Ethnicity cartography during World War II
Case Study – Volkstumskarte Series

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Let me show you four map series that has haunted me for almost a decade. When I worked at the Map University Map collection, I came across these maps. It is amazing cartography, very clean, precise, well represented information. On the surface it is technically beautiful. Colours have held fast, clean circles, clear readable base map. It has what you would expect from a thematic map: scale bar, title, coordinate system, legend, and visualized data. When I first examined these maps in more detail, I realized very quickly that these maps were produced during the Nazi regime in Austria, and displayed in accurate detail the ethnic distribution of population in four countries: Yugoslavia, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary.

The objective of this presentation is to:

1) Examine the Volkstumskarte series of maps with focus on the two major themes on these maps: mapping ethnicity and mapping geopolitical borders

2) Discuss the history behind the production of these maps, the role of Wilfred Krallert (the editor of the maps), and how these maps would have been used during the Second World War

3) At the end of the paper, I will highlight why these maps are important for researchers.
The four series of maps (Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia), are located at McGill University (which has incomplete collection), and at University of Alberta (which has a complete collection, except for one sheet). There are handful of Universities Libraries in the United States and Europe that also have these maps.

List the number of maps sheets in each series. The maps were edited by Wilfried Krallert” and produced by the Publikationsstelle Wien, in 1941.

Each map is at the scale of 1:200,000
The first sheet of each map series has the all the bibliographic information on the map. Including the: title, contributors, editor, and details (in German) on how to read the maps. These bibliographic information has been translated into English and is available via the http://emse.blog.yorku.ca website that I have created for this project.
The base maps used are the *Generalkarte von Mitteleuropa 1:200,000* series that were produced between 1920s to 1941 and this indicated in the lower left corner of the map. Most of the basemaps for the Volkstumskarte series were updated and produced between 1938 to 1941, some of the map sheets were updated produced in the 1930s, and some of them don’t have date stamps.

Topographic information is clean and simple and easy to read. The latitude and longitude is clearly demarked. Some basemaps use Greenwich as 0 degrees longitude, whereas others use the Ferro Islands as the 0 degrees of longitude. The scale bar is clearly indicated as well as the names of the neighbouring maps.

The base maps are for the most part using spelling of place names that are present in that geographic region.
The creators of the Volkstumskarte series superimposed the thematic map information onto the base maps. This includes the circles and pie charts indicating ethnolinguistic groups. The colours, have preserved well, and it is amazing how well the sheets have held up. Keep in mind, the maps at University of Alberta and McGill have been kept in cabinets for years, and haven’t been exposed to a lot of lights.

Other information that has been added are:

- Germanized place names have been placed on the maps
  - New boundaries in red and description of new boundaries that have been established since the production of the base map.
  - Legend indicating ethnolinguistic groups and size of population
  - Date stamp indicating the place of publication of the Volkstumkarte, which is Vienna 1941, and the sheet number for the map.
The base map shows administrative boundaries at several levels of administration: national, state and/or county, city/municipality, and in some cases neighbourhoods.

In addition there is an inset map indicating the boundaries of the municipalities on the map. For some of the countries, there is a regional division, as is the case for Hungary.

Some maps have a red boundary which marks the new national boundaries that were established since the production of the base maps. On this map sheet, it shows the boundary between Hungary and Slovakia in 1939 (in red).
The Volkstumskarte of Hungary and Slovakia, depict the boundaries of Hungary and Slovakia between the 1st Vienna award (1938) and the 2nd Vienna award in 1940.

By the time the Volkstumskarte maps were published, they new boundaries depicted in red were out of date because by that time, Hungary had already gained territory from Romania.

The map on left shows the territory ceded from Slovakia during this time. The map on the right shows the territorial ganes of Hungary between 1938 and 1941.
It is interesting to note that on these maps, it depicts the interwar boundary of Romania from 1918 to 1940, as is depicted in the map in the Upper right corner.

When the Volkstumskarte maps were published in 1941, they were already out of date, and the boundaries of Romania are as depicted in the map in the lower right corner.

According to Michael Falbruch, a leading research about the map editor (Wilfred Krallert) and ethnicity researchers from that period, Falbruch indicates that the data displayed on these maps (while the maps were under production), were used as part of the negotiations of the 2nd Vienna Award, in which Hungary occupied a large swath of the western part of Romania, in area that had larger populations of Germans and Hungarians.
1931 Census Data Visualized in Hungary and former part of Slovakia

With the change in boundaries, the town of Losoncz, would have been part of Hungary (as seen on this map). The population breakdown of Losconz is shown here as an absolute number.
1931 Romania Census Language Ethnicity Data – Tables

This is an example of a city, Satu-Mare in Romania. It can get quite complicated, but as you can see here. There is a lot of counting of circles and symbols. I have added a few labels to show how to interpret this particular map. I have highlighted the boundary of the city in blue. This is a part of Romania that would have been occupied by Hungary after 1940.
I was curious to find out how accuracy of the data visualization based from the census data. I have found copies of the Romanian, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia census. This is a table of the data for Satu-Mare. It shows the data from the State level down to the Municipality level.
The census table for Satu-Mare is above. The data extracted from the Satu-Mare map is below. As you can see, the data in the maps have been rounded to the nearest 50th, and it accurately depicts the data from the census tables. I have done similar analysis on the Hungary and Slovakia maps and the accuracy is similar to what is demonstrated above for Romania.

