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Visions of Stability and Anxiety

The Mediatic Building of Nations and Border Regions, 1918–1930

1 Introduction

> In the Czech case, the cohesiveness of the two main state building factors, the territory and the nation, is implemented with such force that this nation has survived all disturbances of the past. Because the morphology of the land and the boundaries of the national territory are visible in an indisputable way, they are evident to everyone who wants to see them[1].

These observations were published in 1918 in a book written by a young Czech geographer, Viktor Dvorský (1882–1960), including a series of maps like the one reproduced here. In 1910, Dvorský had finished his habilitation with an anthropogeographic study of the border region between Montenegro and the Ottoman Empire.

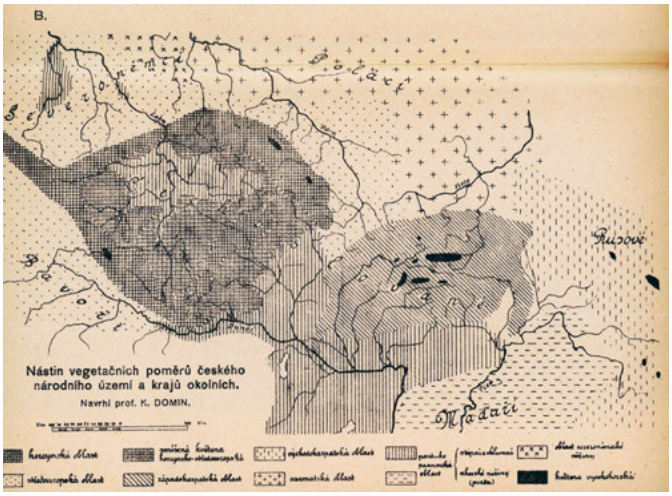

Fig. 1: The future state territory of Czechoslovakia defined by vegetation zones, in V. Dvorský, *Území českého národa* (The territory of the Czech nation), Praha 1918, map attached to the volume.

1 V. Dvorský, *Území českého národa* [The territory of the Czech nation], Praha 1918, pp. 11 f.

Note: I would like to thank the organizers and participants of the Trento conference for their feedback as well as my colleagues from the Collaborative Research Center/Transregion 138 "Dynamics of security. Types of Securitization from a Historical Perspective", for helping to develop my conceptual argument.

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Now, under wartime conditions, he engaged in the production of a persuasive geography that focused on the inclusion of Slovakia in a future state – a concept that had been popularized by the Czecho-Slovak exile since 1915 but still had little political salience within Czech society[2]. Even if Dvorský's attempt to create a binding interpretation of a national space by text and image might not seem too convincing today due to its rather unprofessional appearance (fig. 1), it represents a rhetoric that was widely adopted by both scholars and politicians during the last months of the war and following years.

One year later Dvorský was appointed as a leading geography expert at the peace negotiations in Paris. Before, he had been the main figure behind the territorial program that was presented and adopted in a meeting of the newly created office for the preparation of a peace conference (Uřád pro přípravu mírové conference), 29 December 1918[3].

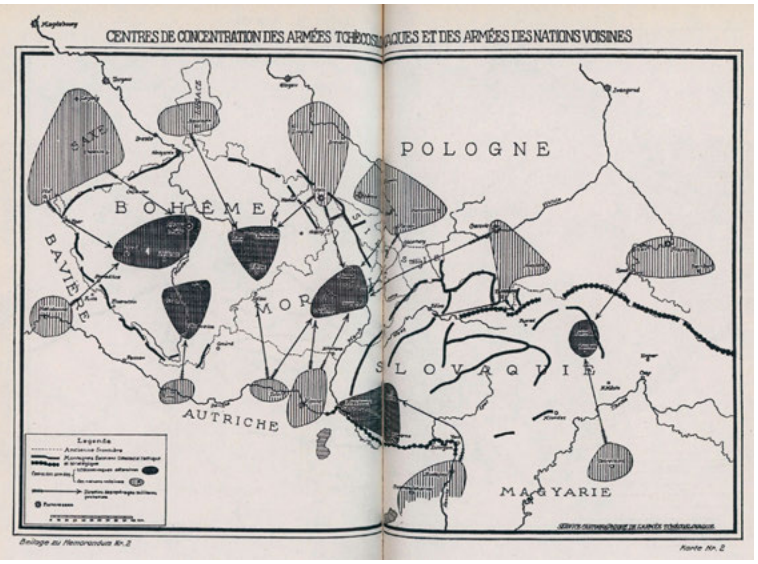

Fig. 2: The borders of the Czechoslovak state from a statistical point of view: map presented by the Czechoslovak delegation at Saint Germain, 1919, in H. Gordon, *Die Beneš-Denkschriften. Die Tschechoslowakei und das Deutsche Reich 1918/19. Kommentar und Kritik*, Berg 1990, pp. 212 f.

2 For the Czechoslovak concept in 1918/19 in general see E. Bakke, *Doomed to failure? The Czechoslovak Nation Project and the Slovak Autonomist Reaction 1918–38*, Oslo 1999.

3 Z. Vácha, *Žádám Vás jako vynikajícího odborníka ... Organizace odborných prací pro československou delegacy na mírové konferenci v Paříži v letech 1918–1919* [I ask you to be an excellent expert ... Thebrganization of professional work for the Czechoslovak delegation at the peace conference in Paris in the years 1918–1919], Praha 2012, p. 67.

At the time of the peace conference he was Professor of Geography at Charles University in Prague with a busy schedule working on 41 studies regarding different geographic topics while giving three to four presentations every day[4]. He was also responsible for the conceptual basis of maps that were produced by a team of 11 cartographers by April 1919[5] and, at least some of them, became part of the memoranda submitted by the Czechoslovak delegation to visually promote their territorial claims (fig. 2 shows the borders that were deemed necessary to guarantee the security of the country against potential enemies).

This uneasy perspective was strategically motivated by the context of the ongoing peace negotiations and also designed to correspond with the French concept of the containment of post-war Germany. In July 1920 – when he was about to act as the Czechoslovak member of the international commission for the delimitation of the border between Poland and Czechoslovakia – Dvorský wrote a lengthy secret report for the Czechoslovak Ministry of National Defence on the risk of military invasions in the future. None of Czechoslovakia's new neighbors except for Romania, Dvorský assumed, had an interest in the continued existence of the state. If conflict occurred, Slovakia would almost certainly become the theater for fierce military clashes. It was therefore necessary to maintain military control over the Danube between its confluences with the rivers Morava and Ipeľ, and to expand the railway network between Moravia and Slovakia as quickly as possible to speed up the transport of troops if necessary[6].

As can be seen from Dvorský's example, geographers dedicated special attention to borders and border regions. One of the reasons for this was that in post-1918 Central Europe, the multiethnic composition of the population almost naturally created zones of conflicting interests between emerging states and the pre-war political regimes. Projected ideas of national territory[7] were cherished on all sides and a symbolic geography can be seen emerging during the last months of World War I, with ethnolinguistic fault-lines and minorities appearing to constitute a risk for the national security of the newly created states.

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4 J. Chodějovský, Viktor Dvorský (1882–1960), in *Akademický bulletin Akademie věd České republiky*, 1, 2010, p. 40. Also see the entry in J. Martínek (ed.), *Geografové v českých zemích 1800–1945. Biografický slovník*, Praha 2008.

5 Z. Vácha, *Žádám Vás jako vynikajícího odborníka*, pp. 181 f. See also J. Chodějovský (ed.), *Paříž 1919. Mírová conference očima poradců československé a polské delegace* [Paris 1919. The peace conference through the eyes of the advisers of the Czechoslovak and Polish delegations], Praha 2017.

