

ATLAS OF CENTRAL EUROPE

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FOREWORD

The Atlas this foreword relates to was issued by our in-house printing office some 45 years ago. Its purpose, its sources and methods of preparation are reported in the Introduction written at that time. Some information, however, has to be given on the producing Institute itself herewith as its function may not be known by the majority of the readers to-day.

The Institute of Political Sciences was founded in 1926 by Count Pál Teleki – university professor and Prime Minister of Hungary on two occasions – within the Hungarian Statistical Association, a scientific society. Its task was the recording of the state of affairs in the neighbour countries surrounding Hungary. All these states received considerable areas from the historical territory of Hungary. Also a significant part of Hungarian population was surrendered to these states, thus their fate and living conditions as well as the development of the new states meant the continuation of the Hungarian history in certain respects. The Peace-Treaty of Trianon brought about drastic changes in the Carpathian Basin and its surroundings. As a result, many traditional relations were interrupted and some new relations were emerging between the newly organized states and the surviving mother-country. Therefore, these neighbour states were much more interested in each other's affairs than the states which lived within old and stable borders. After 1920 all the borders of Hungary were new ones, accordingly attention had to be paid in every direction. Information had to be gathered on the living conditions of the Hungarian minorities and also due to the fact that the new borders while disturbing the economic relations could not break them off.

In the late nineteenthies, in the European general political atmosphere it could be felt that the territorial order formed in 1919-20 was facing a revision. From that time it became important for Hungary to know the state of affairs in the surrounding states and to be able to formulate its claims in the light of the whole picture when opportunity arises. The idea of compiling a comprehensive data-collection on the entire area of

Central Europe showing the geographic, demographic and nationality conditions objectively and uniformly, on the basis of the official statistics of each state, was born at that time. The best way of achieving this aim seemed to be the construction of an atlas with text. In Hungary, in the Institute of Political Sciences all the sources and the data needed for the preparation of such a comprehensive work were available.

As deputy director from May, 1938 and later director of the Institute of Political Sciences, I submitted a proposal to Count Pál Teleki, president of the Institute, for the construction of such an atlas and subsequently I was charged with the implementation of the idea. After Pál Teleki's death the Institute of Political Sciences became a member of the Count Paul Teleki Research Institute, a group of institutes organized by the Minister of Education, Bálint Hóman. Mr. Hóman confirmed my assignment to the function of the director and took it for granted that I was working on the compilation of the Atlas of Central Europe, in the framework of the preparation of the peace-treaty. In the spring of 1944 Mr. Hóman decided to move the Institute to Balatonfüred in order to defend it from the bombing. There we succeeded to make proper arrangements for our accommodation and to complete the Atlas in two languages with coloured maps reproduced by "rotaprint" technique by mid-March, 1945.

Beside the staff of the Institute several other institutes and experts contributed to the preparation of the material. The authors of the maps and explanatory texts produced by these are indicated in the text or on the sheets. The majority of the sheets, however, were prepared by the permanent staff and some temporary employees of the Institute. Assistance was given also by students of the Geographical Institute of the Faculty of Economy. The explanatory text was written by the editor.

Originally the Atlas was produced in two languages. The Hungarian version with 134 maps and of 334 pages was issued first. The English version was somewhat enlarged: it comprised 171 maps and with the explanatory texts together it was of 367 pages.

In this edition no changes were made either in the maps constructed between 1943-45 or in the explanatory texts written at the time.¹

I owe a debt of true gratitude and thanks to the publishers, the Society of St. Steven and Dr. Sándor Püski for considering this work worthy of final publication and working hard, with utmost care on the preparation of the publishing. By that they have preserved the image of Central Europe, in the middle of the twentieth century.

Budapest, 1989

Dr. András Rónai

¹ As for the minor changes made in the course of preparing the facsimile versions of the maps see the notes in the Appendix. (The editor)

INTRODUCTION

The modern public administration, as well as the political and economic organisation require from us, to possess maps giving a quick survey about the different states. These maps should provide us information not only about the geographical conditions, but – similarly to the purpose of the oldest maps – about human life, about the occupations, economic relations, cultural standards of the population and their relationships with the peoples of other territories. The collection of maps of such a kind brings forth those atlases which are wanted by the leaders of public life and the different economic organs, being much more needed, however, in the education.

