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Ethnic Maps: Between Reality and Propaganda

SUMMARY

Ethnic maps provide insight into the ethnically complex populations of certain areas. They are a cartographic way of portraying a part of geographic reality. Southeastern Europe appears as an ideal area for ethnic maps drawers: there is a variety of different ethnic groups living in a relatively small area. Moreover, political boundaries often do not correspond with so-called ethnic borders, i.e. divisions between majority areas of different nations and/or ethnic groups. The history of South-Eastern Europe offers a number of examples of ethnic maps drawing and their use in political context. The paper focused on ethnic maps drawn and published in the context of the break-up of Yugoslav federation during the first half of the 1990's. The maps were produced mainly by scientific institutions or under the supervision of such institutions or experts, but always with the specific goal to back and justify political standpoints of their respective country's governments during a turbulent period of geopolitical change and transition. Generally, figures and statistics were presented professionally and correctly. Map authors and compilers did not try to falsify figures. The degree of intent in mapmaking is registered primarily through the choice of cartographic technique, including certain elements of the map design (choice of colours). In that regard, one can identify a technique favoured by Croatian sources (pie charts) and another one often used by Serbian mapmakers (choropleth maps). Maps were understood to be powerful media tools and influential visual images that could be used to create a particular perception.

KEY WORDS: ethnic map, cartographic technique, political propaganda

Ethnic maps provide insight into the ethnically complex populations of certain areas.[*] They are a cartographic way of portraying a part of geographic reality. Ethnic maps may refer to various spatial units. Sometimes they refer to small pieces of territory, to a region, or a town, but they can also refer to wider areas like a state, a group of states,[1] or a continent.

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[1] In 2002 an interesting international project was initiated by I.B.F. Kormoss from College of Europe, Brugge and Károly Kocsis from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, both widely involved in map-making. With help provided by colleagues from countries involved, they projected to produce Ethnic Map of Continental European Candidates and Neighbouring States. The project should result with ethnic map of so-called transitional Europe.

That part of Europe known as South-Eastern Europe, or simply the Balkans, appears as an ideal area for ethnic maps drawers, because of two main reasons. First, there is a wide variety of different ethnic groups living in a relatively small area. The consequence of this is purely visual: maps representing these features tend to be quite interesting, characterised by dots and colours. Second, political boundaries often do not correspond with so-called ethnic borders, i.e. divisions between majority areas of different nations and/or ethnic groups. The consequence of that fact is more significant and often painful: it has been the source of continuous efforts by various actors attempting to harmonise these two types of lines. That can be done in two ways: either to alter political boundaries in order to make them more compatible with the ethnic map, or to change the existing ethnic pattern in order to simplify it and bring it more into accord with political boundaries. The history of South-Eastern Europe offers a number of examples of both types of actions.

Ethnic maps of South-Eastern Europe are in focus, but not for the first time in recent history. At the beginning of the 20th century, and especially following WW I, many ethnic maps of this area were produced. To illustrate this I should note the work of H. R. Wilkinson (1951), who analysed ethnic maps of Macedonia from 1730 to 1946. Numerous counter-claims as to this region's national affiliation occurred until it was finally allocated to Yugoslavia in 1919. The Serbian geographer Jovan Cvijić would in fact play an important role in legitimising Serbian, and subsequently Yugoslavian claims. Due to his activity in the field, Cvijić served as an example to P. J. Taylor (1989) of how one man's map can change over time to reflect the increasing ambitions of his own state.

The mapping of ethnic structure in the area of the former Yugoslavia again played a role following WW II. The western borders of Yugoslavia were in question, in the area disputed between Yugoslavia and Italy. In negotiations the conflicting territorial claims, politicians were once more backed by ethnic maps, showing the distribution of Italians, Croats, and Slovenes in Istria (Roglić et al., 1946).

But this paper does not deal with the history of mapping ethnic structures in the area. Instead, it will focus on the role of ethnic maps during and shortly after the break-up of the Yugoslav federation in the 1990's. Presuming that the ethnic structure of the former Yugoslavia and its constituent republics is well and widely known, the focus here is on the production and use of ethnic maps. My analysis embraces ethnic maps published since 1991. Specifically, this paper was designed not to describe the patterns of another "ethnic map", but rather to analyse the wider context and background in which such maps appeared, as well as the institutions that organised and published them, the data sources they relied upon, their motives to undertake the project of map production, the aims they sought to achieve and the target groups they intended to influence. I particularly paid attention to different cartographic techniques that were applied selectively as a means of making a very particular impression on the user. Through the analysis I tried to prove initial thesis which is that the way ethnic maps were drawn reflected prevailing political standpoint of particular country or community.

While the former Yugoslav federation was obviously collapsing, its constituent republics could not agree upon their respective future status and the shape of the future

political map of the area. Two conflicting approaches surfaced: recognition of the former republics as independent states within the existing republican boundaries; or a new delimitation between republics on a so-called ethnic basis. Ethnic maps were among means employed to prove particular political options. They were publicly represented in the way to underpin political options of that republic or ethnic group.

The Croatian maps

From the Croatian perspective there were three main reasons to stimulate an increased interest in ethnic geography and ethnic map drawing. First, Croatian cartographers wanted to show that Serbia was ethnically less homogenous than Croatia and that the Serbs were not the only Yugoslav nation scattered beyond the boundaries of their titular republic. According to the 1991 census, the share of Serbs in Serbia was 65.8%, compared with 78.1% of Croats in Croatia. Moreover, out of the total number of Serbs in Yugoslavia, 24% of them were living outside of Serbia, but the same ratio for Croats living outside Croatia was not much lower – it reached 22%. Second, Serb-dominated areas of Croatia were not situated along the border of Serbia. The Serbs formed a majority of the population in areas lying along the Croatian border with Bosnia-Herzegovina, miles away from Serbia. Moreover, those areas were sparsely populated. Croats wanted to emphasise that secession of Serb-dominated areas was not acceptable because relatively small number of inhabitants would "take away" disproportionately large areas and leave Croatia territorially handicapped and un-viable as independent state. It was in general this political framework which created fruitful grounds for ethnic mapping.