6 Archiv ústavu T.G. Masaryk [Archive of the T.G. Masaryk Institute] (AÚTGM), *Fond Masaryk-Republika*, Box 502, Dossier 31 "Úvahy o politicko-geografické situaci *ČSR*" [Reflections on the political-geographical situation of the Czechoslovak Republic], 21.020 pres. voj. dův., Praha 19. July 1920.

7 See, for the theoretical background of that concept, P. Haslinger, *Nation und Territorium im tschechischen politischen Diskurs, 1880–1938*, München 2010, especially pp. 1–38; P. Haslinger / K. Holz, *Selbstbild und Territorium. Dimensionen von Identität und Alterität*, in P. Haslinger (ed.), *Regionale und nationale Identitäten. Wechselwirkungen und Spannungsfelder*, Würzburg 2000, pp. 15–38.

2 Maps as instruments of reification and propaganda

Since much of this is already known, the focus of this article will be on the function of maps as important media for delineating political discussions and disseminating political messages[8]. As is known, spatial concepts assume material form in maps, producing binding interpretations that in turn create inter-personal meaning. Maps are not copy-and-paste representations of the world, they are knowledge media that create "augmented realities". As knowledge media they are inherently rhetorical and represent a "chosen reality"[9]. They also share a common grammar to fulfil basic communicative functions. The first function is to provide information about locations, distances, and spatial relations. Maps (and therefore also map makers) achieve this in a manner that generates multiple implications, due to the fact that maps are based on a set of active decisions that map producers are required to make.

The most important choice is what to show and what to disregard. Due to the international cartographic language, we see similar motifs if we look at representations of spaces. Streets, towns, buildings, state borders, and the distribution of linguistic groups are not portrayed individually, but reduced to standardized representations. Professional map-making therefore encourages categorization of the world in order to reduce its complexity. Based on measurements and statistical data, maps can also determine the visualization of space through choice of colour, contrast (warm-cold or light-dark), clustering and shading, and labelling language (like place and region names). In this way maps impose a lot of streamlining and even obliteration. Through the data they reference and confirm, disagree with, or contradict, they disseminate ideological elements and political claims.

The arbitrary nature of the cartographic visualization of certain regions becomes clear in the case of seemingly "innocent" or "exact" depictions, for example ethno-

8 The following paragraphs are based on P. Haslinger / V. Oswalt, *Raumkonzepte, Wahmehmungsdispositionen und die Karte als Medium von Politik und Geschichtskultur*, in P. Haslinger / V. Oswalt (eds.), *Kampf der Karten. Propaganda- und Geschichtskarten als politische Instrumente und Identitätstexte*, Marburg 2012, pp. 1–12. See also, among other works, J.B. Harley, *The New Nature of Maps. Essays in the History of Cartography*, Baltimore MD 2001; R.M. Downs / D. Stea, *Kognitive Karten. Die Welt in unseren Köpfen*, Stuttgart 1982; J. Black, *Maps and Polities*, Chicago IL 1997; J. W. Crampton, *Mapping. A Critical Introduction to Cartography and GIS*, Chichester 2010; J.R. Akerman (ed.), *The Imperial Map. Cartography and the Mastery of Empire*, Chicago IL / London 2009; S. Siegel / P. Weigel (eds.), *Die Werkstatt des Kartographen. Materialien und Praktiken visueller Welterzeugung*, Paderborn 2011; J. Dünne, *Die Karte Operations- und Imaginationsmatrix. Zur Geschichte eines Raummediums*, in J. Dühring / T. Thielmann (eds.), *Spatial Turn. Das Raumparadigma in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften*, Bielefeld 2008, pp. 49–69.

9 A. David, *Cartes et propagande a la conference de la paix de Paris en 1919–1920*, in "Scientific papers of the University of Pardubice, Series C, Institute of Languages and Humanities", 4, 1998, pp. 197–217, here p. 211.

graphic maps. Even physical maps, which would appear to be neutral due to the lack of political borders and their conventional cartographic language, can make political statements deriving from the choice of the areas that attention is drawn to. In the post-1918 context, cartographic production was focused on regions of conflicting interpretation, or disputed borders, on the basis of competing territorial programs. The result could almost be referred to as parallel cartographic realities that were dynamically and negatively entangled. The maps and their producers communicated and interacted with each other, while cartographers helped disseminate political visions by authorizing competing spatial ideations based on their standing as experts. In order to make their arguments as persuasive and salient as possible, they typically combined professional design and scientific language with elements drawn from political belief systems.

3 Border regions as symbolic spaces in Central and Eastern European cartography

If ethnographic or juridical arguments did not match up with their territorial programs, experts and politicians were ready to diverge from them. In the representation of regions in maps, brochures, and memoranda, the argument for the self-determination of peoples was thus often combined with references to important natural resources, communications and infrastructure, as well as the need to defend the state territory. Especially during the first three decades of the twentieth century, there was widespread adoption of motifs of historical precedence, the decisive long-term imprint of early state or empire building by national predecessors as key factors in claims over certain regions of Central and Eastern Europe. As Alexandra Schweiger said regarding the Polish example, the vision according to which "the centuries-old state tradition of the republic had left a political imprint on the required territory, which was now understood on the one hand as a title of ownership, on the other as an obligation to maintain this imprint. The view of the Eastern regions was particularly affected by this idea of shaping the area through political, civilizing, and agricultural work"[10]. This kind of thinking was also typical of Hungarian and Czech(oslovak) territorial discourse at the time. In all these examples border regions were examined through the prism of assumed cultural hierarchies and civilizing missions. Some of them were therefore represented as symbolic spaces and/or refuges of national authenticity and identity[11].

10 A. Schweiger, *Polens Zukunft liegt im Osten. Polnische Ostkonzepte der späten Teilungszeit (1890–1918)*, Marburg 2014, pp. 197 f. See also B. Conrad, *Umkämpfte Grenzen, umkämpfte Bevölkerung. Die Entstehung der Staatsgrenzen der Zweiten Polnischen Republik 1918–1923*, Stuttgart 2014.

11 See also N. Görtz / J. Hackmann / J. Hecker-Stempehl (eds.), *Die Ordnung des Raums. Mentale Landkarten in der Ostseeregion*, Berlin 2006; S. Seegel, *Mapping Europe's Borderlands. Russian Cartography in the Age of Empire*, Chicago IL / London 2012.

After World War I, the notion also emerged of border regions as economic-demographic zones for state intervention, "empty spaces" that had been infrastructurally and culturally neglected by former political regimes and were sometimes sparsely populated, thus fit for colonization. These territories were framed as regions of the future. In Poland, "the Eastern Territories appeared as a yet untapped source of power for the nation in which Poland's promising future would lie [...], an area in which the Poles could penetrate forcefully"[12]. In Czech brochures and journals of the early 1920s, Slovakia also became a "land of the future". In Karel Kálal's work, for example, it was foreseen that Slovakia would finally flourish by fulfilling functions supplementary to the Czech part of the new republic, which in turn would receive economic and cultural impulses from Slovakia[13]. This example shows how a patronizing attitude could coexist with a message of national emancipation and brotherhood.

