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WHEN REALITY MEETS POWER-RHETORIC.
POWER, MAPPING AND PRACTICE IN CONTESTED
SPACES: THE CASE OF CYPRUS AND KARABAKH

Introduction. – The idea of present paper might never occur to us, if we have not had a chance to travel to Cyprus a few years ago. Led by the most benevolent intentions we purchased two maps in advance before crossed the ceasefire line and entered the Turkish side of the island: one was published by an international company, and the second one, a tourist map was provided by the tourist information office in the Greek part of Nicosia. Less than five minutes after the border-crossing we paid a heavy price for our inattention: both maps only indicated English or Greek toponymy, while the road signs in front of us made us choosing between Turkish settlement names. In order to find orientation we had to buy a map published in the Turkish Cypriot side, communicating the Turkish narrative of reality.

This story well illustrates the sometimes unreliability and contradictory feature of maps in general and especially in contested spaces, where maps very often transmit differing narratives to its readers. In case of Cyprus we encountered (at least) two different viewpoints, two different opinions about reality, which hardly overlap each other. Our experience highlights that although maps' basic function is to help to find orientation from point A to B and provide simple, practical facts about an area, this function is sometimes compromised due to social, historic, and most of all political reasons. But even if the map serves with reliable information one should keep in mind that the amount and reliability of information and the way it is visualized is highly pre-selected, pre-arranged and sometimes hand-picked. All these data indirectly constitute a second layer of meaning and thus maps should be considered as socially constructed texts (Harley, 1988, p. 71), prepared in a certain context, in a given historic time, serving certain needs and interests.

In the last decades, since J.B. Harley published his work about maps being social constructions and widely used by power as «one of the most

explicit assertions of sovereignty» (Neucleous, 2003, p. 419), there has been a high interest to deconstruct the «second-text within the map» (Harley, 1989, p. 9). Fascinating case studies and thorough analyses listed examples in different eras and different geographical settings to prove the role power plays in mapping (e.g. Crampton, 2003; Edney, 1997; Kitchin and Dodge, 2007; Peckham, 2000; Radcliffe, 2009; Rumyantsev, 2008; Winichakul, 1994; Sankaran, 1994). However, less attention was paid to the research of how and in which ways the above mentioned second-text and relation to power challenges the primary function of maps, namely to provide clear orientation and information on certain territory.

Based on examples from Cyprus and Karabakh, present study aims: 1) to show how the practical, on-site applicability of maps depicting contested geographical spaces (and prepared by the parties involved in the contestation) is influenced/deteriorated by power and politics; 2) to identify cartographic tools that limit the applicability of maps on the field; 3) to offer explanation for the anomaly between the visual representation and actual, real situation on-site by showing the political context and power relations/interests of involved parties in contested spaces.

We argue that in contested spaces maps become tools to represent the contrasting parties' understanding about the situation and very often this function conquers the primer, basic function of map, namely to help orientation. By analyzing maps serving different purposes (tourist maps, road maps), published by different (governmental or non-governmental) actors we would like to present how the parallel existing narratives of reality exist and live next to each other. The main selection criteria of studied maps were their easy accessibility for wider audiences, including both local people and tourists. According to our presumption free tourist maps and general road maps published by different authors for local or international markets are among the first ones a visitor or a local people open when tries to – for instance – arrange a trip. Consequently, these maps and the message they (directly or indirectly) communicate reach out to wide audience and transmit the message of the mapmaker in a more indirect, banal way. The power of such maps lies in their easy accessibility both in terms of physical availability and the way their message is communicated. We argue that their analysis might help us to catch the everyday dimension of political conflicts in contested geographical places.

Cartography and power. – In 1989 J. B. Harley published his work on the relation between power and mapping (Harley, 1989). He argued that since the information published on maps is valuable, it is of high interest of any power to control its availability and limit maps' content. It is not only true in case of top secret military maps but for instance goes for public city maps prepared during the cold war or even commercial maps (Monmonier, 1996). Moreover, the lack of certain facts or the visualization of others is also elements of power's toolkit. One of the well-known cases is related to display of toponymy, for instance when «impose a silence on minority or subject populations through their manipulation of place-names» (Harley, 1988, p. 66) that minority can be made invisible and non-existing on paper. Consequently, maps have a very strong power-related rhetoric embedded, which – according to Harley – needs to be deconstructed. As he put it: «By dismantling we build» (Harley, 1989, p. 15) to achieve a deeper understanding of cartography, history and geography.

Inspired mainly by Harley, in the last 25 years great amount of research targeted the critical analyses of maps. Studies in the evolving critical cartography proved with numerous examples that «maps are the products of power and they produce power», moreover «[T]his power/knowledge revealing the ideology inherent in maps (or their 'second text') and how maps 'lie' (or at least provide selective stories) due to the choices and decisions that have to be made during their creation» (Kitchin and Dodge, 2007, p. 332). Such perception has deprived cartography and maps in general from the status of being objective and opened new and interesting research which tried to reveal how 'lying' functions in general, however most of scientific attention was paid on maps describing nation states and regions.

We argue that political power influences maps and mapping to achieve three major goals: firstly to mark the territory as its possession, secondly to prove its sovereignty over that very area and thirdly maps play important role in connecting national belonging to the territory of the state thus contribute to the cultivation of national belonging. These perspectives have an effect on the basic function of maps and influence sometimes the content tremendously. In the followings we offer a brief outline of the driving forces which motivates the power to control, influence and limit the content and visualisation of material on a map.

After occupying a territory, the owner of the land marks it for instance by placing cornerstones to its boundaries, by pulling up a flag in a visible location or (re)naming settlements. According to social anthropology the main aim of such acts is to emphasize possession. This ritual is as old as humanity and can be traced back to ancient times and found in most societies and subcultures all around the world (Barna, 2000). Its main intention is to show to other people and groups, that the given piece of land belongs to one group. While in real life the possession is realized by e.g. fence, on maps borderlines serve the similar needs.

Beyond owing a territory, a state's interest is to prove the unit's integrity and functionality as an organized state formation which is under the control of one titular power. To be considered as an integral formation the (nation) states are encircled with borders, they set up administrative units, built up structure of political power and create its own toponymy. Sovereignty over the whole state territory is essential: any dispute over a territory endangers security, thus the position of power. Consequently, the state needs to be visualized with clear and unquestionable borders, where there is no place for doubts about sovereignty.

