of Negropont and the main, is the Channel of Trikeri, leading to the Gulfs of Zeitoun, the Channel of Talanta and the Gulf of Volo. Having reached the N.W. point of the Negropont, the passage turns to the S.East, and southwards into the Channel of Talanta, a broad extensive Gulf, leading to Egripos, and frequented by the Turkish fleets, but not at present, used by merchant vessels belonging to other nations. The Gulf of Zeitoun is about 5 miles broad, and runs in westerly for 15 miles; at its further end is the River Hellada, and the celebrated cliffs forming the *Pass of Thermopylae*. The commerce carried on at the town of Zeitoun is principally in grain and the produce of the surrounding country, the greater part of which is brought down for the Gulf for exportation; the inland navigation afforded by this arm of the sea is of great advantage for the interior of Thessaly as, with the exception of Volo, there are no ports on its eastern side to give an outlet to the produce of the fertile plains of this province.” In figure 3, Hermopolis on the isle of Syra in 1882 was the first port and the second city of Greece after Athens: its strong development due to its trade and shipyards was caused by the Greek war of independence, and its relatively sheltered location. Dornseiffen mentions: “Capital of the Cyclades, with prosperous trade. Meeting point of the steam ships from Marseilles, Athens, Smyrna, Alexandria and Constantinople.”(Dornseiffen 1886).

Since Heinrich Berghaus published the map *Europa’s Haupt-Gebirgs-Systeme* in his *Physikalischer Atlas* (1842) there existed a coherent image for Europe’s contour lines, even if this was far from detailed. But at least it was a source which could be drawn upon for deciding upon the boundaries for the various hypsographic layer zones that were combined with the hill shading with hachures in the Bosatlas. On the successive maps of Greece in the consecutive Bos atlases, we will see an ever more detailed rendering of these layer zones, with which, certainly in the first phase of atlas design, experiments were still going on.

When we compare the image from 1899 (figure 4) with the previous one, we see that that year, the peninsular railway system had reached Pyrgos and Navplion, and Athens had been linked as well to Laurion. In Boeotia, Lake Kopais has been drained (1867-1887) on behalf of agriculture, and in Thessaly Volos and Larisa were linked by rail. In 1893 the canal through the Isthmus of Corinth had been completed, although it is not visible on the map in figure 4; it just is too small. It would take onto 1976 before it is shown on a large-scale inset map in the atlas. A commentary in a Dutch geography manual printed 1886 mentioned: “A canal



Figure 4: Bosatlas 14th edition 1899

through the isthmus is being constructed which will allow the largest ships to pass and which will reduce the distance from Trieste to the Levant by over 130 nautical miles. It is feared however, that because of the high tolls that will have to be imposed in order to be profitable, the canal will see little traffic.” (Dornseiffen 1886)

The maps in the Bosatlas also had to function as a base map for the students’ classical studies, and that is why some names in this 14th edition were spelled back into their classical versions: Thebe instead of Thiva, the ancient name Pylos had been resurrected for Neokastro/Navarino. Plateaea, Aulis, Mantinea (* = ruins), Megara, Tanagra, Eleusis, Delphi, Therm., Cheroneia and Pharsala were added. Apart from Schliemann, Baron de Coubertin had also done his bit for putting Greece on the map: the 1896 resurrection of the Olympic Games in Athens saw to it that Olympia and Marathon were included now. The Peloponnesus railway line had been constructed up to Pyrgos in time for that event, just as the Athens metro was in time for the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. A clear hellenification of place names had also ensued, apart from the Ionian Islands, all island names were now at least meant to be Greek.

By the turn of the century Greece definitely had become a tourist destination, with its own edition of the Baedeker guide (1905): “Tripolis (2175 ft.), formerly called

Tripolitza, as the Slavonic diminutive form has it, the solitary town in Arcadia, is one of the most important places in the Peloponnesus. It is the seat of an Archbishop and contains a gymnasium and a seminary for priests; the population is 10,465. The name commemorates the fact that the town is built on the territories of three ancient cities, Mantinea, Pallantion and Tegea. Tripolis has existed only in modern times, having been found around the beginning of the Turkish domination in Greece, during which it was the residence of the pashas of the Morea. The foundations of their palace (konak) are still to be seen. ...The town is now very prosperous and is expanding on all sides. The principal routes from various parts of the plain, which meet here, debouch in the centre of the town in the large and shady square (plateia), where a handsome church was erected in 1879. The narrow lanes round the square are occupied by the bazaar, and are thronged with busy traffic. The Gymnasium contains a small collection of antiquities, chiefly objects found in the excavations of the French School at Mantinea.”

In figure 5 the situation for 1915 has been visualized. This map of the Balkan Peninsula on which Greece is rendered is the only one in the 4 editions published during WWI with actual boundaries indicated on it. Crete by this time was considered



Figure 5: Detail from the Bosatlas 22nd edition, 1915

part of Greece (although in 1908 the Cretan parliament already had voted for enosis, this was only internationally recognized in 1913). The Italian occupation of the Dodecanese (1912) is represented with boundaries, but not with names. The Netherlands remained neutral during WWI, and took care in its school atlases to remain neutral as well, so most claims of the belligerent parties were not shown. Northern Epirus is rendered here as Greek, although according to the 1912 Treaty of Bucharest it was to be Albanian, but during and immediately after WWI it was again part of Greece.