When tracing back these discourses, it is important to stress that the conception of national spaces in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy did not begin with the outbreak of World War I. Over the preceding decades in Austria-Hungary, political activists[14] had developed and propagated concepts that crystallized in specific denominations for regions of national-strategic importance (German *Grenzland*, Hungarian *végek*, Polish *kresy*, Czech *pohraničí*, and Slovak *pohraničie*)[15]. Due to the constitutional structure of the monarchy, there was also a mediatic rivalry between nationally engaged academic circles and learned societies[16]. Within this context numerous nationalist projections existed for traditional regions (crown lands) as simulations of proto-national territories, sometimes cutting across internal boundaries (like for

12 A. Schweiger, *Polens Zukunft*, p. 200.

13 K. Kálal, *Slovensko, země budoucnosti* [Slovakia, land of the future], Praha 1919; K. Kálal, *La Slovaquie, terre de l'avenir*, Prague 1919. For the biography of Karel Kálal, see M. Stehlík, *Příběh zhrzeného slovakofila. Karel Kálal (1860–1930)* [The story of a lovelorn Slovakophile], in "Dějiny a současnost. Kulturně historická revue", 23, 2001, 3, pp. 20–23.

14 P. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation. Activists on the Language Frontier of Imperial Austria*, Cambridge MA / London 2006.

15 P. Haslinger, *Die "Arbeit am nationalen Raum" – Kommunikation und Territorium im Prozess der Nationalisierung*, in P. Haslinger / D. Mollenhauer (eds.), *"Arbeit am nationalen Raum". Deutsche und polnische Rand- und Grenzregionen im Nationalisierungsprozess* [special issue], "Comparativ. Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung", 15, 2005, 2, pp. 9–21.

16 The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 had created a constitutional system with two formally independent states: Hungary on the one hand and a second state bearing the complicated name "The kingdoms and lands represented in the imperial council" (this was only officially changed to "Austria" in October 1915). Within this Austrian state, each of the 17 crown lands represented a distinct political entity endowed with a regional constitution, coats of arms, and sometimes even anthems, as well as sixteen diets as legislative bodies (only the municipal council of Trieste/Triest/Trst did not resemble a full-fledged regional government). P. Haslinger, *How to Run a Multilingual Society. Statehood, Administration and Regional Dynamics in Austria-Hungary, 1867–1914*, in J. Augusteijn / E. Storm (eds.), *Region and State in Nineteenth-Century Europe. Nation-Building, Regional Identities and Separatism*, London 2012, pp. 111–128.

example the spatial representation of the plan for federalizing the Habsburg Monarchy by Aurel Popovici from 1906[17]). It was therefore not only the Italian, Serbian, and Romanian irredentist cartography that challenged the cartographic representation of the Habsburg Monarchy. Since the 1890s, different national movements developed imaginaries of national spaces that competed for salience and thereby focused especially on disputed regions.

Austria-Hungary entered the First World War with a complicated landscape of national-political friction, and the outbreak of war soon began to upset the delicate power balance that had functioned up until 1914. Subsequently the new windows of opportunity for alternative future scenarios rendered the complicated and already partly dysfunctional political system redundant. The war inspired expansionist imaginations on the imperial level, and the policy of integrative flexibility was increasingly substituted by a policy of retaliation not only along the front but even in the hinterland against groups that had been singled out for closer observation. Some especially counterproductive administrative and judicial measures introduced collective suspicion and ethnic labelling, which became a new leitmotif of Austro-Hungarian political culture. With this shift towards repressive measures, the war automatically encouraged territorial fantasies on all sides directed towards implementing alternative political scenarios[18]. When the Austrian parliament was re-opened in May 1917, representatives of several national movements openly voiced their discontent and insisted on the implementation of historical rights for their regions and peoples in accordance with their specific nationalist agendas.

From the spring of 1918 onward, Bolshevik propaganda from the East was complemented by an increasingly sophisticated propaganda campaign from Italy and the activities of the Department of Propaganda in Enemy Countries of Great Britain in response to the Central Powers' use of propaganda in 1917[19]. As a consequence, the new ideas of self-determination[20] became increasingly incompatible with the constitutional structure of Austria-Hungary. Spatial concepts that had been emerging before the war were reactivated under the increasingly rigorous circumstances. Over the course of the war, geopolitical thinking therefore came to be accepted not only by representatives in exile but also by those who remained politically active within

17 A. Popovici, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Groß-Österreich. Politische Studien zur Lösung der nationalen Fragen und staatsrechtlichen Krisen in Österreich-Ungarn*, Leipzig 1906.

18 P. Haslinger, *Austria-Hungary*, in R. Gerwarth / E. Manela (eds.), *Empires at War, 1911–1923*, Oxford 2014, pp. 73–90.

19 M. Cornwall, *Morale and Patriotism in the Austro-Hungarian Army, 1914–1918*, in J. Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War*, Cambridge 1997, pp. 173–191, here p. 183. See also M. Cornwall, *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary. A Multi-National Experiment in Early Twentieth-Century Europe*, Exeter 2002, pp. 167–196.

20 Unfortunately, there is only little information on Central and Eastern Europe in this ground breaking work, E. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment. Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, Oxford 2007.

the borders of Austria-Hungary. When imperial loyalties began to fade and the dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire gained momentum, these geopolitical and ideological concepts opened a window of opportunity for enforcing radical revolutionary agendas and implementing utopian ideas in the newly conceived national societies.

4 Professional cartographers as agents of the national cause: Paris 1919 and beyond

When the Habsburg Monarchy finally disintegrated, politicians were in desperate need of experts capable of combining scientific language with open or subtle political messages to serve national interests. Under these conditions, cartographic nation- and state-building developed into a competition between different think tanks. Despite being academic scholars, these experts felt a patriotic duty to engage in what can be called "intentional cartography". Their maps attempted to anticipate propaganda efforts by delegations with competing territorial claims, or react with counter arguments. In these circumstances not only texts but also maps and other images (like graphs or tables) acquired increased weight. When there were conflicting territorial claims, maps and pamphlets defined concrete regions that decision makers needed to pay attention to, either to prevent them from being "lost", or to justify claims for including them into the territory of interest[21].

Maps had already played an important role in February and March 1918 during the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk between the Central Powers and Bolshevik Russia. The Paris peace conference of 1919/20, however, was the first important international diplomatic event in which maps became pivotal tools in the attempt to reach a fair and lasting peace settlement[22]. The sub-committees on territorial issues in particular used them systematically on a daily basis. In a process that Anne David terms "l'inflation cartographique"[23] maps and atlases acquired multiple functions as tech-

21 S. Seegel, *Map Men. Transnational Lives and Deaths of Geographers in the Making of East Central Europe*, Chicago IL 2018; M. Górny, *Kreślarze ojczyzn. Geografowie i granice międzywojennej Europy* [Drawers of homelands. Geographers and borders of interwar Europe], Warszawa 2017; M. Górny, *Der Krieg der Karten. Geografen und Grenzziehungen in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa, 1914–1920*, in "Střed", 5, 2013, 1, pp. 9–39.

22 A very instructive overview of the role of experts during the Paris conference can be found in J. Leonhard, *Der* überforderte *Frieden. Versailles und die Welt 1918–1923*, München 2018, especially pp. 674–687 and 718–746. On the role of experts see also J.M. Nielson, *American Historians in War and Peace. Patriotism, Diplomacy and the Paris Peace Conference, 1918–1919*, Bethesda MD / Dublin / Palo Alto CA 2012, especially pp. 241–272; W.J. Reisser, *The Black Book. Woordow Wilson's Secret Plan for Peace*, Lanham MD / Boulder CO et al. 2012.

23 A. David, *Cartes et propaganda*, pp. 197 f.

nical aids. They conveyed arguments or propaganda (understood as information of a biased manipulative nature[24]) in order to influence experts, political decision makers, and the wider public (at home or globally). As a result, the experts involved developed dual identities that were simultaneously professional and nationalist[25]. Although their mapmaking activities were hidden, some of them addressed the public directly through newspapers and other publications. In this way "maps became 'swords' in the hands of (state) actors who either advanced the nation-state perspective, or contested the nation-state perspective by looking for political alternatives to the status of contested regions"[26]. Moreover, all the experts in Paris were well aware of the potential career benefits from their activities, given the urgent need of the newly formed Central Eastern European states to reorganize their functional elites, administrations, and institutions[27].