Even if possession and sovereignty made clear both on real geographical space and on mapscape, the abstraction of nation state is still needed to be accepted and interiorized by its inhabitants. And maps play important role in this sense given the fact that maps are "functioning as a crucial building block in the construction of national identity" (Neucleous, 2003, p. 421). The power's interest is to «establish the nation-state and its territory as self-evident, hegemonic and enduring» (Radcliffe, 2009, p. 427). By depicting the country's borders on a map, «the silhouette of the state becomes prominent in national maps and helps to instil (...) the outline or shape of the country into the popular imagination» (Kabachnik, 2012, p. 51). As it was brilliantly explained by series of studies (e.g. Billig, 1995; Raento, 2006), the outline of the country as a symbol of the state is embedded into everyday practices (e.g. visible on banknotes, weather forecast, post stamps) thus becomes naturalized, accepted and easily recognizable by citizens.

As human history proved rivalry between states, powers is generated by issues of possession of certain territory. In such contested geographical spaces each involved party wish to prove its right to the area and since map is «one of the most explicit assertions of sovereignty» thus

«used to assert and settle territorial claims» (Neucleous, 2003, p. 419). Each participant applies maps to make visible its existence e.g. by applying its own toponymy (preferably in the assigned language) to prove its right to the territory while at the same time questioning or denying the other's similar wish. The contestation can be followed on maps published by different parties involved in conflict due to the power and «political function of maps in *constructing* rather than merely reproducing the world and in *creating* rather than merely tracing borders» (Neucleous, 2003, p. 418, *stressed in original*). The rhetoric power of maps as representatives of power explains its popularity in contested geographical spaces where sometimes parallel worlds or in other words alternative realities are opening up for the reader. Cartography offers various ways to show or hide claims (and counter claims) in territorial disputes: «to map a state is to assert its territorial existence, to leave a state off a map is to deny its existence. Thus the map is crucial to the recognition of the state as an international subject, for an unmapped state is an unrecognized one, and vice versa» (*ibidem*, p. 422).

In the followings we would like to offer examples of how the above mentioned phenomena are executed and how these can be traced when using maps. Although the ways how a map can lie are countless, we will focus only on methods applied in two regions characterized by numerous territorial disputes: Cyprus and Karabakh.

Cyprus: mutual denial. – The history of the Cyprus conflict has been thoroughly analysed (e.g. Attalides, 1979; Diez and Tocci, 2009; Dodd, 2010), and therefore we only focus on the most important factors to understand the background of the conflict. During the centuries of Turkish rule, the island, previously inhabited predominantly by Greeks, attracted Turkish population. British colonial rule started in 1878 and relied upon the Turkish minority to counterbalance the majority Greeks' pursuit of independence, further polarizing the already existing ethnic division. After 1960, the birth of independent Cyprus, atrocities and violent clashes emerged, ending in civil war. As a result, the two ethnic groups gradually separated; ethnic Turks were mainly concentrated into ethnic enclaves. The putsch against President Makarios in 1974 and the Greek Cypriot intentions for unification with Greece were considered a *casus belli* by Turkey. Hence, Turkey occupied more than one-third of the island. After

that, migrant and refugee flows led to a total demarcation of the two communities. The southern part inhabited by Greeks remained as the Republic of Cyprus, while in the northern part the Turkish Cypriot authorities declared their independence as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983; unrecognized by the international community (except Turkey). Although the two parts have attempted to make an agreement several times, Cyprus remains divided.

As seen from the nutshell history of the conflict, ethnic and religious division played a key role in splitting the island in two entities. But besides, one should not forget about the role of the kin states (Greece and Turkey) whose tense relation resulted in violence, war and forced population exchange throughout the Eastern Mediterranean during the first half of the 20th century. In this broader geopolitical context, the Cyprus conflict should be understood not only as a local conflict, but as the last phase of the Greek–Turkish split, which has a symbolic importance for both countries (Bibó, 1990, pp. 538–540).

The status quo is evaluated in a fundamentally different way by the contesting entities. The Greek Cypriots consider the present situation merely as a temporary status thus their political interest lies in denial of the existence of the Turkish Cypriot state and restoration of the pre-1974 status (including the return of migrants and refugees and the recovery of properties). At the same time, Turkey and Turkish Cypriots have been interested in preserving the status quo and they have rather concentrated on nation-building and proving the legitimacy of Northern Cyprus. This manifests in several ways; among them we highlight those changes (the renaming of settlements and new administrative borders) that appear also in the mapscape, thus have direct influence on practical, onsite applicability of maps. For both Greek and Turkish Cypriot powers, transforming or preserving the political landscape has been an essential tool to symbolically legitimize their power. Thus the different political claims, interests and approaches are directly reflected on the maps published by the various actors.

The present study analyses three kinds of map according to their publishers. First we take a look at maps published by international agencies then we analyze governmental and non-governmental maps by the Greek and the Turkish communities.

International maps

The Cyprus case and in general the contested space's cartography challenges the international mapmaker companies. As a theoretically neutral agent in this conflict they simultaneously attempt to align with the UN resolution and produce a map for practical use. This means that they balance between the de jure and de facto situation. However, the uncertain political context led to wide range of applied methods in terms of toponymy and borders.

Out of the four international maps under study¹ two refer the northern part of the island as «under Turkish military occupation» or cautiously as «under Turkish administration», while no country name is attached to the northern part by the two other maps, as if the entire island were an undivided unit.

The applied toponymy shows even more diverse picture. Though the southern part carries exclusively Greek names in all the maps, two of them render the Greek spelling as well below the Latin one. At the same time, the maps offer different strategies for the Turkish part. The map by Bartholomew and Marco Polo indicates Greek place names only. Freytag & Berndt applies bilingual (Greek and Turkish in that order) names north of the buffer zone, however the Turkish versions are with smaller font size. The place names are also bilingual in the map by Berndtson & Berndtson but with a reverse sequence and with the same font size. Beside Greek and Turkish names, occasionally the major towns, some physical and maritime features also carry their English names in all four maps.