Such general atlases have been made in most of the well-organised and advanced states either about the entire territory or about some of its portions. Concerning the conditions to be represented by the maps these atlases agree with each other to a large extent, and also from the point of view of the methods of illustration there is a harmony in development. The method of illustration is one of the most difficult problems of general atlases. However, the conditions to be illustrated are determined by topographical measurements and statistics, as the atlas-makers are not able to draw up special statistics themselves.

Although the number of the well-constructed and properly elaborated general atlases is rather high at present, we are far from being able to provide a uniform and thorough picture even about the more advanced European and North American continents. Especially we are in lack of a uniform survey about the trunk of Europe which in its geographical conditions, ethnographical view, economic and social structure is a diversified territory. Here the almost constant political crises and repeated boundary changes hindered the work of collecting data, as well as the use of them for giving a proper information. It is difficult to get a comparative survey even on those territories where some noteworthy works have been made. Such works are the Bavarian Atlas, the German Lebensraum-Atlas, the Atlas of the Czecho-Slovakian Republic, the Economical and Statistical Atlas of Hungary by Edvi-Ilés-Halász; the Italian, Polish and Ukrainian Atlases which, although they include a large part of the Central European area, cannot give us a uniform picture, as there are great differences in their methods of elaboration and accuracy. This deficiency led Mr. Albert Halász to the publication of a Central European Atlas in 1926; however, this work had been based upon unreliable and incomplete data representing in many

respects the extraordinary conditions of the period right after the First World War. Consequently a newer elaboration has become necessary. It has been done by our Institute.

The purpose of this Atlas is to illustrate the geographical, demographic and economic conditions of the body of Europe: the Carpathian Basin and the surrounding areas, and to provide a precise and detailed picture of the historical development, the administrative and political division of this territory. The Atlas has been drawn upon the basis of data illustrating the most reliable and normal conditions of the peace period between the First and Second World War. In general, the data referring to the territory, population, population density and to the national, sectarian and occupational distribution, reflect the official data of the censuses about 1930; the maps representing the population movements, births and deaths and natural increase, as well as the agricultural production, indicate the "averages of several years" data generally including the period between 1925-35. The sources were in each case official statistical data. Our purpose was, with the help of research methods of geography and statistics, to present this centrally located and in its conditions most complicated territory of Europe in an objective way, irrespective of the political boundaries. The fact that the data are not indicated by state-territories, but by the possible smallest units: by districts, or in lack of such detailed data by counties and provinces respectively, helps to give a proper information. In some places we have endeavoured to combine the areas of districts within natural boundaries; thus our territory has been divided into 47 smaller, and in their economic relationships more or less connected or uniform regions. These small portions are grouped in 11 larger regions showing sometimes solid geographical, economical and historical connections. The national data covering the whole territory of countries according to the political division of 1930 are usually given in the texts.

Statistical data referring to the entire territory of countries, however, are not able to give us reliable information about the conditions of this area because of the frequent political boundary changes in recent times, as well as of their incongruity with the natural, geographical and economical region boundaries. It is also difficult to draw accurate conclusions, as the data do not always refer to the same period, and most of the time they have been collected with different methods. We have endeavoured to reduce these differences to the minimum in this Atlas. The greatest difficulty and the greatest merit of our work lies perhaps in the fact that it gives information, revised by a serious and uniform criticism, about the conditions of ten countries or portions, using nine kinds of official languages and three kinds of manner of writing. The statistical material of these countries has no detailed editions in any of the world languages. It should be also kept in mind that these countries have the same loose connections with each other in the fields of science, as in politics. The international exchange of data between their offices, scientific organisations and institutes, and even the exchange of their publications is very incomplete.