One basic purpose of most maps and atlases produced in the early post-war years was to provide orientation in a world characterized not only by new borders, but also by profound changes in communication and inter-regional economies, as well as new business opportunities. Many maps reflected the economic motivations of publishing houses to place their products on markets with a strong demand for the information they contained. An example is the Economic Atlas of the Czechoslovak State published in German in August 1920. In the introduction, geographer Ernst Pfohl (1874–1963) reflects on the motives for producing such a publication:

> The difficult questions of the present have also given the general public the need to quickly orientate themselves on the economic situation, the production and industrial situation [...], also because the reorganization and the increase in what are now 'domestic' production sites is now *terra incognita*.

The atlas thus differed from "the hitherto common methods of colorful lines and surfaces, which provided chaos that was unmanageable, offensive to the eyes". Instead it provided a clear overview the new geographic situation, containing

24 S. Suveica, *Between Science, Politics and Propaganda. Emmanuel de Martonne and the Debates on the Status of Bessarabia (1919–1920)*, in "Cahiers du Monde russe", 58, 2017, 4, pp. 589–614, here p. 592.

25 U. Feil, *Die Chemiker im Frankreich der Dritten Republik. Die doppelte Konstruktion von nationaler und professioneller Identität*, in R. Jessen / J. Vogel (eds.), *Wissenschaft und Nation in der europäischen Geschichte*, Frankfurt a.M. / New York 2002, pp. 115–144.

26 S. Suveica, *Between Science, Politics and Propaganda*, pp. 591 f.

27 M. Kohlrausch / K. Steffen / S. Wiederkehr, *Expert Cultures in Central Eastern Europe. The Internationalization of Knowledge and the Transformation of Nation States since World War I – Introduction*, in M. Kohlrausch / K. Steffen / S. Wiederkehr (eds.), *Expert Cultures in Central Eastern Europe. The Internationalization of Knowledge and the Transformation of Nation States since World War I*, Osnabrück 2010, pp. 9–30, here p. 11.

useful knowledge both for schools and the offices of businessmen and industrialists, not least the offices of the authorities, providing economic statistics. [...] The authorities' suggestion to include a brief textual explanation of the maps was therefore gladly complied with in order to supplement the work with suitable historical, technical, and economic statistics in such a way that it will inevitably become part of every teacher's library. [...] We would also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the authorities and other bodies that promoted the work and supported the author with their courtesy, [...] as well as all those who provided information[28].

5 Rebuilding the state with cartography: The example of Poland

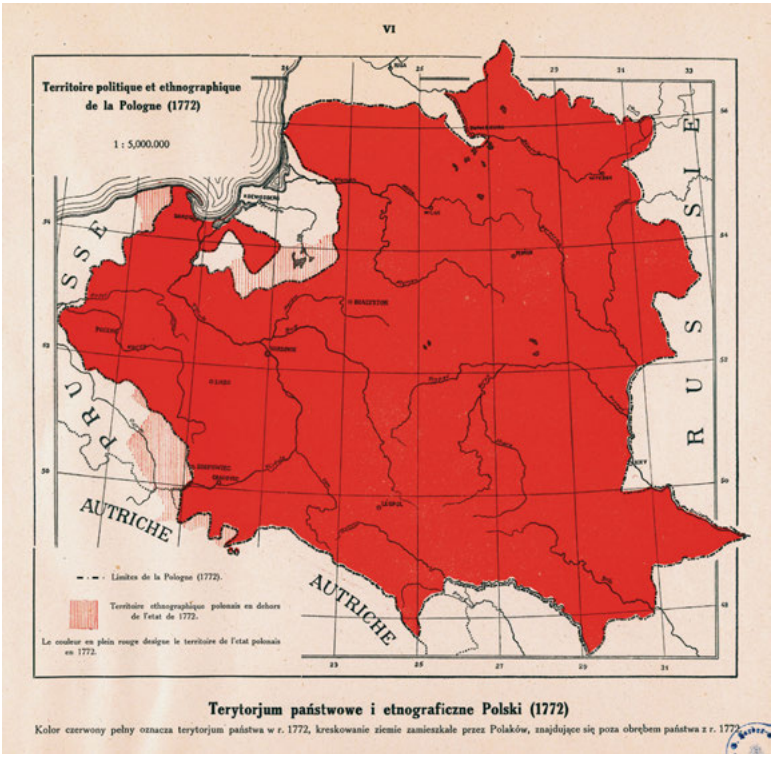

Fig 3: *Terytorium państwowe i etnograficzne Polski (1772)*, (The political and ethnografical territory of Poland [1772]), in E. Romer, *Polski atlas kongresowy. Atlas des problèmes territoriaux de la Pologne*, Warszawa / Lwów 1921, p. VI.

28 E. Pfohl, *Wirtschafts-Atlas des Tschecho-Slowakischen Staates*, Reichenberg 1920.

Although he did not accept any political role in the post-war state, the mastermind for Poland was Eugeniusz Romer (1871–1954). His credibility among international geographers and his personal friendships with experts on the side of the Allied Powers, especially the highly influencial American expert Isiah Bowman, increased the authoritativeness of the maps presented by the Polish delegation among the decision makers. Romer had produced maps during the First World War, which now served as cartographic templates for the Polish delegation maps at the Paris peace conference (published as Polski atlas kongresowy[29] in 1921). In a map entitled *The political and ethnografical territory of Poland (1772)*, Romer visually supports a maximalistic approach to Polish territorial claims by the combination of the ethnografically undifferentiated territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth ("Poland") and areas in the west with some Polish populations (fig. 3). Another example was his map of "Polish" libraries, museums, and collections of institutions, to the exclusion of institutions of other national and cultural orientation, with the aim of visually highlighting the presence of Poles over the entire territory of the former republic.

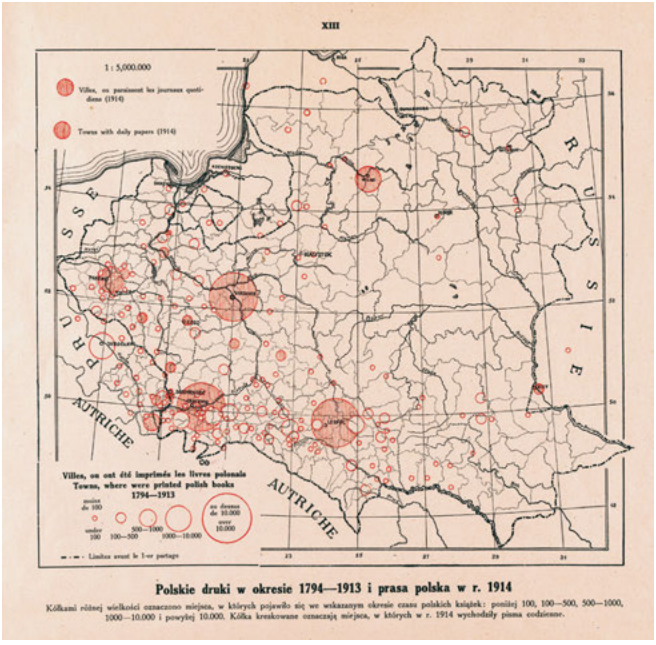

Fig 4: Towns, where Polish books were printed 1794–1913, in E. Romer, *Polski atlas kongresowy. Atlas des problèmes territoriaux de la Pologne*, Warszawa / Lwów 1921, p. XVI.

