

FOREWORD

This cluster of articles is the outcome of a panel organized within the frame of the 12th International Congress of South-East European Studies, which took place in Bucharest in September 2019, entitled *Between the Imperial Eye and the Local Gaze/Entre la surveillance impériale et le regard local*. Due to the long period of time required to transform the talks into full-fledged articles, there are a number of variations between this collection of studies and the initial panel, both in relation to the authors and to their subjects. Nonetheless, we consider that this section of the *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes* accurately reflects the main themes and problems raised in the original papers and the subsequent discussions. We express our gratitude to the editors of the journal for their tireless patience in seeing this project through to the end.

Cartography was an instrumental tool in devising and disseminating the concept of South-Eastern Europe, both amongst the “Westerners” and “Easterners”.¹ Ptolemy’s *Tabula nona Europae, the Danubian Lands, Turkey in Europe, Turkey of Europe, Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the East-Central Europe, the countries behind the Iron Curtain, Third Europe, the EU’s newcomers* are all constructs of cultural geography that successively reinforced and reshaped the idea of a different, second class, Europe, as the ‘other’ to the West.² With every newly devised spatial frame, a different stratum was added to this geographical assembly that escapes the logic of a single, progressive narrative. Traditionally, the cartographic history of this fluid region is considered rather straightforward. From the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries the mapping of South-Eastern Europe was mainly shaped by the so-called cartographic revolution and by the rivalling imperial geographical discourses. The advent of printing and the rediscovery of Ptolemy’s *Geography* prompted something of a paradigm shift with view to the mapping of the region; at the same time, the territorial disputes over the region between the Habsburgs, the Ottomans and the Russian Empire stimulated and promoted numerous cartographical projects.³ Throughout the early

¹ A. Drace-Francis, “The Prehistory of a Neologism: ‘South-Eastern Europe’,” *Balkanologie* 3, 1999, 2, p. 117–127; S. Antohi, “Romania and the Balkans: From Geocultural Bovarism to Ethnic Ontology”, *Tr@nsit online* 21 <https://www.iwm.at/transit-online/romania-and-the-balkans>; S. Antohi: “Habits of the Mind: Europe’s Post-1989 Symbolic Geographies”, in Idem and V. Tismăneanu (eds.), *Between Past and Future: The Revolutions of 1989 and Their Aftermath*. Budapest, 2000, p. 61–77.

² K. Murawska-Muthesius, *Imaging and Mapping Eastern Europe: Sarmatia Europea to Post-Communist Bloc*, New York, 2021.

³ R. Jöhler and J. Wolf (eds.) *Beschreiben und Vermessen. Raumwissen in der östlichen Habsburgermonarchie im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*. Berlin, 2020; J. Wolf and W. Zimmermann (eds.), *Fließende Räume, Karten des Donaupraums, 1650–1800*. Exhibition Catalogue Karlsruhe 2017. Regensburg, 2017; V. Kivelson, *Cartographies of Tsardom: The Land and Its Meanings in Seventeenth-Century Russia*. Ithaca, 2006; S. Seegel, *Mapping Europe’s Borderlands. Russian*

modern period, mapmaking and cartographic knowledge of this region were closely interlinked with war and post-war agendas, with the imposition of boundaries, limits and frontiers that proved, time and time again, to be illusory and elusive.⁴ Starting with the middle of the nineteenth century, the emerging national geographical discourses stimulated alternative cartographies. Mapping the nation was, first and foremost, a polemical project, directed against imperial and national competing narratives.⁵ It was simultaneously an instrumental endeavour, as it was not only meant to represent the national territory, but also to take possession of it through mapping. Nevertheless, although developed as a reaction towards the external colonial view, local cartographical discourses, driven by both the proponents of modernization and supporters of autochthonism, continued to consider Western mapmaking as the yardstick against which all maps should be judged.

All the following six articles question this traditional, simple, narrative and look for more refined conceptual tools of analysis than the over-used binary oppositions: medieval vs. modern; manuscript vs. printed maps; Ptolemaic vs. Non-Ptolemaic territorial frames; imperial vs. national cartographies; local vs. colonial gazes or hegemonic vs. counter-hegemonic discourses. Toni Veneri starts by looking at the Renaissance reiterations of the Ptolemaic frames that apparently confirm the overwhelming authority the ancients held over humanists. By a thorough and sophisticated analysis, Toni Veneri dismantles the idea of Ptolemy's dominance over the Renaissance mapmaking and uncovers instead a multitude of 'cartographic modernities' of the region, shaped by an array of different actors, motives, and visions. Chronologically, Robert Born's contribution takes over from where Toni Veneri's ends, but switches focus to the political-driven cartography and to propaganda maps. By juxtaposing and comparing the Habsburg-sponsored mapmaking with Sigismund Báthory's fascinating attempt to endorse his political ambitions with the help of cartographic propaganda, Robert Born brings into light several networks of knowledge and patronage. The relations within these networks escape easy labels

