

MANUSCRIPT MAPS OF BANAT COUNTIES IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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Abstract: *Manuscript Maps of Banat counties in the late eighteenth century.* The late 18th century changes in the Banat's administrative and territorial organisation led to the emergence of three separate districts: Torontal, Timiș and Caraș, causing the necessity of drawing up maps of these new administrative units. The authors of this article present the first manuscript maps of the above mentioned districts which, apart from being of documentary relevance, are also an original and quite valuable source of historical geography, which has not been explored enough so far.

Rezumat: *Hărți manuscrise ale comitatelor bănățene de la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea.* Modificările în organizarea administrativ-teritorială a Banatului de la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea, când acesta a fost împărțit în comitatele: Torontal, Timiș și Caraș, a prilejuit realizarea de hărți ale acestor unități administrative. Autorii acestui articol prezintă primele hărți manuscrise ale acestora, care pe lângă importanța lor documentară, constituie o inedită și valoroasă sursă de geografie istorică, prea puțin valorificată până în prezent.

Key words: *maps, Torontal, Timiș and Caraș counties.*

Cuvinte cheie: *hărți, Torontal, județele Timiș și Caraș.*



1. INTRODUCTION

In the autumn of 1778, the empress Maria Tereza, under pressure from the Hungarian diet, accepts the incorporation of Banat from Hungary. A commission (*Commissio incorporatoria regio aulica*) based in Timișoara, led by Niczky Kristof, divided the Banat territory, during 1779 – excepting the Military Border which kept up that status until then in three counties: Timiș, with residence in Timișoara, Torontal with residence in Becicherecu Mare (today Zrenjanin) and Caraș, with residence in Lugoj¹.

On the 23rd of April 1779, the territory of Torontal and Timiș counties was divided into four network units (processes) by area, number of inhabitants, administrative problems and the possibilities of communication (rivers, roads etc.): Becicherecu Mare, Sânicolaul Mare, Kanjiza, Peciu Nou, respectively: Timișoara, Sânandrei, Lipova and Vârșeț; and the one of Caraș county in five nets: Lugoj, Bulci, Căpâlnaș, Caransebeș and Oravița².

In 1779, Caransebeș, together with 39 villages in the area, belonged to the Caraș county. At this unit, in 1783, 13 localities: Caransebeș, Ciuta, Obreja, Glimboca, Poiana, Prisian, Petroșnita and Goleț were given to Roman-Illyrian Regiment³.

In the first years, after the incorporation of the Banat region from Hungary, there were no maps of the mentioned counties. The first county maps of Torontal, Timiș and Caraș counties preserved in manuscript were made in 1781 by engineer K. K. Hoelzel Carl⁴.

2. HOELZEL CARL, *Das Temeser Comitatus (the Timiș county)*⁵

It is a polychrome, a general manuscript map which also reveals the administrative – territorial division of the Timiș county. Its extension of 97,5/76 cm was designed by engineer Hoelzel Carl in 1781. The map is oriented to the north and has no geographic framework. The little map, legend and scale are in the bottom right.

The title is filled with the following: “This county is bounded to the east and south with the Caraș county, to the west with the Torontal and Roman-Illyrian Regiment and north to Arad. This county is divided into four processes: Sânandrei, Lipova, Timișoara and Vârșeț. The first consists of 40 localities, the second from 44 localities, the third of 48 localities and the fourth from 43 localities.

¹ For details about the work of the commission cf. J. Szentklaray, *Száz év...*, p. 54-61.

² *Systema welches die in dem den 6-ten Juny 1778 mit dem Königreich Hungarn einverleibten Temesvarer Bannat errichtete Comitatern und sonstige zu diesem Geschäfte gehörige Einrichtungen betrifft*. Magyar Országos Levéltár, Budapest, *Helytartótanácsi Levéltár* (Consilium Locumtenentiale), A 99, 8 fol. 123 – 124, ed. J. Wolf, *Quellen zur Wirtschafts – Sozial – und Verwaltungsgeschichte des Banats im 18. Jahrhundert*, Tübingen, 1995, p. 47-232 (Institut für donauschwäbische Geschichte und Landeskunde, Materialien, Heft 5/1995), p. 337-338). This division in number of nets we also meet at Matth. Bell, *Compendium, Hungariae geographicum*, 1779, p. 259-262; G. Windisch, *Geographie des Königreichs Ungarn*, Presburg, 1780, p. 238.

³ Pesty Frigyes, *A Szörényi Bánság...*, II, p.200, 286.

⁴ Maps titles: *Das Torontaler Comitatus...*, M.O.L., Kamarai,S.No.245; *Das Temeser Comitatus...*, Kamarai, S.11.No.249; *Das Karschover Comitatus...*, Kamarai, S.11.No.251; Cf. *A Magyar Országos Levéltár Terkepeinek Katalógusa* 2. Kamarai terkepek, Budapest, 1978, numbers: 307, 310 și 312.

⁵The original map is at O. L. Kamarai S. 11. No. 249. The microfilm of the map is in our possession.

Below the title it is a note that says: "Those places that are colored in green were given to the Montanist Region." The legend has symbols for: Catholic villages, Serbian and Romanian settlements, institutes, post stations and monasteries with monks.

The relief on the map is shown in shadows and the hydrographic network and road network are presented in detail. For forests it uses small tree symbol. Simple scale bars of 8,000 Viennese fathom equal to 105 mm, converted into metric system is approximate 1:144.000. The toponymy of the map is in German.