29 E. Romer, *Polski atlas kongresowy. Atlas des problèmes territoriaux de la Pologne*, Warszawa / Lwów 1921. Other atlases of this kind were: N.-P. Comnene, *La terre roumaine* à *travers les* âges. *Atlas historique, politique et* éthnographique, Lausanne / Paris 1919; J.S. Mills / M.-G. Chrussachi, *La question de Thrace. Grecs, Bulgares et Turcs*, London 1919; D. Rizoff, *Les Bulgares dans leurs frontièrs historiques, ethnographiques et politiques*, Berlin 1917; J. Cvijić, *Frontière septentrionale des Yougoslaves*, Paris 1919.

In the map showing book publications and press organs between 1794 and 1913, Romer combined a linguistic characteristic (only Polish-language publications were taken into account) with a normative cultural statement (fig. 4).

Due to the strategy of creating a connection between structural features and the proof of a general Polish presence in specific areas (albeit at different densities), gives the impression that only the Polish population can be associated with cultural development in their own area. Maps like these indicate regions where the level of "civilization" has not yet reached that of the west and can thus be identified as "regions of deficit" requiring state intervention with a specific set of actions.

Although Romer was always transparent about his working methods and complied with geographical-statistical practices, his choice of topics promoted the perception that the Polish claim to certain areas and regions was geographically or historically justified. This is also true of his colleague, the geographer and political activist Antoni Sujkowski (1867–1941). Sujkowski had studied at Kiev University before. After being released as a prisoner of war, he became an expert for the Polish delegation at the Peace conference. He elaborated a comparison between the Polish regions with, for example, Alsace-Lorraine, and in August 1919 he supported the Polish cause on the ground as a member of the relief committee for Upper Silesia, a violently disputed border region between Germany and Poland.

Fig. 5: *Mapa etnograficzna* (Ethnographic map), in A. Sujkowski, *Geografia ziem dawnej Polski*, 2nd ed., Warszawa 1921, p. 160.

In a new edition of his pre-war work, *Geografia ziem dawnej Polski* (The geography of former Polish lands), 48 maps were also included. Sujkowski stressed in an additional foreword that while Poland was now resurrected as a state, this was not within the old borders[30]. Like Romer in his *Polski atlas kongresowy*, he still paid some visual reference to the historic borders of Poland, for example in an ethnographic map (fig. 5) or another map of the distribution of domestic animals, when even regions beyond the 1772 borders, like Eastern Prussia, Upper Silesia, Latvia, and Lusatia appeared fully integrated into the Polish national sphere[31] (fig. 6).

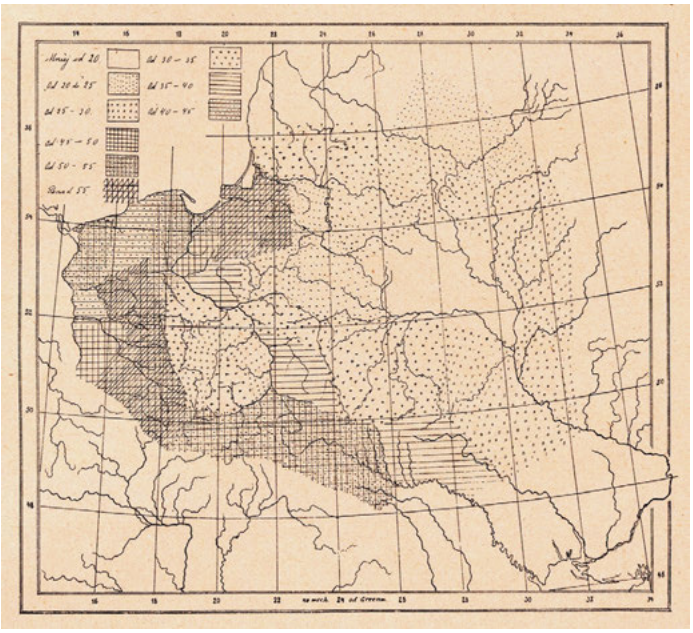

Fig. 6: The distribution of domestic animals, in A. Sujkowski, *Geografia ziem dawnej Polski*, 2nd ed., Warszawa 1921, p. 237.

However, after the peace treaty of Riga 1921, which ended the Polish-Soviet war, references to the 1772 borders soon began to disappear from maps that had no historical content, and all other traces of the imperial legacy were erased from official Polish cartography. Cartographic map representations of Central and Eastern Europe in general downplayed the significance of old dynastic boundaries and long-established regions relevant to the process of national emancipation. Geographers were again involved in the work of the border drawing commissions, with some successor states to Austria-Hungary finding themselves among the victorious powers of the

30 A. Sujkowski, *Geografia ziem dawnej Polski* [The geography of former Polish lands], 2nd ed., Warszawa 1921.

31 E. Romer, *Polski atlas kongresowy*; A. Sujkowski, *Geografia ziem dawnej Polski*.

world war and striving to establish an impression of stability. These included Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes[32]. For these countries the focus was on the visualisation of the new country, and the new maps did not only inform of the location of the new borders, but also redefined space in a manner intended to foster identification of the population with the new form of state sovereignty, lending plausibility to the new state territory as such. Some cartographers designed their maps specifically to popularize and stabilize the notion of the new territories and promote structural and emotional unification.

In some Austro-Hungarian successor states, geographers were also facing pressing logistical and organizational problems. Sujkowski – who would become the co-founder of the Wyższa Szkola Handlowa (Higher School of Trade) in Warsaw and its rector between 1929 and 1933 – was not the only one who spoke in favor of a complete and profound re-organization of geography in Poland in order to make the discipline independent of the military geography applied by the former empires that had partitioned Poland. He thought that ethnography was another crucial consideration for redefining Polish geography. ("The analysis of the ethnographic material that has been collected in large quantities already would shed light on the specific character of the Polish culture (like the influence of race and historically emerging practices and norms on the fate of the nation in the present and future"[33].) It was Romer who founded the Instytut geograficzny in 1921, and a year later became chief editor of the journal, "Polski przegląd kartograficzny" (Polish cartographical journal), which had the aim of assessing domestic and international cartographic production. Romer explained the motives for this activity as follows:

> As the cartography of the Polish territories was, for a century and a half, in the hands of the partitioning states, carried out by enemies of the Polish people and their civilization, [...] all elements of cartography, above all the Polish nomenclature, were, during the century, distorted and falsified. These polonophobic but official publications were imitated by the cartography of all countries. Fighting against this abuse, attracting everyone's attention to the relatively low state of the cartography of Polish territories, especially in the synthetic cartography of international science is the main task of the Polish Review of Cartography[34].

Romer also reported on the work of the Polish Military-Geographical Institute that assumed the task between 1920 and 1921 of printing 271 special maps of sections of the new state territory: "The war, which in Poland continued for two years after the armistice, and the rapid exhaustion of maps published by the occupying armies, made

32 Due to its ongoing territorial aspirations across the Adriatic Sea, Italy remained a more complex case.

33 A. Sujkowski, *Potrzeby nauki polskiej w zakresie gieografji* [The needs of Polish science in the field of geography], in "Nauka polska", 1, 1918, pp. 155–164, here p. 160.

34 E. Romer, *Avis de la rédaction*, in "Polski przegląd kartograficzny", 1, 1923, 1, pp. 1–3, here pp. 2 f.

this imperative." At the beginning of their work, the mapmakers were confined to reprinting maps used by the governments,

> which had till then ruled the various divisions of Poland. Even this undertaking presented serious difficulties, for Poland was neither scientifically nor technically prepared for it. The result of the enterprise is certainly satisfactory [...]. These maps, though mere photo-lithographed and photo-zincographed reproductions of those used by the Germans, Austrians and Russians, are by no means servile copies; they have all been reduced to the uniform scale of 1:100,000 and many of the names which had been mutilated by foreign topographers have again received their original Polish forms[35].