Cartography in the Age of Empire, Chicago, 2012; Ian Manners (ed.), *European Cartographers and the Ottoman World: 1500–1750. Maps from the Collection of O. J. Sopranos*. Chicago, 2007. URL: <https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/oimp27.pdf>; P. Emiralioğlu, *Geographical Knowledge and Imperial Culture in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*. Farnham 2014

⁴ V. Rödel (ed.), *Zwischen den Welten. Kriegsschauplätze des Donauraums im 17. Jahrhundert auf Karten und Plänen*. Exhibition Catalogue Karlsruhe 2010, Karlsruhe, 2010; Idem., *Die Militärkartographie – Mittel der Sicherung und Erschließung des Donauraums*, in K. Mösender, M. Thimann and A. Hofstetter (eds.), *Barocke Kunst und Kultur im Donauraum*. Vols. 1–2. Petersberg, 2014, here vol. 1, p. 205–219; M. V. Veres, *Constructing Imperial Spaces: Habsburg Cartography in the Age of Enlightenment*. Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2015; G. Fasching, "Die kartographische Erschließung des östlichen Europas", *Der Donauraum* 57, 2017, 3–4, p. 111–130.

⁵ P. Haslinger and V. Oswalt (eds.): *Kampf der Karten: Propaganda- und Geschichtskarten als politische Instrumente und Identitätstexte*, Marburg, 2012 https://digital.herder-institut.de/publications/frontdoor/deliver/index/docId/129/file/PUB_Herder-Institut_Tagungen_30_9783879693702.pdf; S. Seegel, *Map Men. Transnational Lives and Deaths of Geographers in the Making of East Central Europe*, Chicago, 2018; J. W. Crampton, "The Cartographic Calculation of Space: Race Mapping and the Balkans at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919", in: *Social & Cultural Geography* 7, 2006, p. 731–752; M. Górný, *Vaterlandszeichner. Grafen und Grenzen im Zwischenkriegseuropa*, Osnabrück, 2019.

and force scholars to rethink the complex process of designing, printing and disseminating a Renaissance ‘propaganda map’. The same theme is further pursued by Ionuț Cruțeru, who looks at the making of the map of Wallachia, published in Padua in 1700. To some extent, this much-debated map, at least in the Romanian scholarship, is an example of propaganda, as it promotes a geographical identity of the realm of Wallachia, part of a larger cultural Greek graphosphere. By setting aside the authorship question, which for decades dominated the research and blocked new approaches, Ionuț Cruțeru reconstructs a bundle of initial functions for this map. Marian Coman’s study is similarly focused on a single map, but a textual one this time. The geographical description of Wallachia by the Transylvanian-Suisse charlatan Ridolfo Damiano de Brünnetz was meant to exploit the Habsburgs’ interest in the realm and to impress the prospective employer. Although, at a first glance, this textual map seems just another example of imperial cartography, at a closer look it proves to be an Enlightenment adventurer’s attempt to fabricate a false geographical expertise. The last two contributions treat the intricate topic of Romanian national mapmaking in the twentieth century. While Silviu Anghel chooses to focus on the cartographical expressions in the time-span of a specific historical episode, Cezar Buterez looks at a several-decade long cartographic project, continued throughout different political regimes. Silviu Anghel tackles the controversial ethnographical principle as understood by the different actors involved in Romania’s negotiations to enter the First World War. By analyzing the maps and the geographical discourses used during the diplomatic negotiations, Silviu Anghel convincingly argues that the 1910’s Romanian mapmaking was slowly and painstakingly transitioning from a historical- to an ethnographical-grounded national cartographical discourse. Immediately after the First World War the Army Geographic Service started the first large-scale national map collection, which was meant to cover all regions of the post-war Romanian state. This project is investigated by Cezar Buterez, who unveils the heterogeneity of the so-called ‘Plan Director de Tragere’ collection, which had an extremely lengthy production and incorporated numerous previous cartographic sources of different origins and styles.

Despite the chronological complementarity and the thematic contiguity of the six contributions, it was not intended to provide an overview of the history of cartography of and in South-Eastern Europe. Such a desideratum has yet to be achieved and, despite the recent effervescent scholarly production in this field, there are still many white spaces on our map of knowledge. This group of articles explores some of them, such as the institutionalization of cartographic production or the role of mapmaking as an exercise in political wish-fulfilment, while others, such as map consumption, are barely touched upon. The editors and authors hope ultimately to encourage the readers to look beyond the familiar paradigm of the making of Eastern Europe and of the imagining of the Balkans and to discover a far more intricate cartographic history.

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