The first two ethnic maps produced in Croatia in 1991 and early 1992 completely fit with the previously mentioned national goals. An ethnic map of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Figure 1)[2] was produced with the aim to show the relatively large number and broad distribution of Croats beyond the boundaries of Croatia and to minimise the presence of the Serbs within Croatia as presented by Serbian sources.

Being personally involved in the map production, I can state that the map was drawn and published by a scientific institution but with support and advice from actors in the political sphere. Before its cartographic realisation, the map was discussed and approved by two advisors from the Office of the President (both geographers), by representatives from the Ministry of Information (which was abolished in 1992), as well as by representatives of the governmental unit called The Office for Relations with Yugoslav Republics.

The main target group intended to influence were representatives and members of the international community. During autumn 1991 their number in Croatia was increasing daily. Officials from the EU monitoring mission, staffs of humanitarian missions present in Croatia, as well as journalists who were coming to report from the country often

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[2] *Narodnosna karta Republika Hrvatske i Bosne i Hercegovine te dijelova Vojvodine i Crne Gore sa znatnijim udjelom Hrvata (po općinama prema popisu pučanstva 1991) / Ethnic Map of the Republics of Croatia and of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Including Parts of Voivodina and Monte Negro with Significant Share of Croats (communes, according to 1991 census).* The map was published by The "Miroslav Krleža" Lexicographic Institute, Zagreb, s.a.

Figure 1: An example of the map published in Croatia
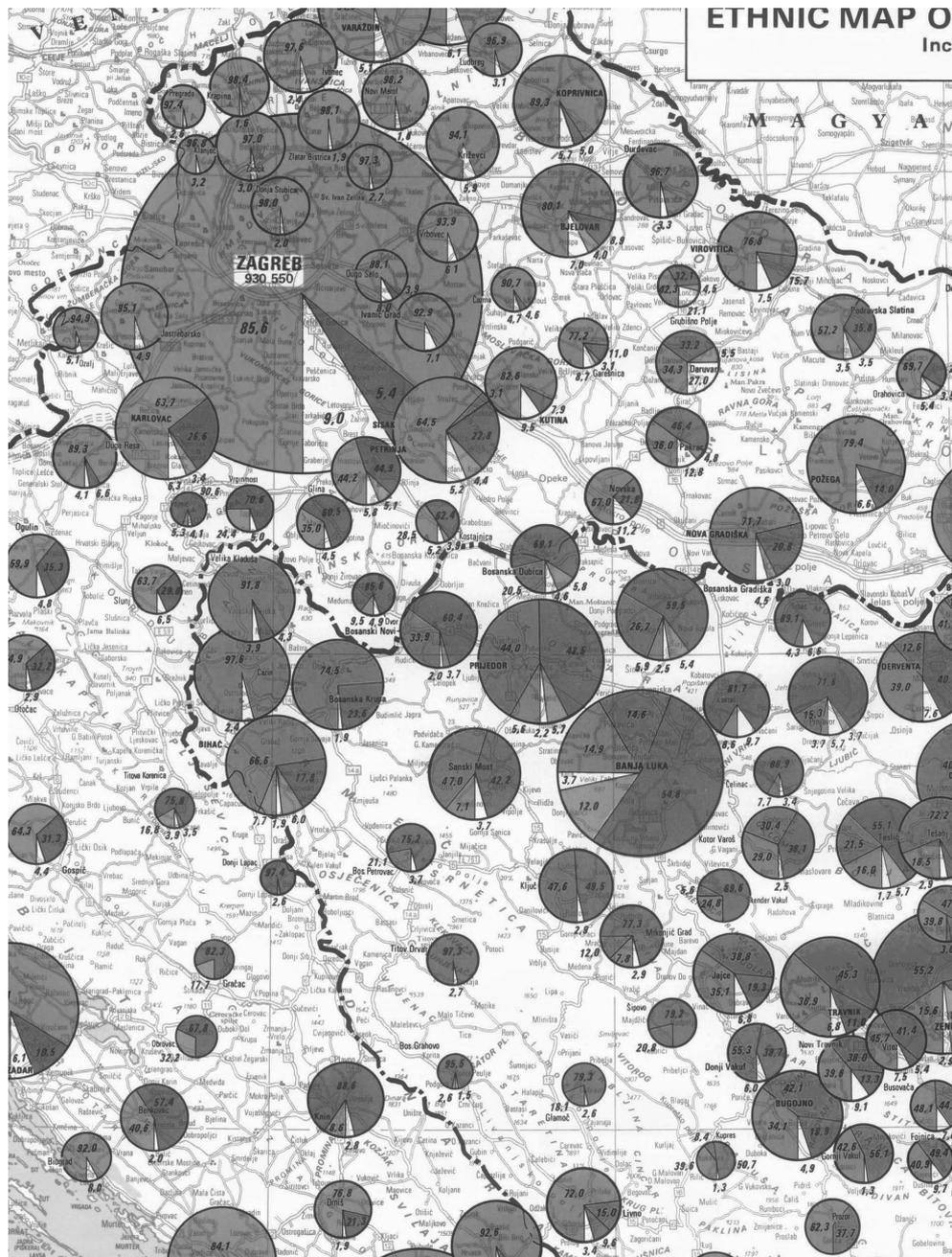
arrived without basic information about the background of the conflict. Therefore, the titles and the map-keys were translated into English in order to make the maps accessible by foreigners. The source of figures on ethnic structure was the 1991 census, which was taken earlier that year. The fact that the census was taken on the eve of the conflict and was conducted by the Belgrade-based Federal Statistics Bureau was believed to be an argument that the figures presented were not one-sided. The goals Croatian side wanted to reach with the map were decisive factors in the choice of the cartographic method. Pie charts were chosen to interpret figures in order to emphasise differences in the number of inhabitants of each administrative unit. Numerical information on the population of communes was listed in two columns in the right margin of the map. The number of ethnic groups shown on the map was limited to six. It is quite clear that Croats, Serbs, and Muslims were the largest groups in the area shown by the map. "Yugoslavs" and "nationality undeclared" were also substantial statistical categories. Hungarians were included as an ethnic group significantly represented in the north of Serbia in Vojvodina, an area also covered with the map. Regionally-declared populations lived mostly in Istria and were important for the structure of the Istrian communes. The choice of colours representing different ethnic groups was intentional. Once one accepted the colour green as notoriously logical to represent Muslims, the choice of blue for Croats was also logical in order to visualise the Croat-Muslim political alliance as an anti-Belgrade coalition. The colour red was chosen to represent Serbs; this may have not been the best choice from a propagandistic viewpoint because red would visually dominate the map and might have at first glance suggested a larger than actual presence of Serbs.