The visual representation of the buffer-zone is a key element of the mapscape in case of Cyprus and tells us much about the mapmakers' geopolitical perception of the conflict. Nonetheless, two maps depict only the cease-fire line (with an interrupted line) and give no information about the buffer-zone however it would be crucial due to the limited accessibility of the zone. Especially the thin grey line on Freytag & Berndt's map is hard to follow. By contrast, Marco Polo and Berndtson & Berndtson draw the buffer-zone in its entire expanse.

Focusing on practical use of maps we emphasize the significance of

¹ Bartholomew (1992); Berndtson & Berndtson (n.d.); Freytag & Berndt (2008); Marco Polo (2003).

another feature, the road network. The map by Berndtson & Berndtson is the only one which does not call attention on the impermeable borders. Both Bartolomew and Marco Polo apply small signs (blue I and red X) cutting the roads closed to motor vehicles. Unfortunately thin red X is barely visible on main roads coloured with red. The only map on which the delineation of road network effectively helps the orientation on the site is the one by Freytag & Berndt, where the roads do not cross the border as in reality.

As presented above, the international maps of Cyprus balance between the two standpoints and apply different strategies regarding the mapscape. As a result, usually incoherent, unclear toponymy and borders appear on the map, which reflects the current power-relations and the official status rather than the de facto situation; therefore their usability in the field is limited. Analyzing the four maps we revealed no tendentious application of cartographic elements: those using bilingual place names in the north draw only an almost invisible cease-fire line and vice-versa. Every map has both strengths and weaknesses in terms of onsite practical use and none of them can be characterized by coherent political standpoint regarding the de jure and de facto situation.

Greek Cypriot maps

Contrary to the international maps, those published by the Greek Cypriot authorities or companies are consistent. The analyzed maps² – irrespective of the publisher's background (i.e. governmental or market oriented) – all use Greek names exclusively. In official maps targeting both tourists and Greek Cypriots, all cartographic elements (names, colours, roads, administrative units) suggest the unity of the country; thus only thin and pale lines indicate the cease-fire line, and the buffer-zone is non-existent (*Figure 1*).³ The symbolic significance of place names in this conflict is proved by the remarks on both official and profit-oriented maps. The map by Department of Lands and Surveys (2002) stresses that «names were standardized by the Cyprus Permanent Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names 1991», while that by Kyriakou

² Department of Lands and Surveys (2002); CTO (2007); Kyriakou (n.d.).

³ The cease-fire line is called «Position of the Turkish Invading Forces» (Department of Lands and Surveys 2002), «Limit of area under Turkish occupation since 1974» (CTO 2007) in the legend.

(n.d.) emphasizes that «within the part of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus which is under Turkish Military occupation since 1974, the Official Geographical Names might have been illegally changed». These examples highlight that those maps designed primarily for foreigners are part of the toponymic war described by Kadmon (2004).

Fig. 1 – *Exclusively Greek – a Greek Cypriot approach to Cyprus*



Source: CTO 2007

The Greek Cypriot maps refer the northern part of the island as «Area inaccessible because of the Turkish invading forces» or as «Area under Turkish occupation since 1974», clearly reflecting the Greek viewpoint in this issue. It is interesting that maps made for the in-group with Greek spelling only do not attach any remark to the northern part neglecting its separate existence.

Onsite practical use of these maps is also very limited as the road network is contiguous across the border, and no signs call attention on the barrier function of the cease-fire line. Only the map by Kyriakou (n.d.) draws the Leda Palace Crossing Point marking indirectly the otherwise closed nature of the border.

The Cyprus Tourist Organization (CTO) published another remarkable map in the Turkish language. Although the map was drawn presumably for Turkish Cypriots (CTO 2003), the place names are in Greek

and those settlements inhabited by Turks (before 1974) carry Turkish names as well – across the entire island. However, these Turkish names were placed in subordinate position; in brackets, under the Greek names and with smaller font sizes. The northern part is referred as «Area inaccessible because of the Turkish invading forces» in Turkish language. In addition, these Turkish names usually differ from the versions that are currently in use in the north. Beyond the names, other features (cease-fire line, administrative units, roads) are represented in such a way as to suggest the unity of Cyprus – in accordance with the already presented Greek Cypriot approach.

The Greek Cypriot maps under study apply various methods silencing or stressing those elements that contrast or underlie their claims. The most striking phenomenon is the toponymic silence (see Helander, 2009; Tátrai and Erőss, 2015) regarding the Turkish names north of the cease-fire line. Greek Cypriot maps – contrary to the international ones – are coherent and clearly intend to underpin the unity of the island which can only be achieved by rejecting the status quo.

Turkish Cypriot maps

The Turkish Cypriot political viewpoint as mentioned earlier is clearly reflected by their maps. Opposite to the Greek Cypriot maps, Turkish ones represent the northern part as an independent country with clear borders, territory and sovereignty. The applied methods are twofold again: the mapscape includes those factors that underlie the status quo and silences what is against it. Although country names are rendered on the map only by KKTC Harita Dairesi (2006a), all the Turkish maps under study draw clear and thick cease-fire line called as state boundary in the legend. Only the most detailed administrative map delineates the buffer-zone, however, some maps place the cease-fire line in the middle of the buffer-zone (KTÖ 2002; Mapping Department 2011). Another method for stressing the contours of the northern part is colouring. The map by the Mapping Department (2011), although using the same base maps for the two entities, applies a deeper hue for the Turkish part highlighting its separation.

Like in the Greek maps, the language of the place names is considered to be crucial issue and all of the Turkish maps under study apply the same method. In the territory under Turkish administration only the pre-

sent-day Turkish name is written, while in the south, beyond the official Greek names, settlements inhabited by Turks (before 1974) carry Turkish names as well (in brackets).