The Turks never were interested in linking Greece to the European rail network, but Thessaloniki, which, with Smyrna were the Ottoman Empire's most important trading hubs (Lampe and Jackson 1982), had been connected in 1888 to Central Europe via rail through Belgrade, and in 1893 to Monastir. The link with Constantinople was built in 1896, for strategic reasons. According to the geography manual by Bos (1895) "Thessaloniki has 150 000 inhabitants, carpet factories, cotton mills, silk factories and tanneries, and exports wheat, cotton [from Serrai], wool, silk, tobacco [from Drama] and hides. Because of its rail connections the city could become an important link for Europe's trade with the Near East and through the Suez Canal, but for the high tariffs charged and the mismanagement of the Turkish railways." (Bos 1895). Immediately after the second Balkan war in 1913, construction of the link between Larissa and Thessaloniki (or rather between Papapouli and Topsjin (Gefyra)) was started (in figure 5 it is indicated as under construction) and it was completed in 1916. The difficult track through the Tempevalley had already been indicated as completed in the previous, 21st edition (1914). The privileged position of Greece in the Bosatlas can be deduced also from the lack of information on the area beyond its borders, both in figures 4 and 5: Apart from Ioannina and Thessaloniki, Epirus and Macedonia are devoid of place names, with as only names the Vistritza river (Aliakmonos) and Mt. Kaimakcalan (Mt Voras), where a year later a fierce battle between Serbia and Bulgaria would be fought. Western Thrace with Dede Agatsj as port (present Alexandroupoli) is Bulgarian.

Although on the larger-scale overview map of the Balkans in the Bosatlas no boundaries were drawn in, between 1915 and 1923, a smaller-scale map of Europe did represent them (see figure 6, 1919). Here Smyrna and Eastern Thrace are rendered as Greek, but this was not to last, and after 1923 far more than a million Greeks refugees from Asia Minor had to be accommodated, and were mainly settled in Athens and in Macedonia and Western Thrace. When we compare figures 5 and 7, the areas stand out where marshes were drained, along the Loudias, Axios, Strymonas and Nestos rivers, in order to accommodate and resettle the refugees. In the following editions of the Bosatlas we see the drainage of Lake Karla in Thessaly (1962), the reconstruction of the mouth of the Axios, and the drainage of the Giannitsa-Loudias marshes and lake, the drainage of the marshes and lake Tachyno (later Achinos) in 1933 on the river Strymonas, as well as the drainage of



Figure 6: *Bosatlas 25th edition 1919, detail of a map of Europe.*

the Nestos delta. In the 1947 edition of the *Bosatlas*, the first to be published since 1939, also the town of Drama is incorporated for the first time, probably because of the Drama Uprising during WWII. But this could also have been because of the large numbers of Pontic Greeks that were resettled here in the 1920s (Clark 2006). By comparing the various editions, we see that the Dodekanesos was finally handed over to Greece in 1947.

The 2007 image (figure 7), also shows the other major infrastructural works, such as the Via Egnatia and the other motorways constructed since Greece's entry into the European Union, although the map is not quite up to date: the reservoirs along the Aliakmonas and the Acheloos rivers (with their hydroelectric plants) and the Rio-Anterrio bridge over the Gulf of Patras are not drawn in as yet. It is in this illustration that the hachures prominent in the previous images have been replaced by hill-shading, and blue hydrography (rivers and coastlines) has replaced the previous black lines, leading to a much clearer image. For a time, river- and sea names were also rendered in blue, but although this was better for map reading, it proved to be too expensive for reproduction: for editions in other languages produced under licence, with blue names two printing plates would have to be changed, instead of one, if all names were printed in black.



Figure 7: Detail from *Bosatlas* 53th edition, 2007

Changes in place names

Finally, to get a better view of the changes to the place names, these have been extracted from the overview maps and made comparable in figure 8. In the first edition (1877) Italian and Turkish names abound. By 1908 Greek island names have been restored, although for the Ionian Islands the Italian names are added within parentheses. For Crete, the Italian name Candia apparently was just as familiar to the Dutch audience as the native name. Outside Greece's boundaries, Konstantinopel, Smyrna and Adrianopel still were the (Greek) names the Dutch used for referring to those places; only after 1923 were they changed for Turkish names. The names for the 1947 edition (see figure 8) were still rather much influenced by the classical Greek names in the current Dutch transcription. It was not until 1995 that the Greek names were rendered according to the official Greek transliteration system accepted by the United Nations, the ELLOT 743 conversion system.



Figure 8a 1877



Figure 8b 1908



Figure 8c 1913



Figure 8d 1923



Figure 8e 1947



Figure 8f 1995

Figure 8: Place name changes in the various editions of the *BosAtlas*

Conclusion

In closing, we can say that from 1750 onwards there was individual attention for Greece in Dutch geography manuals and atlases, and that developments, from the Greek 'Reconquista' to the extension of its rail network and motorway system, the building of reservoirs for irrigation and hydroelectricity and the gradual reclamation of all reclaimable lakes and marshes for agricultural purposes, were followed and duly represented. This was partly due to the gymnasium school type with its focus on classical studies, but the Bosatlas, aimed at the more technical HBS secondary school type, shows that here just as well Greece was regarded as an area that should be represented by relatively large-scale overview maps.

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