The overall production of the map reached 25,000 copies. It was distributed mainly by the Croatian Information Centre, an institution close to the government that partly replaced the activities of the Ministry of Information, which was disbanded in early 1992. An ethnic map of Serbia[3] was published soon following the ethnic map of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Because of difficulties in getting proper statistics based on the 1991 census, and knowing that the Kosovo Albanians boycotted the census, the authors decided to draw the map based on the 1981 census results. The same cartographic method, a diagram map with pie charts, was applied as with the previous ethnic map of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The intention was to counteract permanently Serbian propaganda that was insisting on the rights of Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and claiming for boundary revisions on that basis. Serbia with its non-Serb minorities, like Albanians in Kosovo, Hungarians and more than dozen of others in Vojvodina, Bulgarians in the East, and Muslims of the historical region of Sandjak (divided between Serbia and Montenegro), was ethnically less homogenous than Croatia. The message, therefore, was the following: if ethnic rights are to be discussed and if an ethnic map is to be the basis for future political solutions, then the ethnic maps of Croatia and Serbia should be treated equally.

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[3] *Etnička karta SR Srbije (SAP Kosova i SAP Vojvodine) i SR Crne Gore. Popis stanovništva i podjela po opštinama 1981. godine (popis iz 1991 nije objavljen) / Ethnic Map of the SR Serbia (with Autonomous Provinces of Kosovo and Voivodina) and of the SR Montenegro. Division into districts according to the 1981 census* (1991 census is not available). Authors: Stjepan Šterc, Miljenko Mikuc, Goran Zelić. Published by Croatian Information Centre, Zagreb, s.a.

Further production of ethnic maps highly depended on changing political context. In spring 1992, international peacekeeping troops – the UN Protection Force (UN-PROFOR) – were deployed to areas of Croatia where Serbs constituted a majority or sizeable minority of the population and where tensions between ethnic communities had led to conflict. When UNPROFOR arrived into their areas of deployment, they were already ethnically cleansed by the Serbs. The prospects for Croatia to regain effective control over UN Protected Areas (UNPA) and reintegrate them, were not optimistic, although Croatia gained international recognition. The period between spring 1992 until summer 1995, when Croatia reinforced its position, was marked by an exhausting political struggle in the UN to bring progress to a process that had become deadlocked. An effective occupation of parts of the country had in fact been further solidified through the presence of UNPROFOR. Croatian authorities and public opinion were permanently warning outsiders that this process, if continued, would lead to a "cypriotisation" (Klemenčić and Schofield, 1996) of the country.

Although the main political aim, international recognition, was reached in 1992, the Croatian government struggled further to ensure country's integrity. Croatian efforts were focused on areas under Serbian control and UN protection. From a Croatian perspective it seemed essentially important to inform international mediators that, first, the areas in question had not been completely Serb-dominated before the conflict erupted and, second, that Serbian occupational authorities had ethnically cleansed the areas. Ethnic maps were quite logically looked at as the proper means to illustrate that. While during the first stage, general ethnic maps referring to the entire countries had been made, the second stage saw production of maps of particular regions.

The first one was an ethnic map of the five borderland communes in Eastern Croatia.[4] The map was produced in the framework of the institution which already was involved in ethnic map production of Croatia and Serbia – the Croatian Information Centre. Ethnic structure was graphically expressed using the method that Croatian sources usually applied: pie charts. Besides the Croats and Serbs, other ethnic groups shown separately were Hungarians and Ruthenians, because they formed majorities in several villages of the region. Eastern Slavonia, or Sector East as one of the UN Protected Areas in Croatia, had different characteristics than other distressed parts of the country. While UN sectors North and South were Serb-dominated areas before the conflict, the share of the Serbs according to the 1991 census in the area known as Sector East was only 35 per cent. A majority of the settlements in the region did not have Serbian majorities. Therefore, the ethnic map of the area seemed to be a strong argument in Croatian hands to put pressure on international mediators to act towards a resolution of the conflict.

Another regional map dealt with the occupied area of Northern Dalmatia.[5] Although the publisher nominally changed, this map was clearly a continuation of ethnic

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[4] *Narodnosna karta općina: Beli Manastir, Osijek, Vinkovci, Vukovar, Županja / Ethnic Map of the County of: Beli Manastir, Osijek, Vinkovci, Vukovar, Županja*. Authors: Stjepan Šterc, Davor Šterc, Goran Zelić. Published by Croatian Information Centre, Zagreb, 1992.

[5] *Narodnosni sastav sjeverne Dalmacije 1991. / Ethnic Structure of the Northern Dalmatia 1991*. Authors: Stjepan Šterc, Goran Zelić, Davor Šterc. Published by Institute for Applied Social Research, Zagreb, 1993.

map production in Croatia, because the authors and the methods of presentation were unchanged. The map showed the region which was numerically Serb dominated, but also had pockets of Croat-dominated villages. The message was: it was an ethnically mixed area before the conflict, do not let the Serbs build their autonomy on the results of ethnic cleansing. In order to make the impression more favourable from the Croatian viewpoint, information on all coastland settlements as far as Split was included in the map. Since the coastland was entirely Croat dominated, it served to visually balance off the Serb-dominated hinterland. The map key distinguished only Croats, Serbs and others. There was no need to distinguish any other ethnic group in particular, because no other group was present in the region.