The above characteristics are not only the reverse of the Greek maps: some of the Turkish maps go even further and employ classic examples of cartographic silence, a term by Harley (1988). On the map by KTÖ (2002) most of the Troodos region looks abandoned or “empty” since in the southern part only places inhabited at some time by Turks are indicated (*Figure 2*). This ethnocentric view not only intends to justify the status quo but questions the legitimacy of the southern part stressing its (former) Turkish nature. Another good example of silencing was also created in Northern Cyprus. The maps (even the Turkish ones) analysed up until this point depict the whole island of Cyprus. But some Turkish Cypriot maps focus only on the northern part leaving the south empty or non-existent, and therefore Northern Cyprus looks as an island itself (CNP n.d.; KKTC Av Haritasi, 2012). The same method appears in case of maps about the divided capital, Nicosia. Although one can find (mostly international) maps that present Nicosia as a whole with Greek street names in the south and Turkish in the north (e.g. Berndtson & Berndtson, n.d.), most of the maps reflect the divided status. Despite the complete city texture drawn by the free city maps published in the Greek part, street names are completely missing from the northern part (CTO, 2006). In the Turkish part, maps complement the above deficiency; they show only the northern part and leave the southern part blank (KKTC Harita Dairesi 2006b).

The Turkish Cypriot maps analyzed in this chapter use various tools in order to justify the status quo. They render only Turkish names in the north and also use partly bilingual names in the southern part silencing thereby the Greek Cypriot claims regarding Northern Cyprus. Nevertheless, taking into consideration the harsh and various cartographic silences by the maps published in Northern Cyprus, yet, some of these maps help more the reader’s orientation in the field than their counterpart made by Greek Cypriots.

Fig. 2 – *The empty Troodos area in a Turkish Cypriot map*



Source: KTÖ 2002

The analysis of 14 maps of Cyprus clearly proved that maps should be considered as typical and everyday tools for symbolic struggles. Turkish Cypriots neglect the past and the *de jure* status, Greek Cypriots neglect the present and the *de facto* situation, and both sides neglect the other side. The politics therefore can be characterized as «institutionalized denial» (Boedetje *et al.*, 2007, p. 17). In order to reach the political-ideological aims, maps are manipulated by using a wide range of cartographic silences and utterances irrespective of the publisher’s background (governmental or profit-oriented). The maps under study intend to influence readers primarily by the tendentious application of place names, borders, road networks, colouring and empty spaces. As a result of the differing official standpoints, «alternative cartographies» (Cohen and Kliot, 1992, p. 673) exist, which show the same area but in a completely different context and way, denying each other. Although one can find few – mostly international and Turkish Cypriot – maps which are quite close to what exists on the field, in contested spaces like Cyprus it is impossible to regard a map as fully objective or politically neutral due to the mutually exclusionary narratives.

Karabakh: unity vs. integrity. – However the Karabakh conflict show certain similarities with the Cyprus one (for instance the conflict resolution has frozen in the state of cease fire, both Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Nagorno Karabakh Republic are non-recognised states, forced migration and mutual evictions took place in both cases) the situation is more complex and up until nowadays pose a serious security risk in the Caucasus region.

The collapse of the USSR was followed by series of territorial conflicts out of which the war over Nagorno Karabakh is «the first full-blown and most complicated» (Özkan, 2008, p. 577). Karabakh conflict is well documented and thoroughly analysed in international literature (e.g. De Waal, 2003; 2010; O’Lear and Whiting, 2008; Geukjian, 2012). In the followings we only make an attempt to highlight the most important elements of the Karabakh conflict and to present the interests and strategies of involved parties, which are reflected in the analysed maps.

Karabakh has been a borderland for hundreds of years between Persia, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, Armenians and different Turkic groups. The local population was ethnically diverse (Armenian, Azeri, Persian, Greeks, Russians, etc.) and lived intermingled. After the USSR was established, in 1923 the territory of Karabakh and Nakhchivan, two regions with high share of Armenian population, became part of the Azerbaijan SSR.⁴ The boundaries of Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO) did not coincide with the territory of historical Karabakh, and it lied only few kilometers from the border of Armenian SSR, thus the potential conflict was encoded to the situation. Although in 1988 Armenians living in Karabakh started a political movement to transfer NKAO to Armenian SSR it did not succeed. The situation escalated and the newly born republics, Armenia and Azerbaijan fought a bloody war between 1991 and 1994 over Karabakh. The Armenian troops managed to control not only the territory of former NKAO (except Shahumyan district in the north and some smaller areas in the eastern edges), but occupied seven administrative regions from Azerbaijan’s territory which earlier were not part of NKAO. This buffer zone secured direct connection between Karabakh and Armenia.

⁴To create ethnic enclaves in the territory of the newly formed Soviet republics was not uncommon in the USSR’s power strategy (De Waal, 2010, p. 105).

Although the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh (NKR) was proclaimed in 1991, it has not been recognized by the international community, even by Armenia. Ceasefire agreement was signed between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1994, which conserved the conflict. Any kind of new agreement or peace treaty seems highly unlikely (Minasyan, 2010). The border between Armenia and Azerbaijan is sealed and hostile. The de-facto existing NKR is a land-locked state formation, only accessible through the Lachin corridor via Armenia, but entering that way is considered to be illegal by Azerbaijan. For both countries the only 4400 km² Karabakh is a top priority, independently of its present poor state, shrinking population, high unemployment and emigration rate. To understand the importance of Karabakh one should consider the stand-points of both sides in this regard.

According to the Azeri point of view, the current state of affairs is a consequence of Armenian military aggression and is not acceptable. Karabakh is de jure part of Azerbaijan and the refugees who had to flee from the region are called Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The Karabakh conflict was a serious loss of prestige for Azerbaijan, as the country's integrity was compromised and the power's sovereignty was questioned by a neighbouring state. Consequently, Azerbaijan's tactic is to deny the de facto situation and maintain in all level of propaganda, including maps, the de jure conditions: namely not recognise the existence of any inland border or ceasefire line.