Due to the high level of internal ideological dispute in Poland, however, geopolitical projections were often used to reify concepts of state and society. One example is the work of Joachim Stefan Bartoszewicz (1867–1938), who before the war had studied medicine in Warsaw, political science at the École libre des sciences politiques in Paris, and international law in Lwów / Lemberg / Ľviv. After acting as editor of the journal Dziennik Kijowski based in Kiev, and secretary of the Polish delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, he became Senator for the National Democrats in the Polish Sejm 1921–1937 and 1928–1937[36]. In his work "War over Poland" he stated,

> Achieving appropriate borders is not the only task for ensuring Poland's strength and size. This also requires a powerful internal organization and a planned economic policy. Without these, it is impossible to build a truly independent Poland. [...] Today, when Poland is in an extremely difficult and dangerous condition, we must not forget that a structure that is too liberal to worry about the comfort of single individuals or social classes can still shake the building of the state[37].

In 1929, a year after he had become President of the highest court, Bartoszewicz confirmed his views regarding a strong and united country: "Territory is an essential part of the concept of the nation. An independent nation that has a state organization must have a specific area of land where it carries out its political mission and creates its own history"[38]. As a consequence, Bartoszewicz felt no need to make a distinction between different regions within the territory of Poland, quite the contrary: The state had the duty to implement a policy that produced not just integration, but also unification. Therefore "our state can only be a national state. This means that the state must serve to implement the nation's goals, interests and ideals. This in turn means

35 E. Romer, *Stan prac nad mapą Polski 1:100.000* [The status of work on the map of Poland 1:100.000], in "Polski przegląd kartograficzny", 1, 1923, 1, pp. 3–8, here p. 8.

36 M. Białokur, *Myśl społeczno-polityczna Joachima Bartoszewicza* [The social-political ideas of Joachim Bartoszewicz], Toruń 2005, pp. 347 f.

37 S. Kilian, *Myśl edukacyjna Narodowej demokracji w latach 1918–1939* [The educational ideas of National Democracy in 1918–1939], Kraków 1997, p. 49.

38 J. Bartoszewicz, *Zagadnienia polityki polskiej* [Issues of Polish politics], Warszawa 1929, p. 99.

that the Polish policy, for the implementation of which the state exists, must be a national policy"[39].

The work of Jerzy Józef Smoleński (1881–1940) provides another example of this. Smoleński had studied geology, chemistry, and physics in Krakow until 1902, and earned a scholarship from the Akademia Umjętnosti to continue his studies in geography and geology in Berlin. After a short time in the Austro-Hungarian Army, he returned to Krakow University in 1919, becoming professor of cartography, historical geography, and anthropogeography two years later. Like many Krakow University teachers, he was rounded up by German security police on November 6, 1939 and died in Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp. In 1926, in his book on the natural space of Poland and its boundaries[40], he stated that while the Carpathians, and the Black and Baltic seas created natural boundaries to the South and North, the political power of early Poland was too weak to dominate the whole area. It had developed in the West in the border regions but was pushed eastwards by more powerful forces, re-establishing border regions in the East. This was also caused by internal features that inhibited communication between the political centers and the peripheries[41].

Unintentionally, this form of cartography actually undermined the notion of unity and stability it was attempting to establish. It defined zones of deficiency in terms of security, lack of infrastructure, and developmental or cultural aspects (like language, ethnicity, or religion) that were needed in order to justify the claim of the state over a specific region.

6 Maps of trauma: The example of Hungary

Among all the Austro-Hungarian successor states, Hungary was an exception due to extreme levels of violence in 1919, combined with the severe territorial losses inflicted by the Treaty of Trianon on June 4, 1920. Therefore the cartographic discourse on the national territory and its borders contrasted starkly with the maps for unification described above. As Stephen Vardy noted, after the signing of the peace treaty, virtually all Hungarian intellectuals, irrespective of ideological preferences, were extremely bitter about the outcome.

> At the beginning the reaction of historians was emotional ...]. Moreover, it was mixed with elements of disbelief, and a kind of uncertain conviction that the harsh terms of Trianon could not possibly

39 *Ibid.*, p. 15.

40 J. Smoleński, *Przyrodzony obszar Polski i jego granice w* świetle *nowoczesnych poglądów* [The natural area of Poland and its borders in the light of modern views], Warszawa 1926.

41 See the review of J. Smoleński, *Przyrodzony obszar Polski i jego granice a* świetle *nowoczesnych poglądów*, in "Przegląd geograficzny", 1926, pp. 33–44, here p. 42–44.

become lasting or permanent. Later, when the hope for a quick return to normalcy faded, historians calmed down and began to organize more systematic attacks against the post-Trianon reality[42].

Hungarian geography and cartography were already well developed by around 1900. This was when Pál Teleki (1879–1941), future Prime Minister on two occasions, became the leading geographer and academic mastermind of Hungarian cartography and geopolitics[43]. In contrast with the Czechoslovak and Polish cases, Hungarian geography was much better prepared institutionally and in terms of man-power. Processes of institution building following the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867[44] meant that map production was driven by an independent, explicitly national Hungarian impetus[45]. After the end of the war this discourse did not change in substance and message, but only in choice of means. As early as November 1918 the revolutionary government under prime minister Mihály Károly established the Országos Propaganda Bizottság (National Propaganda Commission). They created the slogan "Nem! Nem! Soha!" (No! No! Never!), which later on became widely used as an anti-Trianon catchword during the entire Interwar period. Initially, the propaganda activities focused mainly on areas that were overwhelmingly populated by national minorities, and increasingly on Entente countries with publications in French, English, and Italian[46]. After the short and politically disastrous interlude of the Republic of Councils between March and August 1919, these activities were intensified by the new governments representing the pre-war political elite. The Hungarian delegation appeared at the Paris peace conference as a belated underdog only in January 1920.

Teleki and the delegation promoted the idea that Hungary was one of the most striking morphological units on the physical map of Europe, with the "practically

42 S.B. Vardy, *The Impact of Trianon upon Hungary and the Hungarian Mind. The Nature of Interwar Hungarian Irredentism*, in "Hungarian Studies Review", 10, 1983, 1, pp. 21–42, here p. 21.

43 A comprehensive academic as well as political biography is B. Ablonczy, *Pál Teleki, 1874–1941. The Life of a Controversial Hungarian Politician*, Boulder CO 2006.

44 See for other disciplines G. Palló, *Scientific Nationalism. A Historical Approach to Nature in Late Nineteenth-Century Hungary*, in M.G. Ash / J. Surman (eds.), *The Nationalization of Scientific Knowledge in the Habsburg Empire, 1848–1918*, London / New York 2012, pp. 102–112; M. Turda, *Nationalizing Eugenics. The Hungarian Public Debate of 1910–1911*, in M.G. Ash / J. Surman (eds.), *The Nationalization of Scientific Knowledge*, pp. 183–208.

45 P. Haslinger, *National Geopolitics in Habsburg Central Europe. Imperial and Post-Imperial Perspectives on Hungary and Poland, 1890–1930*, in J. Arend (ed.), *Science and Empire in Eastern Europe. Imperial Russia and the Habsburg Monarchy in the 19th Century*, München 2020, pp. 205–236, here pp. 206 and 211.