Finally, a third title in the regional group was one focused on the part of Northern Bosnia[6] where Serbs established a well known "corridor" to connect territories under their control in Western and Eastern Bosnia. Contrary to the other Croatian ethnic maps, this one was based on the 1981 census, because the 1991 figures for Bosnia were not available at the settlement level at the time of the map drawing (this was explained on the map with a special note). The map distinguished Croats, Muslims, and Serbs, while all others were included in the category "others".

Ethnic maps appeared also in general publications in Croatia. In April 1992, the Croatian Statistical Bureau published the 1991 census results on ethnic structure.[7] Numerical figures were registered for each individual settlement, the smallest statistical unit available. This publication also contained an ethnic map for each commune – altogether 102 maps. On the maps, ethnic majorities were shown with different coloured circles for each settlement of the respective commune. Croatian majorities were shown in the colour red and Serbian majorities in blue, while majorities of all other ethnic communities were shown in black. The size of the circle was proportional to the number of inhabitants. That conception resulted in detailed maps but also in maps relatively limited in expressing ethnic structure. For based on this organising concept, all minorities were automatically excluded. The only exceptions in that regard were settlements with no majorities. If the share of the most numerous group was below 50 per cent, the circle was not fully coloured.

Three years later the same institution published a similar book on Bosnia-Herzegovina.[8] Instead of in Sarajevo, which was under Serbian siege for more than three years, the publication was published in Zagreb. The Croatian Statistical Bureau processed census figures originally collected in 1991 by the Sarajevo Statistical Bureau. Like its twin publication on the ethnic structure of Croatia, the volume on Bosnia-Herzegovina also contained ethnic maps for each commune, or 109 maps in total. The same cartographic method was applied in both books: ethnic majorities shown with differently coloured circles for each settlement of the respective commune (Figure 2). Muslim ma-

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[6] *Narodnosna karta naselja Bosanske Posavine / Ethnic Map of Settlements in Bosanska Posavina.* Edited by Ivan Džapo. Published by REIMA d.o.o., Zagreb, s.a.

[7] *Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava, stanova i poljoprivrednih gospodarstava 31. ožujka 1991. Stanovništvo prema narodnosti po naseljima.* Dokumentacija 881. Zagreb: Republički zavod za statistiku, 1992.

[8] *Stanovništvo Bosne i Hercegovine: narodnosni sastav po naseljima.* Zagreb: Državni zavod za statistiku, 1995.

Figure 2: The map of the Brčko commune in the book on the 1991 census in Bosnia-Herzegovina

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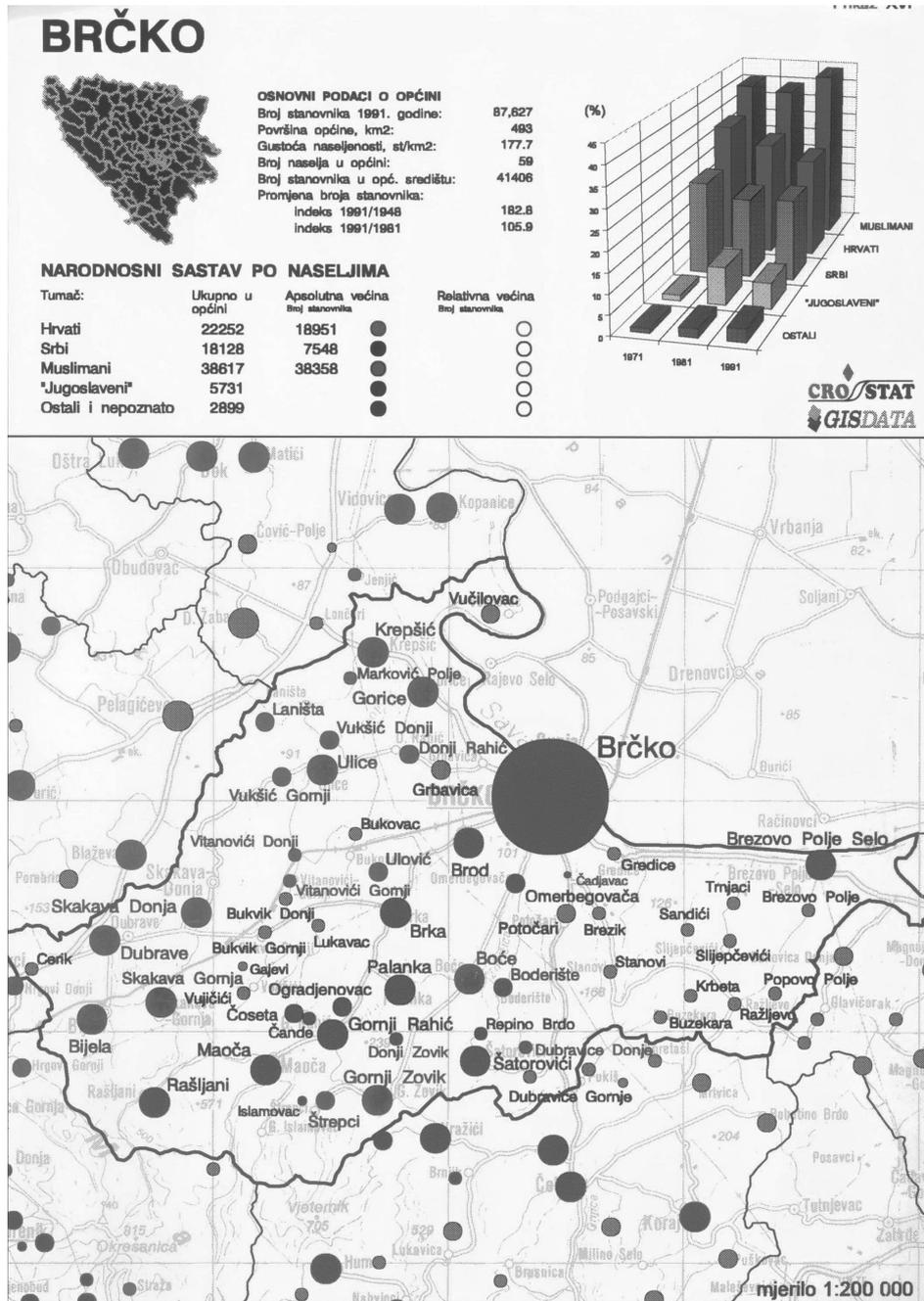
jorities were shown in the colour green, Croatian majorities in red and Serbian majorities in blue, while majorities of other ethnic communities were shown in black. The size of the circle was proportional to the number of inhabitants. This book also contained graphs on the changes in ethnic structure in the 1910–1991 period for 30 towns in Bosnia-Herzegovina. There are no textual comments for these graphs, but one can easily see that in the majority of the selected towns the share of Croats has significantly decreased from the beginning of the century. The reason to include them, therefore, was to alert users of this negative trend when the number and share of Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina was in question.