Around 1788 engineer Joseph Bagossy made a map of the Caraş county which has been also kept in manuscript⁶. On this map the division of the county in nets is the following: Bulci, Căpâlnaş, Lugoş, Caraşova and Oraviţa.

3. BAGOSSY JOSEPH, *Geographische Charte des Krassovaer Comitatus... (The geographical map of Caraş county)*⁷

The map, a polychrome manuscript, is posted on canvas in good condition and has dimensions of 94,5/58 cm; it was designed by engineer Bagossy Joseph from Lugoş county around 1788. It is a general administrative geographical map on which are indicated also some economic elements (mills, vine, post stations). The toponymy of the map is in German.

The wind rose at the top of the map shows that it is properly oriented towards true north. The simple graphic scale (in which 16.000 Viennese fathoms, respectively, 4 German miles on the field) corresponds to the 156 mm converted into metric system, while the scale is 1:192.000.

The relief is represented by hatchings. The hydrographic network is detailed and accurate. On the tributaries coming from the left of Bega river appear watermills. The area is covered by forests and there are used established symbols and colours. Localities consist of fairs, royal chamber offices, places with mines; the villages are properly placed on this map. Roads are classified as: post roads with mail stations, trade roads, military roads and secondary roads, while bridges are divided in stone and wood ones.

J. Szentklaray (1879) believes that the first map of the Torontal county was designed by engineer Johan Spatsek. The original map has not been kept, but a copy of it is dated the 10th of September 1785⁸. There have been kept also two manuscript maps of the Torontal county from the years 1787⁹ and 1789¹⁰.

⁶ Bagossy Joseph Com.Ing., *Geographische Charte des Krassovaer Comitatus ...* Htt.S. 12 Div. X.No.5. Cf. A.Magyar O.L.. Terkepeinek katalogusa, 1, Budapest, 1979, poz.383.

⁷ The original map is at O. L. Htt. S. 12. Div. X. No.5. The microfilm of the map is in our possession.

⁸ Map title: *Mappa Geographica, Incltyti Comitatus Torontaliensis, cum designatione Metarum, omnium Territoriorum et Praediorum. Pro Excellentissimo ac Illustirissimo Domino Joanne Bocho deDezerS.C.etR.Apost.MajestatActualilnt.Consiliario,Comit.Krassovien.SupremoComite Temesiensis vero, Torontaliensis Bacsiensis Off.Supr.Comit.et in a tactis Comitatus Delegato Comissario Regio.Stephanus Szent.Ivany Jurassor I.Cottus Torontaliensis Ao.1785.10.Sept. copiatvit Delineirt und Reducirt durch J.Spatsek, k.Ung.Toront. Comitatus Ingen und Hidraul.* Apud: J.Szentklaray, Száz év..., p.62-63.

⁹ Spatsek Johan.Con.Ing., *Post Charte des Torontaler Comitatus...* Htt. S. 12. Div. X No.19:2

¹⁰ Idem, *Torontaler Comitatus Karte...* Htt. S. 12. Div. X. No.19:1.Cf.A Magyar O.L.Terkepeinek katalogusa, 1.Budapesta 1979, number 400.

4. SPATSEK JOHANN, *Torontaler comitats Karte... (Harta comitatului Torontal)*¹¹

This manuscript map is polychrome, 63/96 cm in size, bearing the signature of Spatsek Johann and was made at Becicherecu Mare (Kikinda) on the 23rd of February 1789.

The toponymy of the map is in German. It is considered "an administrative – territorial detailed map of the Torontal county and also the most beautiful and detailed hydrographical map by that date"¹². It represents all watercourses and lakes by then, in a fine and detailed manner: the flooded areas, the swamps, the islands, the canals, the dams, the bridges and the fords.

On the left bottom of the map it is a detailed explanation of the signs used on the map. There are represented by plans: towns and villages which in the right of the letters "M" and "D" are mentioned the persons who have annual and weekly fairs.

Different colors are used to separate the agricultural areas and forests, while roads are classified as: post roads with mail stations, trade and military roads. Map scale is in fathoms (9600 fathoms= 131 mm), which converted to the metric system is approximately 1: 144.000.

In conclusion, it is considered a beautiful and valuable map, which together with the others represents an asset for the historical geography that aims at the reconstruction of the physical and economic-geographical aspects of the end of 18th century Banat.

5. CONCLUSIONS

All the studied manuscript maps of the Banat counties are at the origins of the new county maps made by M. Votesty¹³, J. Bagossy¹⁴ și J. Degen¹⁵, accurate maps relying on geometric measurements, highly valued abroad as before being engraved they were sent in the counties for examination and correction¹⁶.

¹¹ The original map is at O. L. Htt. S. 12. Div. X. No. 19. The microfilm of the map is in our possession .

¹² Cf. Fodor Ferenc, *A Magyarországi keziratos visrajzi térképek katalogusa 1867-ig* fasc. III. p. 150, Budapest, 1956.

¹³ M. Votesty, *Torontal varmegye (Comitatus torontaliensis)*, Viena, 1799, în *Magyar Atlas* edited by Demeter von Görög și Samuel Kerekes, Ö.N.B.- Alb. 199, 392.848- D.K; K.A.- B.IX.a.515-1 (2 copies).

¹⁴ J. Bagossy, *Krasso varmegye (Comitatus Krassoviensis)*, Viena, 1800, în *Magyar Atlas*.

¹⁵ J. Degen, *Temes varmegye (Comitatus Temesiensis)*, Viena, 1802, în *Magyar Atlas*.

¹⁶ J. Szentklaray, *Száz év...* p.66.

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