I have yet to track down the census tables for Yugoslavia, but it appears from my research that the maps were partially compiled from unpublished census data.
Wilfred Krallert as I mentioned earlier, was the editor of the Volkstumskarte series of maps.

Krallert was born in 1912, and at the age of 22, he joined the S.S.. He studied history and geography, focusing on South East German studies. He studied under the heads of the Sudostdeutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft (SODFG). The SODFG was founded in 1931, as interdisciplinary institute of faculty and researchers, the focus looking at cultural, and aspects of SE Europe, \ many of the researchers focused their studies on the German presence in south-eastern europe. In 1935, Krallert obtained his doctorate in 1935.

Petra Svatek, argues convincingly in her research that with the seizure of power by the National Socialists in Austria, in 1938, relationship between humanites and social science scholars and NAZI politicians and scholars was strong, and this included the sharing and co-publishing of materials. This can be demonstrated by examining Krallert’s involvement and his institute.

In the Spring of 1938, Krallert became a high ranking officer of the S.S., and member of the “Foreign Research branch” of the RSHA (Reich Security Office). During this period he actively went on active diplomatic negotiation and spying missions throughout central and south Eastern Europe. He was established a close working relationship with the Romanian statistician Sabin Manuila. The information exchanged between Manuila and Krallert, helped in the negotiations of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Vienna Award, in which Hungary was awarded a large part of Romania. In addition, the SODFG became the Publikations-Stelle Wien, under Krallert’s lead. The P-stelle had included a map division, library, a translation and research division. From 1939 onwards, the P-Stelle (Wien), collected and analyzed statistical data from Yugoslavia, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and also the Crimea Penninsula.
According to Michael Falbruch, in a biography about Krallert, Krallert realized early on that ethnicity maps could be used for diplomatic negotiations, administrative purposes. Krallert provided analysed census data and maps, during the negotiations of the Second Vienna award, which happened in August 1940, it is possible that preliminary versions of the maps of Romania were used. Regardless, the Volkstumskarte series of maps were published in 1941, and there is evidence the maps would have been used by the German military in Yugoslavia. There is no evidence, as of yet, that the maps were used for the deportation and genocide of Jews and Roma.

In 1943, Krallert became a commander of the AMT-VI-G department and the p-Stelle was folded into this agency. Krallert oversaw over 22 research insitutes, subdepartments and associations located throughout Germany and Austria. The primary focus was the collection of information about areas outside of Germany, and dissemination of this information to other S.S. Departments. This included the theft and raiding of Jewish bookstores and Jewish antiquarian stores in Budapest. His activities during this time are too numerous to go into detail. In the last days of the War, Krallert transferred the P-Stelle library to a Monsestary for safe keeping, and were discovered by the British military. Unlike his fellow RHSA leaders, most whom were trialed at Nurmeberg, Krallert was never charged.
After the war, he was interned by the British, investigated, and released in 1948. The French and the West Germans used him unsuccessfully for intelligence after his release. He retired into academia, actively published articles about Cartography and ethnicity, and continued to collect materials for institutes focusing on South Eastern European studies. He died in 1969. Above is a statement from the War Office file [Public Record Office (=PRO) War Office 208/5228 Dr. Wilfried Karrlert. In, Fahlbusch (2007)

Sources:


Where are these maps?

Print Copies:
- **Canada**: University of Alberta and McGill University
- **United States**: University of Chicago, University of Illinois Champaign Urbana, University of Oregon, University of California Berkeley, Yale University, Penn State University
- **Europe**: National libraries of Denmark, Germany, France, and several University libraries in Europe

**High Resolution Scans**: University of Alberta’s Collection (JPEG and TIFF Format) of the Volkstumskarte available from Backbone Cartographics - [BackBone.Cartographics@gmail.com](mailto:BackBone.Cartographics@gmail.com)

The print copies that I have been working with are available at University of Alberta and McGill University. High resolution scans are available from University of Alberta.
As part of my research project, I have created this website for researchers who are interested in doing research about these maps. http://esme.blog.yorku.ca. This website contains the maps in Google Earth format, interactive map indexes to locate the maps, and translations of legends from German into English.
To conclude, the Volkstumskarte series of maps are very complex in nature, but are also significant because of the information contained within the map: it visualizes in cartographic form the geopolitics and ethnocultural research during the rise and implementation of National Socialism in Central and South-Eastern Europe. Evidence shows that these maps would have been used for military purposes. In addition, these maps have the potential to be a useful research tool for researchers focused on the history of cartography. In addition, since these maps are thematic maps, it can be used by researchers who are interested in the history of geopolitical boundaries, ethnic distribution of population in the 1930s, and also genocide / shoah research.
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• Marcel Fortin, University of Toronto Map Library
• Internet Archive Canada

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