Another publication which is to be included in the group of general publications is the first Croatian atlas published in English.[9] Among 30 thematic maps, the atlas contained an ethnic map of Croatia, too. It also contained closely related maps showing population according to religion as well as four maps on dialect groups of the Croatian language. Due to the method of presentation of the 1991 census results, the ethnic map in the atlas is similar to the already mentioned ethnic map of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina published by the same publisher – Zagreb's Lexicographic Institute. For that occasion Croats, as the most dominant group, were shown in a visually non-dominant blue colour. From the preface of the atlas one could learn that the atlas was primarily "intended for readers abroad, no matter whether their interest in Croatia is purely professional, or of a private nature".

Maps produced in Serbia

Prevailing standpoint in Serbia regarding future re-organisation of breaking-up Yugoslav federation was in favour of revision of boundaries on the so-called ethnic principle. It was based on claim that large number of Serbs lived beyond borders of Serbian republic. Since Serbian claims were not accepted by the other republics within the existing political framework, Serbia took the benefit of its effective control over the majority of former federal institutions and tried to impose its preferred option by force. The former federal army and its military resources were in fact a major Serbian "argument" against the other republics.

From the Serbian side, I will focus on a set of maps produced within a series of books published by the Faculty of Geography of Belgrade University in 1992 and 1993. The book series, named "Ethnic Area of the Serbs", is comprised of three volumes. The first one deals with the ethnic structure of Serbia and Montenegro as well as with the distribution of Serbs within the entire former Yugoslavia.[10] The second volume of the series refers to ethnic structure of Bosnia-Herzegovina,[11] while the third volume is on the Serbs

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[9] *A Concise Atlas of the Republic of Croatia & of the Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina* (editor Mladen Klemenčić). Zagreb: Miroslav Krleža Lexicographical Institute, 1993.

[10] *Etnički sastav stanovništva Srbije i Crne Gore i Srbi u SFR Jugoslaviji / Ethnic Composition of the Population of Serbia and Montenegro and the Serbs in SFR of Yugoslavia*. Edition Ethnic Area of the Serbs, Volume 1 (editor Milena Spasovski). Belgrade: Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade, 1993.

[11] *Etnički sastav stanovništva Bosne i Hercegovine / Ethnic Composition of the Population of Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Edition Ethnic Area of the Serbs, Volume 2 (editor Jovan Ilić). Belgrade: Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade, 1992.

in Croatia.[12] Each volume includes several ethnic maps, most of them printed in colour and with map keys translated into English. In order to make texts from the three volumes available to an international audience, the publisher also prepared an abridged English version [13] that included a selection of papers from the original Serbian publications. The English publication consisted of 17 articles divided into three parts and, what is more important for this essay, twelve maps, most of them republished from the original three-volume set. Among the maps which did not appear in the original three volumes, two of them referred to the territorial distribution of the Montenegrins and Yugoslavs, while the third summarised the ethnic structure of the entire former Yugoslavia.

Each map was signed not only by the author or authors, but also by two reviewers, which illustrated the high professional aspirations of the publication. The objective advantage of the ethnic maps regarding the "Serbian Question" was that they did not generalise figures on a communal level. Instead, they were based on figures at the lowest possible statistical level, that of the settlement.

Instead of the most recent 1991 census, these maps were based on the 1981 census. The reason for this may lie in the fact that Kosovo Albanians boycotted the 1991 census. However, that fact, acceptable as an excuse for Serbia, should not reflect on the reliability of the 1991 census for the other republics. My impression is that the neglect of the 1991 census was a deliberate act aimed at discrediting the 1991 census in general. (Although, it should also be noted that the Serbian version of the book on the ethnic structure of Bosnia-Herzegovina contains the 1991 ethnic map alongside another one based on the 1981 figures.)

The technique that was applied to all of these maps was typical for ethnic map production from Serbian sources. Although the maps published on the "Serbian Question" were technically superior to the propagandistic maps showing "Serbian lands" and justifying Greater Serbian territorial claims, they ultimately applied the same technique – area coloration of communes according to their ethnic majorities, regardless of the population density and ethnic complexity. That was the most appreciated presentation from the Serbian perspective because of the characteristic of the distribution of Serbs outside Serbia, most notably in Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as of non-Serbs within Serbia. The Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina generally formed majorities in sparsely populated areas. When shown on the map, relatively small numbers of inhabitants within most of the settlements occupied disproportionately large areas. For example, large mountainous western Bosnian communes of Bosansko Grahovo, Drvar and Glamoč were almost entirely populated by ethnic Serbs but altogether the population of the three did not exceed 40,000 inhabitants. Except for the few settlements with Muslim or Croat majorities, all others were Serb-dominated. However, most of them were very small, sometimes having literally only a few inhabitants. The area covered by the three communes was almost 3000 sq km and almost the whole area was presented on the map by the "Serbian colour". At the same time, Greater Sarajevo,

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[12] *Srbi u Hrvatskoj: naseljavanje, broj i teritorijalni razmeštaj*. Edition Ethnic Area of the Serbs, Volume 3 (editor Vujadin Rudić). Belgrade: Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade, 1993.