As for Armenia, the situation is more delicate. Since it is almost completely surrounded by hostile and closed borders, its economy and military power is less developed than that of Azerbaijan. Moreover, the country is highly dependent on alleys/power relations⁵ in the region besides the financial and political support of the overseas Armenian diaspora. To successfully balance between all those interests, Armenia cannot recognize de jure the NKR without risking security threats. How-

⁵ Recently power relations are quite stable in the Caucasus region, though alleys are highly depend on regional and global politics. In a very simplified manner we can say that Azerbaijan is supported by Turkey. The major alley of Armenia in the region is Russia, but it is important to see that Russia cultivate good relationships with Azerbaijan as well. Thus for Armenia the support of the USA (thanks to the influential Armenian lobby in the US) and maintaining good relationships with Iran (Iran and Azerbaijan has territorial disputes) is essential (Deriglazova and Minasyan, 2011; Gachechidze, 2001; O'Lear and Whiting, 2008;)

ever, in contemporary Armenia's everyday life the success in Karabakh war cannot be overemphasised: Karabakh and the memory of the war victory is intermingled with political, cultural, social life of Armenians, it is important element of national consciousness and displayed in various ways from Yerevan's cityscape until tourist maps. From Armenian point of view prior to the Karabakh war the 20th century was full with losses: as a consequence of Armenian Genocide Armenians mainly disappeared from Turkey, in the Soviet times Armenia lost Karabakh and Nakhchivan and became the smallest Soviet republic in the USSR (Broers and Toal, 2013). Since 1988, Nagorno-Karabakh «became the symbolic centre of the imagined, lost and regained Erkir.⁶ The old romantic idea of both an independent and *united* Armenia revived with Nagorno-Karabakh» (Barsegian, 1999, p. 233). Overall, even though Armenia officially does not recognize NKR, Karabakh as a symbol and as a de facto state is present in Armenia and visualized in various ways.

International maps

Similar to the Cyprus case, the international publishing houses have to decide which narrative they display on their maps, taking into account that the content of the map might be considered as a political statement. Hence, again, maps are balancing between internationally recognised de jure status and onsite existing de facto situation. Various mapping solutions emerged from this complicated context, out of which four maps will be analysed here,⁷ all of them were published after the 1994 cease-fire.

In comparison to the Cyprus case the display of the contested space (i.e. Nagorno Karabakh and its surroundings) is a fundamental and striking difference. Only two of the four maps depict the cease-fire line together with the administrative boundary of the NKAO which, indeed, officially ceased to exist in 1991. The other two (Freytag & Berndt 1997, 2013) show only the border of NKAO, furthermore latter map arbitrarily combined the NKAO border and the cease-fire line, which resulted in a quite chaotic picture. The border of NKAO, like the borders of Adjara, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, is called as «administrative boundary» in

⁶ Erkir stands for the symbolic, imagined, unified homeland of Armenians (Barsegian, 1999, p. 229).

⁷ Freytag & Berndt 1997, 2013; Map Link 2006; Reise Know-How 2014.

three of the four maps avoiding the term ‘autonomous’ and blurring the distinction between the officially existent and non-existent autonomous territories. The map by Reise Know-How is the only one, where the design of the cease-fire line is more perceptible (thick contiguous line) than that of the NKAO border (series of small dots). However, displaying NKAO on the map by all the four publisher company should be evaluated as a compromise since it is a non-existent entity according to the contrasting standpoints: Azerbaijan, where NKAO officially belonged to, rearranged its administrative division abolishing the autonomous oblast in 1991, and from Armenian viewpoint, the region is governed by the unrecognized state, Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR). The name of the territory also reflects the compromise, since three of the four maps refer the area purely as Nagorno Karabakh (without any marker), while Freytag & Berndt (2013) render both the Armenian (Lernayin Ghara-bagh) and Azeri (Dağlıq Qarabağ) name on the map. However this compromise led to display a situation which exist nor de jure, neither de facto.

The way how toponymy is assigned to the area varies as well but looks a bit more coherent. Except the map by Freytag & Berndt (2013), the settlements carry bilingual names in the territory of NKAO (in Azeri, Armenian sequence; Armenian names in bracket on the map by Reise Know-How), and this applies to the adjacent territories controlled by NKR in the maps by Map Link and Reise Know-How.⁸ By contrast, Freytag & Berndt (2013) render only Armenian names in the NKAO (except the major towns where Azeri names also appear), while both Freytag maps apply exclusively Azeri names to settlements between Armenia and NKAO (under NKR administration).

As in the present article our main aim is to evaluate maps primarily due to their practical functions and applicability on-site, the display of the border-crossing points has a key importance. Out of the four maps, only the latest ones indicate these points. Especially the map by Reise Know-How stands out as it distinguishes both the opened and closed border-crossing points.

⁸ The bilingual inscriptions consist of Azeri names and Armenian names transliterated to Latin spelling. In Armenia, the names of major towns are also written with Armenian spelling.

In sum, the international maps we analyzed vary from those basically useless on the field (e.g. Freytag & Berndt 1997) to those that have very good approximations of real situation (Reise Know-How). Quite strange combinations can be also seen (e.g. Freytag & Berndt 2013), where the display of the pre-1989 situation (which is closer to the present *de jure* status) is combined with monolingual Armenian names in the territory of NKAO. However, it is interesting that half of the analyzed international maps do not reflect the current power-relations and even the cease-fire line is missing from the map.