46 M. Zeidler, *Ideas on Territorial Revisionism in Hungary, 1920–1945*, New York 2007, p. 93. By mid-December 1918 the National Propaganda Commission had already issued 9 million leaflets (with 6.4 million for minorities), and in 1920/21 alone it issued 24 brochures in the "East European Problems" series and 7 brochures in the "Questions de l'Europe Orientale" series. A. Kovács-Bertrand, d*er ungarische Revisionismus nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Der publizistische Kampf gegen den Friedensvertrag von Trianon (1918–1931)*, München 1997, pp. 47 and 101.

uninhabited belt of the Carpathians" surrounding most of the country and creating a natural barrier, similar to the way the Pyrenees and the sea delineated France[47]. Teleki's extensive language skills had helped to establish his international reputation before the war (he spoke German, French, and English, as well as some Dutch, Italian, and Romanian)[48]. Under the circumstances of disintegration and the redefinition of boundaries in former Austria-Hungary he had drafted the famous "carte rouge" as early as December 1918[49] (fig. 7).

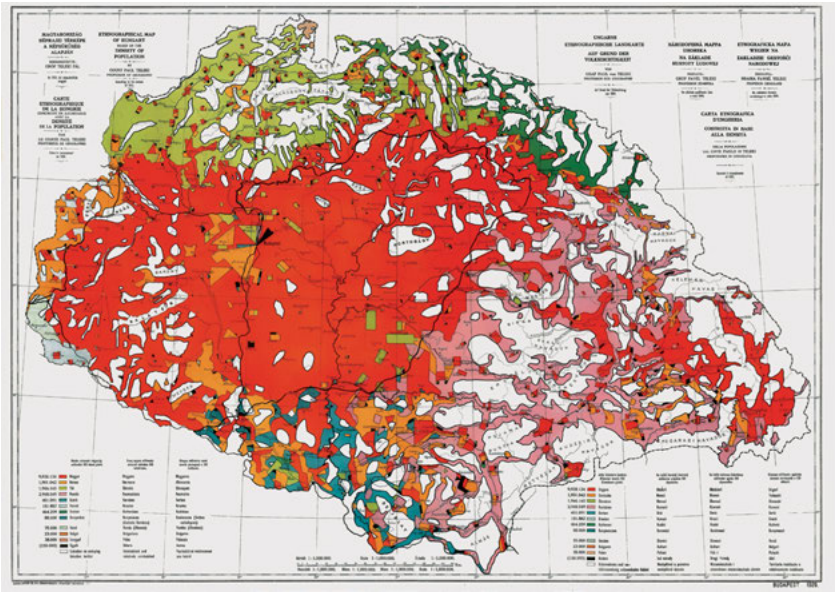

Fig. 7: *Carte rouge*, in P. Teleki, *Magyarország néprajzi térképe a népsűrűség alapján* (Ethnographic map of Hungary based on population density), Budapest 1919

His method of not including areas that were less populated, and his choice of colors (bright red for Hungarian, faint pink for Romanian) visually overemphasized the Hungarian-speaking minority population in Transylvania at the expense of the

47 P. Teleki, *Short Notes on the Economical and Political Geography of Hungary*, Budapest 1919, p. 1. A further attempt by leading geographers to underpin Hungary's geographical unity is the following work, P. Treitz / C. de Papp, *Geographical Unity of Hungary*, Budapest 1920; L. de Buday, *L'unité économique de la Hongrie*, Budapest 1919.

48 S. Seegel, *Map men*, 60.

49 A detailed analysis of this map, other ethnographic maps, and the international reaction to it can be found in D.Z. Segyevy, *Térképművek Trianon* árnyékában [Map works in the shadow of Trianon], Budapest 2016, pp. 97–122; D.Z. Segyevy, *Carte Rouge 100*, https://pangea.blog.hu/2019/05/29/carte_rouge, accessed January 15, 2020.

Romanian-speaking majority and provided a cartographic counter argument to the French cartography of Emmanuel de Martonne, who supported the Romanian point of view[50]. This map was now officially used to retain as much territory as possible for Hungary. Teleki's academic standpoint became the political position, if not to say foreign policy dogma of the Hungarian delegation, a fact also reflected in the passages from the "Memorial on the frontiers of Hungary" presented at Trianon in January 1920:

> It is no empty phrase, but a severely scientific truth that Hungary's frontiers, of a thousand years' standing, enclose a geographic unit. New frontiers cannot be drawn within this boundary without disturbing the peace of the peoples inhabiting this basin. Within this most marked geographic unit, over a thousand years, each district and each people has been interwoven with the others in so close a connection of traditions, history, culture, economics and transport that the connection can only be sundered by ruthlessly destroying it and making for the unhappiness of the peoples living there. Not one of our nationalities has any right whatever to any regions of our country[51].

This argument remained central to the Hungarian position even after the treaty of Trianon (which not only included a detailed description of the new boundaries, but also an additional map at the scale of one-to-a-million). Following the loss of vast territories of the former kingdom of Hungary, politicians and geographers strove to develop and implement a cartography of trauma that continued contesting post-war geographies under terms of peace that were felt to be unjust and unreasonable (even more intensively than in Germany and Lithuania, countries that followed the same strategy).

An important work in this respect was the atlas *Hungary in Economic Maps*, commissioned by Teleki and implemented by the Deputy State Secretary, Aladár Edvi Illés. The first edition was published in late 1919 in a limited number of copies, followed by a substantially enlarged 6th edition in 1921, which included 75 maps and 6 diagrams. In order to prove the reliability of the data and validity of the methods applied, the atlas gave a long list of consulted publications and experts. As the authors underline, the aim of the maps was to present Hungary's unimpaired economy based on data from the last year before the First World War (1913) in contrast with the state of affairs after the war: "It has been done in the conviction that a true picture of the economic

50 S. Seegel, *Map men*, 66. Also see Z. Krasznai, *Földrajztudósok az első világháború után. Emmanuel de Martonne* és *Teleki Pál* [Geographers after World War I. Emmanuel de Martonne and Pál Teleki], in Z.K. Horvath / A. Lugosi / F. Sohajda (eds.), *Léptékváltó tarsadalomtörténet. Tanulmányok a 60* éves *Benda Gyula tiszteletér*e [Scale-changing social history. Studies in honor of 60-year-old Gyula Benda], Budapest 2003, pp. 345–366; G. Palsky, *Emmanuel de Martonne and the Ethnographical Cartography of Central Europe (1917–1920)*, in "Imago Mundi. The International Journal for the History of Cartography", 54, 2002, 1, pp. 111–119; G.P. Bowd / D. Clayton, *Emmanuel de Martonne and the Wartime Defence of Greater Romania. Circle, Set-Square and Spine*, in "Journal of Historical Geography", 47, 2015, pp. 50–63.

51 J. Cholnoky, *The Hungarian Peace Negotiations. An Account of the Work of the Hungarian Peace Delegation at Neuilly s/S, from January to March 1920*, Budapest 1922, p. 75.

interconnection of the different regions of the country can be rendered only by the aid of data taken under normal circumstances". The maps were designed to prove that the different regions of Hungary complemented one another almost naturally in economic terms, "the oro- and hydrographical map convincingly shows that in the territories of Hungary the transport, management of forests, regulation of rivers, and the direction of all matters connected with water-policy must be united under one authority in order to attain the best results"[52]. In a separate introduction to this work, László Teleki set the tone in terms of strategy:

> This atlas was drafted during the preparation work for the peace conference. From the moment we saw the way in which peace was settled with Germany, we had not the least hope of changing the minds and decisions of the conference taken and fixed without asking much about the conditions or the will of populations. Still we had to put our argument before them, even when our memoranda and maps remained closed and folded. It was our duty towards our nation, towards future generation and – towards our foes and judges. [...] And they will see that by having mixed themselves into the affairs of the lands to the North of the Balkans they Balkanized them too, instead of Europeanizing the Balkans. [...] We knew the moment would come, when people would look around for remedies to repair the terrible confusion caused by the lack of knowledge of the peace conference. This atlas shows not only what Hungary lost, what she retained, but shows quite abstractly to the foreigner, to the neutral, how an economic unit was cut to pieces[53].