[13] *The Serbian Question in the Balkans*. Belgrade: Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade, 1995.

excluding Pale – numbering more than 500,000 inhabitants but covering only 1500 sq km – was presented as a relatively small Muslim-dominated area. The Muslim majority area of the City of Sarajevo was twice as small on the map, although the number of inhabitants represented by that graphic symbol was twelve times larger than the population of the three Serbian communes. There are other examples as well, and not only in Bosnia-Herzegovina. For example, the same characteristic held for almost the entire region of the self-proclaimed Serbian statelet of Krajina within Croatia. Spacious wastelands with few inhabitants resulted in large "Serbian" areas on the map.

Exclusion of the non-majority ethnic communities was characteristic of the Serbian cartographic method. Space on the map was provided for only one ethnic group. Although Serbs themselves were also occasionally "victims" of this exclusiveness, map-makers obviously decided that the "gains" were bigger than the "losses" on the Serbian side.

Additionally, the choice of the method was justified by the population distribution within Serbia. Most members of the largest non-Serbian community – Kosovo Albanians – were packed within a densely populated autonomous province. While they contributed roughly one-fifth of Serbia's total population, they did not cover a proportionally large area on the ethnic map, because Kosovo comprised only one-eighth of Serbia's area. The same could be said for non-Serbian majorities in another province – Vojvodina. From a Serbian perspective, therefore, the overall impression of the ethnic map was favourable because it left a first impression that Serbia was more ethnically Serbian than, for example, Croatia was ethnically Croatian. In reality, however, Serbia was ethnically less homogenous than Croatia. The explanation that Serbian map-makers are inclined towards flat cartographic presentations provides an equally convincing explanation of why Croatian map-makers wanted to avoid and minimise that method and opted for other techniques.

Misleading impression of a strong Serbian presence in parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina was particularly emphasised by this ethnic map (Figure 3) which, according to information I hold, was initiated and produced by the political leadership of the Bosnian Serbs.[14] No distinction was made on the map between sparsely and densely populated areas, thus giving a false impression of the existence of large exclusively Serbian areas and, ultimately, of Serbian territorial dominance in the country. In order to support that impression further, Muslims were represented on the map by the colour green, which is optically dominated by the blue colour that represents Serbs. These two colours differed from one another only in nuance and were optically opposed to the yellow colour chosen to represent the Croats. There was no explanation about the technique applied to transfer statistics onto the map. One can only presume that figures at the settlement level were the basis for the map. Moreover, the cartographer's work was clearly imprecise. Altogether, that map was by far the worst work among all of the ethnic maps, cartographically, compounded by the fact that it was widely used, if not initiated, by Bosnian Serb leaders who suggested and later implemented a policy of ethnic cleansing in the 1992–95 period.

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[14] *Socijalistička Republika Bosna i Hercegovina. Prostorna karta stanovništva prema nacionalnoj pripadnosti.* Razmjera 1:700 000

Figure 3: The map of Bosnia-Herzegovina published by the Serbian side
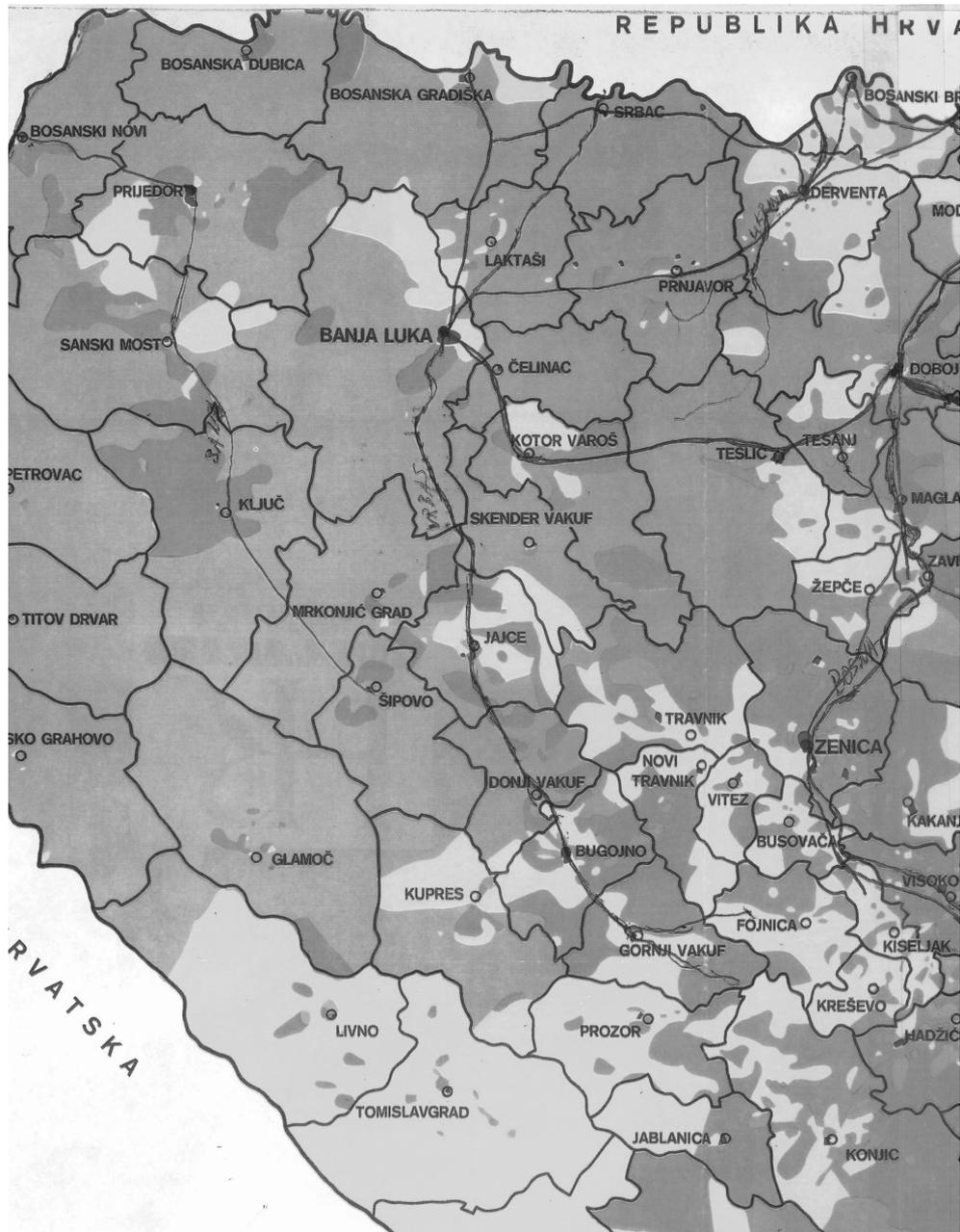
Ethnic maps in Bosnia-Herzegovina