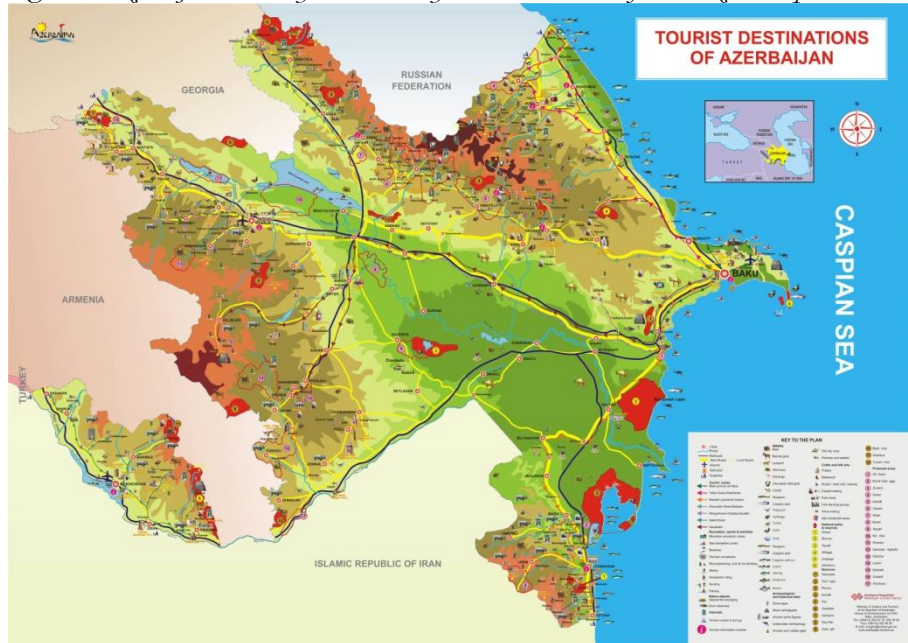
Azerbaijani maps

Azerbaijani maps, reminding of Greek Cypriot ones, are very coherent, rejecting the status quo and consequently displaying the *de jure* status. What is a remarkable difference compared to the Cyprus case, is the total neglect (or denial) of the reality and the current power-relations. This means that most of the Azeri maps depict Azerbaijan as a homogenous entity without any subdivision or cease-fire line (*Figure 3*).⁹ Adherence to the *de jure* status is manifested in a very exact draw of the state borders: all the small Azeri exclaves in Armenian territories and Armenian enclaves in Azeri territories are displayed, though all these exclaves were occupied by the surrounding power during the Nagorno-Karabakh war. Nagorno Karabakh as autonomous region does not appear in most of the maps with the exception of a well-defined group of (propaganda) maps focusing specifically on the Azeri–Armenian conflict (BKF, 2015, Embassy, 2009). These propaganda maps present both NKAO and NKR, latter is called occupied territories. Besides, IDP tent camps and settlements are placed on map together with a lot of data regarding the conflict (victims, refugees, etc).

As a consequence, the language issue does not emerge in Azerbaijani context: all names in *de jure* Azeri territories are in Azerbaijani language. However, as seen also in Cyprus, some of the Azeri maps symbolically export the conflict to Armenian territories and while depict its own territory as homogenous, display historical Azeri names in present-day Armenia with red (BKF 2009).

⁹ See e.g. Ministry of Culture and Tourism (n.d.); BKF (2002; 2009).

Fig. 3 – *Azerbaijan’s territory untouched by the Karabakh conflict - Azeri viewpoint*



Source: Ministry of Culture and Tourism (n.d.)

The onsite applicability of Azerbaijani maps is very limited. When not depicting the cease-fire line, general and road maps not only hamper onsite orientation but transmit a political statement. All elements of the mapscape suggest the homogeneity and unity of the country, and there are not any sign referring the existing conflict or questioning the territorial integrity of the country or the sovereignty of the state over it. Therefore the Azerbaijani narrative expressed on maps should be considered as much more exclusive than that of the Greek Cypriot.

Armenian maps

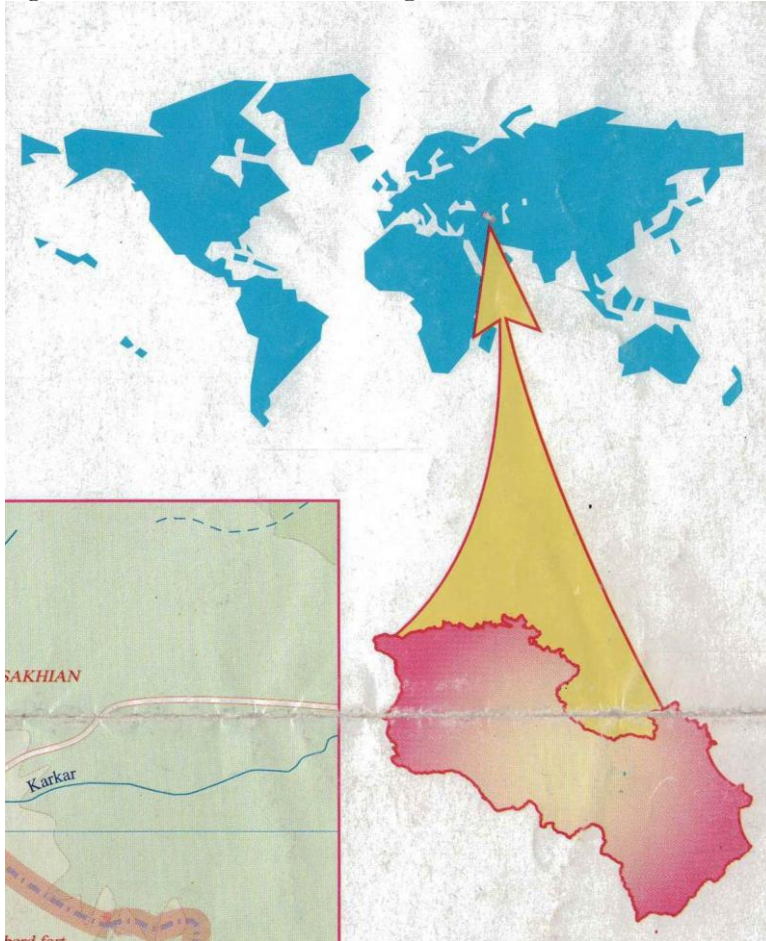
When analysing maps published in Armenia or in NKR, one should consider the symbolic significance of maps for the Armenian society regarding the Karabakh conflict and the enlarged national territories. The way it is displayed in public images, maps, etc. is termed «cartographic exhibitionism» by Broers and Toal (2013). Broers and Toal also suggests differentiating between governmental and private cartographies, since Armenia’s geopolitical situation restricts its official cartography to be politically correct and respect *de jure* conditions. At the same time,

«alongside official governmental cartography, there is widespread tolerance for a cartography that is not politically correct in the international arena but is nevertheless popular and legitimate locally» (Broers and Toal, 2013, p. 24). Perhaps this also contributes to the fact that private cartography is much more active than that of the governmental.