Teleki was involved in another atlas project that published maps in four languages[54]. He worked together with two geographers who had left Transylvania in 1919 after the region was occupied by the Romanian state, Ferenc Fodor (1887–1962), a high school teacher and assistant to Teleki, and Jenő Cholnoky (1870–1950) who had studied in Kolozsvár/Cluj where he later became professor. The latter knew Teleki from travelling to the United States together in 1912. He chose to leave Transylvania and became both a professor at Budapest University in 1920, and a prominent member of the Hungarian Frontier Readjustment League.

In May 1921, a month after Pál Teleki's brief term as Hungarian Prime Minister, government authorities re-examined all anti-Trianon activities in a series of strategy meetings. They came to the conclusion that as long as those activities continued to be pursued by enthusiastic but inexperienced amateurs, they would not produce the desired results. In August, the new Prime Minister István Bethlen intensified government control over revisionist propaganda activities and supported institution building measures. Resources and propaganda materials were taken under control by the

52 A. Edvi Illés / A. Halász, *Magyarország gazdasági térképekben* [Hungary in economic maps], Budapest 1921.

53 *Ibid*.

54 F. Fodor, *Magyarország gazdaságföldrajzi térképe; Carte de géographie* économique *de la Hongrie; Economic-geographical map of Hungary*, 2nd ed., Budapest 1921. The following work also contains some interesting maps: L. von Buday, *Ungarn nach dem Friedensschluss*, Berlin / Leipzig 1922.

Hungarian National Alliance, and the government established a control board whose task was to refine the work of the minority and propaganda organizations[55]. In a confidential meeting, Bethlen said on October 31, 1922:

> We have to collect materials that document interior weaknesses, problems, and the economic and political unviability of the neighbouring states [...] we should also demonstrate the impossible situation as regards politics, economy, and culture that has been created by the peace treaty and the grievances of our minorities. We should illustrate that the new states, due to their structure and their low (meaning Balkan) culture, will be a constant threat to peace in Central Europe and a setback for intellectual culture[56].

In the years that followed, a huge scientific apparatus was set up under the supervision of Pál Teleki, who had been very critical of the way the anti-Trianon rhetoric had materialized so far. Teleki was convinced that it had to take much more account of political realities, scholarly attitudes, and scientific facts. He argued from a professional point of view when stressing that because of their emotional tone, many campaigns and publications were unfit for use abroad and so ultimately counter productive[57].

Fig. 8: O. Légrády, *Gerechtigkeit für Ungarn! Trianons grausame Irrtümer*, Budapest 1930, p. 2.

Institutes for sociography and political science were established in 1924 and 1926 respectively and functioned according to strict scientific principles laid down by Teleki himself, providing data for both the propaganda organizations and the govern-

55 M. Zeidler, *Ideas on Territorial Revisionism*, pp. 96 f.
56 A. Kovács-Bertrand, *Der ungarische Revisionismus*, pp. 131 f.
57 *Ibid*., pp. 134 f.

ment, assisting the latter in political decision making[58]. With government sponsorship, the Hungarian Frontier Readjustment League alone published 270 books within 15 years, of which approximately 75% in English, French, and Italian (It is quite telling that only a few works were published in Slovak and Hungarian, and none in Romanian, Czech, or Serbo-Croatian).

One aim of this new discourse was to prove that the new boundaries were completely artificial and dangerous to the region's stability. In this context, formerly Hungarian regions beyond the territory of "rump-Hungary", as it was now called within its Trianon borders, gained new symbolic visibility. The work of Ferenc Olay is a good example of this alternative or even uprooted worldview, derived from the position of being the victim of unjust decisions. Olay was the official Hungarian representative to the Committee for Moral Disarmament under the aegis of the League of Nations. The book he published in 1927 under the title *Critical Years of Hungarian Culture* spread quite a different message.

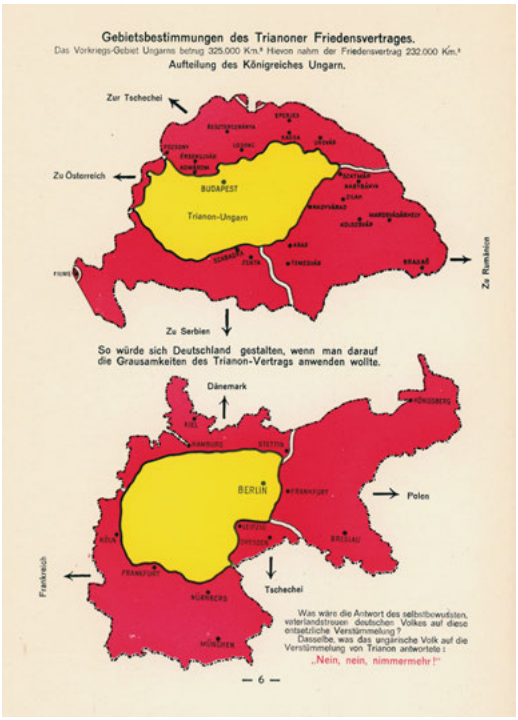

Fig. 9: O. Légrády, *Gerechtigkeit für Ungarn! Trianons grausame Irrtümer*, Budapest 1930, p. 6.

58 M. Zeidler, *Ideas on Territorial Revisionism*, pp. 99 f.

He documented the fate of Hungarian national monuments, schools, and libraries that had been plundered, destroyed, or damaged since the end of the war and argued that this testified to the attitude and low civic potential of the new neighboring states. He saw this as evidence that the natural cultural hierarchy had been turned on its head by the peace treaty[59]. The cartographic representation of this distorted image appeared in some important propaganda works, like the volume *Justice for Hungary* (Igazságot Magyarországnak), which was published by the Hungarian Society for Foreign Affairs in January 1928 in Hungarian, and in May in English[60]. The German language version displayed the dystopian vision of the cruzification of Hungary by the Trianon peace treaty (fig. 8) and hoped to provoke some solidarity by just simulating what would have happened if the "cruelty of the Trianon treaty" were being applied in the case of Germany (fig. 9).

7 Conclusions

As observed above, during the postwar war years many cartographic representations were characterized by a mediatic invention of nations with their fringes and boundaries. In general, these conceptions expressed national defense concerns and anxieties about the safety of the state. These motifs coalesced with geopolitical concepts that aspired towards open futures with new possibilities for national development and state building. Therefore, most leading geographers of Austro-Hungarian successor states embraced a combination of speculative national-political imagination on the one hand, and a geopolitics of risk assessment and worst case thinking on the other. This did not occupy the minds of experts only during the turbulent post-war years, but endured for the entire interwar period, greatly influencing the re-drawing of borders and the disputes of experts between 1938 and 1947.

Due to their locations and ethnic compositions, border regions were ideal territories for the projection of this ambivalent anxiety. By attracting intense monitoring, border regions transformed into objects of geopolitical pride and/or anxiety. The attention they received was multi-layered with regional and local motives which also functioned as discursive resources for an overall argument. Apart from visual aspects and the cartographic language, they depended on economies of attention, opportunity structures, and highly selective reception and monitoring processes that resulted in diverging epistemologies and contrary interpretations of the histories and futures of contested regions.

59 F. Olay, *A magyar kultúra válságos évei 1918–1927* [Years of crisis for Hungarian culture, 1918–1927], Budapest 1927; see also F. Olay, *Csonkamagyarország ellenséges megszállása* és *kulturális káraink*, [Hungary's occupation by her enemies and our cultural damages], Budapest 1929.
60 M. Zeidler, *Ideas on Territorial Revisionism*, pp. 135 f.