The best known ethnic map produced in Sarajevo was one compiled by Ante Markotić as the main author, with Ejub Sijerac and Asim Abdurahmanović as co-authors, and published by the National and University Library and Mediamarket soon following the 1991 census. I hold a copy of this map re-published three years later in Croatia.[15] The map was also reproduced in London (figure 4), which made it accessible for the international public.[16] This map was composed with the intent to present information at two levels. First, ethnic majorities, divided into three categories (below 50%, 50–60% and over 60%), were shown using distinct coloration within each respective commune. In addition, that simplistic image of ethnic structure was supplemented with diagrams representing shares of non-majority ethnic groups. Altogether, the map provided insight into the complex ethnic structure of Bosnia-Herzegovina and offered various other information, while avoiding the effect of preferential treatment of the majorities. Thus, the ethnic map compiled by A. Markotić was a good illustration of the Bosnian ethnic patchwork, and illustrated why the ethnic structure of Bosnia-Herzegovina was often compared with a tiger or leopard skin.

The map should have been favoured primarily by Bosnian Muslims because it clearly illustrated why Muslims, the most numerous ethnic group, did not like the idea of dividing Bosnia-Herzegovina into regions that were dominated by one ethnic group. The distribution of Muslims dictated their reluctance towards different plans for dividing the country into ethnic units: instead of being concentrated as majorities in certain regions like Serbs and Croats, Muslims were scattered throughout the entire country. The total population of each commune was listed in the column in the left margin, but was not shown cartographically. That was a major deficiency of the map. The colour red, chosen for the Serbs, dominated the map in Western Bosnia and Eastern Herzegovina, giving one at first glance an impression of a strong Serb presence there. In reality, however, these are remote, mountainous areas with very few inhabitants.

Finally, the last ethnic map mentioned in this article did not belong to the group of maps produced in Bosnia-Hercegovina, but did refer to that country. It was published by the most popular geographic magazine, *National Geographic*, in 1996.[17] Surprisingly, this map – published as part of a dozen-page *In Focus* contribution on Bosnia – showed only areas of ethnic majorities without distinguishing them according to any other additional characteristic. Having choropleth mapping as its basis, it was similar to the Serbian map which I charged as biased. However, it is more precise from the technical viewpoint, and it also includes the inter-entity line according to the Dayton Peace Accord. Since the entire contribution was geared to present information about the Dayton Accord and its initial consequences, this ethnic map should be taken primarily in

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[15] *Etnička karta Bosne i Hercegovine 1991*. Priprema: Appleby International, Rijeka. Tisak: Slobodna Dalmacija, Split.

[16] "Bosnia-Herzegovina 1991: The Ethnic Makeup of the Republic", *Balkan War Report*, London, no. 16 (November/December 1992).

[17] "Bosnia: Before and After", *National Geographic*, Washington, vol. 189, no. 6, June 1996, pp. 56–57.

that specific context. The ethnic map served as background for what was clearly stated as a situation which "had been altered by war".

Figure 4: The map of Bosnia-Herzegovina published in Sarajevo, reproduced in London
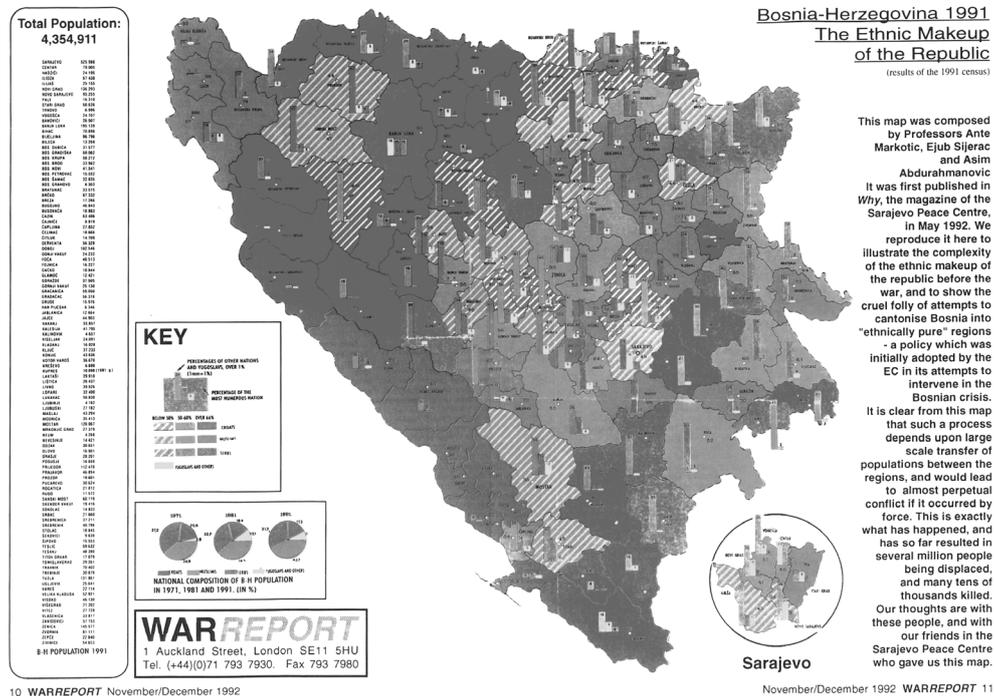
Conclusions: between reality and propaganda

The review of the maps published in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia showed that ethnic maps were widely used to present an important aspect of geographic reality. They were published in several republics, and later successor states, as publications by themselves, or as parts of atlases, monographs or statistical reports. All ethnic maps embraced within this review were based on the interpretation of census figures. Some of them were based on the 1981 census, while others were based on the 1991 census, which is the most recent census available.