Starting with the analysis of non-governmental products, the most striking feature of contemporary Armenian maps is the represented area: all maps under study display both Armenia and the NKR in a uniform colour scheme.¹⁰ This general picture suggests unity: for the first sight only the combined territory of the two entities are visible, while the state boundary between the two republics is not striking in case of most of the maps. The image suggests amalgamation, which is just strengthened by the contrast: territories outside Armenia and NKR are displayed with a uniform light grey colour (excluding those maps using topographical map as a basis; like Lusabats 2007). In some cases, the cohesion of the two entities is further reinforced by the small overview map about the location of Armenia and NKR within the world or the Caucasus region: the Lusabats map simply merged Armenia and Karabakh (*Figure 4*). The joint display of the two entities «naturalized the cartographic image of an enlarged Armenian space» for the Armenian society (Broers and Toal, 2013, p. 24). Parallel with the emergence of NKR, the contour of NKAO partly ceased to exist on Armenian maps, however in the late 1990s it was still a reference point (Broers and Toal, 2013, p. 24). The reason, why the body of NKAO only partly disappeared, is the new maximalist visualization of NKR, since it includes not only territories controlled by Armenians but those areas of NKAO (e.g. Shahumyan district) under Azerbaijani control. These areas are represented either as integral parts of the NKR (Lusabats 2007) or with cross-hatching (Collage 2002; Collage 2010; Hyur Service n.d) sometimes explained it as «many parts of territory of Armenia and Artsakh are occupied from Azerbaijan» (Collage 2013), which is an explicit claim for these territories.

¹⁰ The sole exception is Geocart's map on the NKR (2005), however, it is the same as Geocart's map on Armenia and the NKR (2010); the only difference is the represented area.

Fig. 4 – *Armenia and the NKR merged*



Source: Lusabats 2007

As part of the Armenian–Azerbaijani conflict, Armenian commercial maps silence Azeri enclaves in Armenian territories occupied by Armenia during the Nagorno-Karabakh war. By contrast, all of them display the only Armenian exclave surrounded by Azeri territories but also occupied by Azerbaijan. Only the map by Collage (2002) draws it as contested area with similar cross-hatched shading like those parts of NKAO under Azeri control.

Alongside the tendentious design of borders, the title of maps and the name of Nagorno Karabakh also carry symbolic content. Regarding the title two silencing strategies can be identified: the first mention only

Armenia in its title, although both entities are displayed (e.g. Hyur Service), while the second title includes Republic of Armenia and Republic of Artsakh as if latter was a proper state (Lusabats 2007; Geocart 2010). However, using Artsakh, the mediaeval Armenian name for Nagorno-Karabakh, also intends to symbolically legitimate the possession over the territory. Moreover, rendering the name «Artsakh» becoming more and more popular distances the memory of the war and NKAO which name stood for the region during Soviet times and under Azerbaijani rule. On the other hand it also creates an imaginable bridge suggesting that this state formation is the successor of the medieval Armenian territory.

As the areas historically inhabited by Armenians reached far beyond the present border of Armenia, Armenian toponymy exists for many parts of the neighbouring territories, and it is not a surprise that this is displayed on maps. If Armenian names have not existed before, alternative or new names were introduced (mainly in the NKR outside the former NKAO) (Dabaghyan, 2011; Broers and Toal, 2013, p. 27). All the maps without exception use exclusive Armenian toponymy for Armenia and the NKR. Some maps also render Armenian names to Turkish and Azerbaijani settlements (especially in Nakhchivan), however their use is not consequent. In such cases, the official names are subjugated in brackets (Lusabats 2007; Collage 2010). This practice is derived from the existing power-relations, as it stated: «The data of Artsakh, Nakhijevan and Azerbaijan, as well as the names of Armenian upland are presented in Armenian versions, reflecting the current situation» (Collage, 2010).

Several more cartographic techniques can be discovered in Armenian maps; out of them we call attention only on silencing former Azerbaijani major towns currently under NKR administration like Aghdam (*Figure 5*) (see Hyur Service n.d; Collage 2010; Lusabats 2007), also described by Broers and Toal (2013, p. 27–28).

Analyzing the governmental maps (in fact these are the maps by Geocart) we found that there are not as clear dividing line as Broers and Toal (2013) suggest. Geocart's mapping strategy varies rather according to the target groups: in their English language wall map titled Republic of Armenia (2004), they provide the politically correct narrative, while its maps in Armenian language (either about Armenia and NKR (2010) or

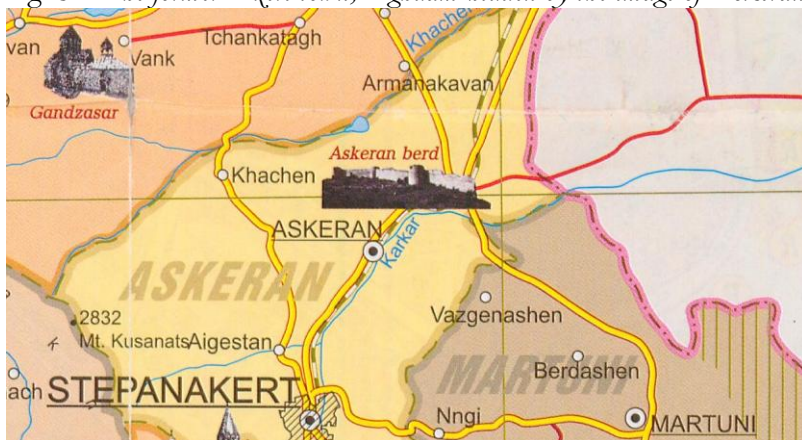
the NKR-map (2005)) apply the same approach as other non-governmental maps. Nevertheless, its Armenia map (2004) theoretically aligning with the internationally accepted standpoint provides also a Janus-faced narrative. This map only represents what its title is: Armenia (without the eastern parts of Nagorno Karabakh). The surrounding territories, including Artsakh have a light grey colour contrasting the colourful territory of the Republic of Armenia. Moreover, territories controlled by the NKR in between Armenia and the NKAO are cross-hatched and defined as «Territories are under control of armed forces of Republic of Mountainous Garabagh», and the boundary of the NKAO is explained as a region border, which is in harmony with the politically correct narrative about the region. However, a detailed analysis refines this image, which is indeed permeated by the unofficial Armenian narrative. First, NKAO's territory is not shaded with cross-hatching thus it looks like an uncontested proper part of Azerbaijan. Second, Nagorno Karabakh's border mostly follows the pre-1991 NKAO border, except in the Shahumyan district, where the border is drawn along the cease-fire line. Third, the settlements carry only Armenian names in Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding occupied territories. Fourth, the name of Azerbaijan is displayed far north of the contested territory of the NKR. Fifth, the Armenian exclave is but the Azeri enclaves are not depicted. These features suggest that governmental cartography looks like politically correct, but at the same time it transmits a dual narrative to the reader.