Momentary actuality is given to our work by the fact that the peoples of Central Europe are at present feverishly expecting a solution, a complete political, economic and social change. After the World War between 1914-18 a radical political rearrangement had been performed in Central Europe. The leading motive of this rearrangement was the ethnical principle. However, it did not succeed to carry this principle completely into effect, which consequently led in many places to great dissatisfaction. It was still worse that the new political boundaries have very often come into conflicts with economic interests and connections. Without having started a new World War, a new territorial rearrangement would have been undoubtedly necessary on the basis of the 20 years' experiences after the First World War. This rearrangement should be done by taking into consideration the ethnical, as well as the geographical and economic conditions. In order to be able to do this, we must have a complete survey about the political, racial and economic conditions of the entire and in its problems coherent territory, quite independently of the old and new boundaries. We have to know the historical conditions, as well as the geographical forces and the spiritual and material energies so often independent of figures and quantities. Our work has the purpose to offer assistance in solving the actual problems of the new arrangement. Besides, it also serves to provide proper source and aid for the modern instruction of geography, topography, ethnology and economy.

The statistical data of the Atlas have been collected, their control and application have been done, the maps have been constructed and drawn by the officers of the Institute of Political Sciences. This Institute had been established in 1926 in Budapest, within the Hungarian Statistical Association, with the purpose to pay attention to the development of the geographical, economical, cultural and political conditions of the Central European Territory, especially of the Carpathian Basin. The Institute has gathered official statistical data, laws and orders and has endeavoured to get information also from scientific publications, books, periodicals, memorandums and the Press. Since its establishment the Institute has rapidly developed. In 1941 it parted from the Hungarian Statistical Association, and as an independent scientific Institute became a Department of the Count Paul Teleki Research Institute of Budapest. Beside the officers of the Institute of Political Sciences, the members and the students of the *Geographical Institute* of the Royal Hungarian Palatine Joseph Technical University have cooperated in the data collecting and processing work. In the construction of some of our maps the *Royal Hungarian Geological Institute* and the *Royal Hungarian Meteorological Institute* have been a great help to us.

Of my collaborators I have to mention *Sándor Csihony*, dr. *Imre Jakabffy*, and *Géza Szathmáry* who partly in the construction of the maps, partly in drawing and printing them have done an excellent work.

* * *

Our Atlas in consequence of the war conditions could not be finished. Our scientific connections and the possibilities of collecting material in most part of the illustrated states have been interrupted. In our work we were absolutely dependent on the material which had been collected earlier, the deficiency of which has become only evident in the course of elaboration. Some of our collaborators entered the army, consequently we were obliged to continue our work of drawing up statistics and maps with new and different officers. In the beginning of the year of 1944 a great part of our staff and of our precious material, together with our instruments and photolaboratory, had to be removed before the airraids to the country. The removal and the separation of the material resulted in new difficulties and hindrances. We met with great difficulties concerning our connections with the other institutions and libraries, as in consequence of the bombardments the libraries had been closed or removed. In consequence of the war we have met with great difficulties as regards paper-supply, calculating-machines and drawing-instruments, paints and other articles. Our Central Office in Budapest was damaged by an airraid in September of 1944, and in December of the same year our Office in Balatonfüred came into the frontline. Our post and railway connections have ceased. The general evacuation endangered our material and staff. Yet with the greatest difficulties, fighting with food and heating troubles, we have succeeded to keep our place and to continue our work among roars of cannon.

In the present conditions we have hardly any hope to be able to finish our work according to our original plans and to have it published. The destruction of the manuscripts, however, would ruin the result of all our efforts made up to now. Thus, we have decided to provide a provisional publication, by our own polygraph, of those parts of our work which have been done until now and from these pages to have a few bounded copies made. The text belonging to each map, the references to sources and literature had to be shortened. Thus came our Atlas into being, the contents and the technical execution of which are due first of all to the admirable inventiveness, ambition and unselfish perseverance of my collaborators.

Balatonfüred, 3rd January, 1945

Prof. Dr. András Rónai