It was clearly in a political context – the break-up of the Yugoslav federation – in which these maps appeared, so therefore they came increasingly to embody a clear political emphasis. The maps were produced mainly by scientific institutions or under the supervision of experts, but with the specific goal to back and justify political standpoints of their respective country's governments during a turbulent period of geopolitical change and transition. The maps were often published with the help or support of governmental bodies or institutions close to government, which usually appeared as the map pub-

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lisher, sponsor, or distributor.

It should be stressed that, generally, figures and statistics were interpreted professionally and correctly. Map authors and compilers did not try to falsify figures. The degree of intent in mapmaking is registered primarily through the choice of cartographic technique, including certain elements of the map design (choice of colours). In that regard, one can identify one technique favoured by Croatian sources (pie charts) and another one often used by Serbian mapmakers (choropleth maps). The final score was that ethnic maps reflected reality but at the same time served propagandistic purposes, because they were designed according to prevailing national narratives. Maps were understood to be powerful media tools and influential visual images that could be used to create a particular perception. Since ethnic maps were aimed to provide information for foreigners, most of them had map keys translated into English.

A curious result of the linkage between scientists and politics was that ethnic maps showing the same ethnic structure were used differently by opposing political representatives advocating conflicting political aims.

Although the majority of these maps were produced for propaganda purposes, the maps themselves did not contribute to ethnic cleansing, the term which came to be used for the forced large scale transfers of populations. Having said that, I want to repeat and stress that these maps were not always entirely "innocent", because their design was sometimes intentional. Still, none of the ethnic maps listed in this essay deserve to be judged as pure manipulation. What put them into a propagandistic context was the way they were interpreted. Geographers and other experts did not use maps to change reality, but politicians did not hesitate to interpret ethnic maps exclusively in the way they wanted to read them. In spite of their relatively high degree of professional correctness, ethnic maps from the 1990's will inevitably be remembered in a negative context marked by intolerance, ethnic cleansing and bloodshed.

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ETNIČKE KARTE: IZMEĐU STVARNOSTI I PROMIDŽBE

SAŽETAK

Etničke karte omogućuju uvid u složen etnički sastav pojedinih područja. One su kartografski način prezentacije dijela geografske stvarnosti. Jugoistočna Europa čini se da je zahvalno područje za sastavljače etničkih karata: na razmjerno malenom području nastanjen je velik broj različitih naroda i etničkih skupina. Povrh toga, političke granice često se ne podudaraju s tzv. etničkim granicama odnosno područjima većinske nastanjenosti različitih etničkih skupina. U povijesti Jugoistočne Europe bilo je mnogo primjera izrade etničkih karata i njihove uporabe u političkom kontekstu. U sasvim određenom političkom kontekstu – raspad jugoslavenske federacije u početku 1990-ih godina – pojavile su se i karte o kojima je riječ u ovome članku. Većinu karata izradile su znanstvene ustanove, ili su pak karte izrađene pod nadzorom takvih ustanova ili priznatih stručnjaka, no uvijek s jasnim ciljem da podupru političko stajalište nacionalnog vodstva u razdoblju geopolitičkih promjena i previranja. Statistički i drugi podaci prikazani su korektno. Sastavljači karata nisu krivotvorili podatke no stanovit stupanj tendencioznosti primjećuje se u izboru kartografske tehnike i metode te pojedinih elemenata dizajna karte (izbor boje). Izdvaja se kartografska tehnika koju je favorizirala hrvatska strana (uporaba strukturnih dijagrama) od one kojoj se obično priklanjala srpska strana (plošno prikazivanje etničkih većina). Karte su, očigledno, bile prepoznate kao moćno medijsko sredstvo i utjecajno vizualno pomagalo koje se može korisno upotrijebiti u svrhu stvaranja određene percepcije.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: etnička karta, kartografska tehnika, politička propaganda

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CARTES ETHNIQUES: ENTRE LA RÉALITÉ ET LA PROPAGANDE

RÉSUMÉ

Les cartes ethniques permettent de connaître les compositions ethniques complexes de certains territoires. C'est la manière cartographique de représenter une partie de la réalité géographique. L'Europe du Sud-Est paraît être un territoire propice aux rédacteurs des cartes ethniques: un territoire relativement petit est habité par un grand nombre de peuples et groupes ethniques différents. En outre, les frontières politiques ne correspondent pas souvent aux frontières ethniques, c'est-à-dire aux territoires habités en majorité par de différents groupes ethniques. Dans l'histoire de l'Europe du Sud-Est il y a eu beaucoup d'exemples de la rédaction des cartes ethniques et de leur utilisation dans un contexte politique. Les cartes dont il s'agit dans cet article ont paru dans un contexte politique tout précis – la dissolution de la fédération yougoslave au début des années 90. La plupart des cartes ont été rédigées soit par des institutions scientifiques soit sous la surveillance d'institutions de ce genre ou d'experts réputés, mais toujours avec un objectif clair de soutenir la position politique du gouvernement dans la période de changements et d'agitations géopolitiques. Les données statistiques et autres ont été présentées correctement. Les rédacteurs des cartes n'ont pas falsifié les données mais on peut remarquer un choix tendancieux de la technique et la méthode cartographique et de certains éléments de la représentation de la carte (le choix de la couleur). La technique cartographique favorisée du côté croate (l'utilisation des diagrammes structuraux) diffère de celle pour laquelle optait ordinairement le côté serbe (la représentation bidimensionnelle des majorités ethniques). Les cartes ont évidemment été reconnues comme un média puissant et un support visuel influent qui peut être utilement employé dans le but de produire une perception voulue.

MOTS CLÉS : carte ethnique, technique cartographique, propagande politique