There is one special feature of maps published in Armenia: although state boundaries are signalled, border crossing points are rarely indicated on maps, even in case of Georgia and Iran where the crossing is possible, which decreases the practical usage of the maps.

The Armenian cartographic activity should be separated according to the background of the publisher (i.e. governmental vs. commercial), however the dividing line is rather blurred. Governmental maps aiming at the international community represent the internationally accepted *de jure* status permeating with some elements of the *de facto* situation, while other agencies' maps and governmental maps in Armenian language definitely display the Armenian narrative about the region: two separate entities seem to belong together. Hence, we argue that Armenian cartography clearly serves the nation building project and

applies various cartographic silences and utterances to justify Armenian claims/narratives. Both the above described cartographic tools (i.e. the interpretation of NKAO areas outside the Armenian control as «occupied territories», and the Armenian toponymy applied outside Armenian areas), reminding the Turkish Cypriot strategy, intend to weaken Azerbaijani claims by putting their counterclaims and presenting Armenians both as ‘innocent’ winners and victims in this conflict. However, all the counterclaims are projected to territories out of Armenian control, while Armenian territories are depicted as homogenous, unified, and their integrity and sovereignty is out of question. Despite the various cartographic silences and utterances listed above, the on-site applicability of Armenian maps is more satisfying than that of the Azerbaijani but it is still limited.

Fig. 5 – *The former Azeri town, Aghdam bidden by the image of Askeran berd*



Source: Hyur Service (n.d.)

The analysis of 17 maps of the Armenian–Azerbaijani borderland has shown a very similar situation to the Cyprus case. It is proved that maps play a significant role in the conflict – primarily from Armenian point of view. In this tense situation both international and official Armenian maps balance between the politically correct and incorrect narratives, at the same times the rest of the maps apply exclusive Armenian or Azerbaijani narratives. One can hardly find any overlap between the conflicting parties’ cartography, the standpoints are perhaps even farther from each other than in the Cyprus case, therefore the term «exclusionary car-

tographies» describe the Karabakh phenomenon rather than «alternative cartographies» characterizing Cyprus. However, evaluating the on-site utility we found that some of the international and most of the Azerbaijani maps are disappointing but the practical function of Armenian maps is also limited. Cartographic silences and utterances are characteristics of all three groups of maps, utterly abolishing the illusion that maps would be objective or neutral products.

The comparison of the Cyprus and Karabakh cases provides relevant results about the mapping practices in contested territories. The analogous geopolitical situation generated analogous mapping strategies by the agents of the conflict in analogous role. As a consequence, in both case studies the up until nowadays unresolved territorial conflict and the basically contradictory perception of geopolitical situation gave birth to contrasting parallel narratives questioning either the de facto or the de jure conditions – depending on whose maps we have in hands. Analyzing contested spaces mapping activity, this study revealed that geopolitical claims broadcasted by one agent are silenced or neutralized by the counterclaim of the other agent. Such claims and counterclaims are always projected on territories outside the given power's control, while at the same time the power's own territory is depicted as homogenous, sovereign and unquestioned.

There are numerous similarities between the Cyprus and Karabakh cases, however we also would like to emphasize some of the major differences. The Cyprus case looks a bit less overcomplicated and despite the remote standpoints of the Greek and Turkish communities, some elements of the mapscape (e.g. the existence of the ceasefire line) are mutually depicted. At the same time, the Armenian and Azerbaijani cartographic narratives do absolutely not overlap each other, resulting in, as termed by present study, 'exclusionary cartographies'. In case of the international maps, similar peculiarity was identified: while in Cyprus the ceasefire line is always displayed (even though its visibility show great variability), in Karabakh silencing it is not an exceptional case.

What seems to be valid for both cases is that not only the content but the visualization of the information (e.g. the role of colours) plays crucial role in the overall expression a map creates in the reader. If it comes to the most often employed cartographic tools applied to influence the overall impression or comprehension of a map, the followings might be

mentioned: incorrect or outdated depiction of road network, (in some cases complete) lack of border crossing points, fuzzy or incoherent display of borders/ceasefire lines, administrative boundaries and toponymy. Beside the incorrect or missing road network, border crossing options and the applied toponymy cause the most problems when somebody would like to get orientation either in Northern Cyprus or Karabakh. Yet, the most spectacular manipulations are the deliberate cartographic silences like the display of a selective settlement network and the missing boundaries.

By analyzing maps published by different authors about Cyprus and Karabakh we wish to call attention to the problematic situation one can face when tries to determine orientation onsite relying on maps published in contested geographical spaces. Beside studying the role of politics and power relations embedded in maps as second text, we made an attempt to evaluate the practical value of a map. We found that all the maps applied, in different extent, various cartographic silences and utterances, which decreases the map's practical applicability. Naturally, maps justifying status-quo (de-facto situation) always provide an image what is closer to the on-site 'reality'. However, present study argues that maps depicting contested territories are sometimes influenced and deteriorated in such a grade that it questions the primer function of a map, namely to help the orientation.

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When Reality Meets Power-Rhetoric. Power, Mapping and Practice in Contested Spaces: The Case of Cyprus and Karabakh. – In the past decades geographers and cartographers have been witnessed the inspiring and multilayered scientific discovery of the second text and power-rhetoric transmitted by maps. Although maps' basic function is to help the orientation, this is sometimes challenged due to social, historic, and most of all political reasons. This is especially true in contested geographical spaces where contrasting parties are interested in not only justifying their standpoint but at the same time denying or silencing the opponent's similar wish. Based on examples from Cyprus and Karabakh, we present how the power-rhetoric, territorial and political claims influence mapping and how maps

justify these claims by applying various cartographic tools and manipulations. By analyzing various tourist and road maps, present study shows how the parallel existing narratives are displayed on maps, resulting in exclusionary cartographies. Furthermore, present study argues that maps depicting territorial conflict zones are sometimes influenced and deteriorated in such a grade that it questions the primer function of a map, namely to help the orientation.

Keywords. – exclusionary cartography, cartographic silence, contested spaces, Cyprus, Karabakh

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