

Ethnic Map in the Book containing the Williamstown Lectures of Count Teleki

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Abstract:

This paper will focus on the maps reprinted in the book *The Evolution of Hungary and Its Place in European History* by Count Paul Teleki of Hungary. These maps provide an informative case study on presentation of thematic elements on maps and how colour, shading and other effects can greatly vary the presented information. This study begins by considering the original colour maps and how they presented their thematic material – the ethnography of Hungary – and how the presentation would have been radically different if they were reprinted in black-and-white without modification. The study then moves on to analyse the modifications made by Teleki to these maps and how these modifications helped to preserve the presentation of thematic material despite being printed in black and white.

In August of 1921 Count Paul Teleki of Hungary sailed to the United States to hold a series of lectures in Williamstown Massachusetts. Teleki was well known in America, not primarily for having been the prime minister of Hungary between the summer of 1920 and spring of 1921, but rather for his work in geography and cartography. His map titled *The Ethnographical Map of Hungary Based on the Density of Population* was well known by that time in most western countries, since Teleki himself handed the map to representatives of these countries. In fact many other maps which were not made by him were catalogued under his name in America. The Treaty of Trianon ending the First World War for Hungary was signed on 4 June 1920, but only came into force on 26 July 1921. This means that until that date travel from Hungary to the United States was not possible, because technically Hungary was still at war with the United States. It can thus be determined that Teleki travelled on the first possible occasion to America. The series of lectures he held at Williams College in Williamstown is well documented, since he published them in a book in 1923. This was Teleki's second trip to America, after he had been there when he took part in the Transcontinental Expedition in 1912. After his first journey he was already a well respected geographer in America, so when arriving for his second visit he was met by his friend Lawrence Martin. Martin, an American geographer also took part in the Transcontinental Expedition. He recalled that during the war incorrect news came to America that Teleki died during the war. In January 1919, when Martin travelled to Budapest with the Coolidge-mission, he was very happy to see Teleki. In 1922 Martin helped Teleki to prepare to have his lectures published in New York in 1923.

In the book of Teleki's lectures he discussed the general geography, history, economy, ethnic structure and political structure of Hungary. One very interesting feature of the book is that many maps originally printed in colour were republished in the book in black and white., which would have made the maps unusable if they would have been printed without alterations, since many of these relied on colours in the legend for them to be read. In the case of the original ethnographic maps the colour of the symbol represents the ethnic group the population belongs to. This was well known, so the maps Teleki provided to the publisher had to be redrawn in order for them to be published in a book printed in black and white. If they had just been converted to maps using greyscale by making a black and white photograph of them, that would not only have made the map hard to read, but the most important information that the map wanted to convey would have been lost.

Teleki had many maps drawn in the book most of which depicted the economic situation in Hungary and showed the economic losses that Hungary had to suffer due to the Treaty of Trianon. These maps showed raw materials, energy sources (mainly coal, but he also included a map showing realised and potential hydro-electric power (Teleki:1923 103)), railways and waterways, agriculture and industry emphasizing industry linked to agriculture. It is interesting how

he presented maps showing that railway links in Transylvania were much better towards Hungary than they were to the rest of Romania. Having these maps printed in black and white was definitely a challenge, but not as demanding as printing ethnic maps in black and white. There is one ethnic map in the book that is a remake of an ethnic map Teleki handed to the Coolidge mission in January of 1919 (Jeney: 2020 192-193).

This ethnic map, which can be found on page 215 (Teleki: 1923 215) of the book, shows the ethnic distribution of the population in the Banat region according to the census of 1910. The original map was published by the Royal Statistical Bureau of Hungary in 1918, and uses dot type symbols to show the population: a small half circle shows fifty inhabitants, small circle shows hundred inhabitants, large half circle shows five hundred inhabitants, and large circle shows a thousand inhabitants (Segyevy: 2016 83). While it was possible for Teleki to present the original map in Williamstown when holding his lectures, the map was redrawn for publication in the book by Mr. F. M. Hart of the US Geological Survey in cooperation with Teleki to meet the criteria needed for printing the book – i.e. that no colours were to be used. Due to the size of the pages the book was to be printed on, it was not possible to show all of Hungary in great detail, and the Banat was chosen since that area is the most ethnically diverse area in the Carpathian Basin. This was a great challenge, since the more categories are depicted by colours, the more challenging it is to convert a map into black and white format. The colours had to be substituted with patterns that were to be drawn inside the circles. The first two categories that were made were simple: Hungarians are shown using black circles, Germans using white ones. Romanians are shown with dotted circles, Serbs with circles with a cross, Slovaks with a circle that is half black half white while others are shown using a white circle with a black dot inside it. Since the shape and size of the symbol represents the number of inhabitants it was not possible in any way to alter the shape and size to show ethnic origin, so only patterns could be used. Since the symbols printed on the map are rather small, especially the ones representing hundred inhabitants, the pattern had to be simple so it is easily recognisable. Using these symbols on half circles was not possible, so this is why the categories 50 and 500 inhabitants had to be removed from this map. It is however important that even with this generalisation the map not only gives an oversight of the ethnic ratio in the depicted area, but also shows us how many inhabitants live there, and how many of these belong to a particular ethnic group.

This is a great example when an ethnic map originally printed in colour was republished in black and white in such a way that the loss of information was minimal when compared to the original map. The only information that was lost were the dots representing 50 and 500 inhabitants. These were combined into dots showing 100 and 1000 inhabitants, so the numbers were not lost, but it does create a certain degree of generalisation on the map. One can say that the extent of the generalisation on this map was kept to a minimum, hence the map is clearly readable and serves its purpose well.

Black and white ethnic maps are rare but they do exist. This map is the best black and white ethnic map that the author of this paper has seen so far, and in many aspects its quality is very near to those printed in full colour. In fact it is more precise than many maps that were printed on large coloured sheets at the end of the First World War. In the foreword of the book written by Lawrence Martin he states the maps handed to him by Teleki in Budapest in January 1919 were the most precise maps made by any government that provided maps for the peace negotiations in Paris. Since the map printed in the book was made based on one of the maps Teleki handed to Martin, it gave the map a very good basis to be very accurate itself.

It can be said that the map is unique in that it is one of the few ethnic maps printed in black and white, and is the most precise such map. The Banat is the most ethnically diverse area in Central Europe. There is no other area where so many categories are needed when mapping the ethnic structure. Despite the limitations of the black and white format, the map conveys the diverse ethnic structure of the depicted area very well.

References

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