Critique of Spatial Information - Information for Spatial Criticism
Maps and map resources for historical studies

REIRES Workshop on Digital Humanities, IEG Mainz, 23.01.2019
• What shows the map?
• What historians can do with maps?
• The librarian access to spatial information - GeoPortOst
What shows the map?

A map is a symbolic depiction emphasizing relationships between elements of some space, such as objects, regions, or themes.
What shows the map?

Two important characteristics of maps should be noticed. A map is not the territory it represents, but, if correct, it has a similar structure to the territory, which accounts for its usefulness. If the map could be ideally correct, it would include, in a reduced scale, the map of the map; the map of the map, of the map; and so on… (Korzybski, 1933)
What shows the map?

All maps state an argument about the world and they are propositional in nature. All maps employ the common devices of rhetoric such as invocations of authority (especially in 'scientific' maps) and appeals to a potential readership through the use of colors, decoration, typography, dedications, or written justifications of their method. (Harley, 1989)
What shows the map?

- Maps as representation
- Maps as symbols
- Maps as narratives
- Maps as multimodal media
What shows the map?

Signatures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Best to show</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shape</td>
<td>possible, but too weird to show</td>
<td>cartogram</td>
<td>qualitative differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
<td>cartogram</td>
<td>quantitative differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Hue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>qualitative differences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Color Value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>quantitative differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color Intensity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>qualitative differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>qualitative &amp; quantitative differences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jacques Bertin

http://mylene-baba.blogspot.com/2012/03/jacques-bertin.html
What shows the map?

Colors

http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mejn/election/2016/statemap1024.png
What shows the map?

Projection

Eric Gaba (CC BY-SA 4.0) https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tissot_indicatrix_world_map_Mercator_proj.svg
Strebe (CC BY-SA 3.0) https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gall%E2%80%93Peters_projection_SW.jpg
What historians can do with maps?

- Maps as sources

Place names, settlement, territorial development and claim, demarcation...
What historians can do with maps?

- Comparison [Eastern Polish Boarder, Dziennik ustaw 1921]

1. Before the peace treaty (1920-10-12)  
   [Link](http://geoportal.ios-regensburg.de/catalog/BV042517611)

2. After the peace treaty (1921-03-18)  
   [Link](http://geoportal.ios-regensburg.de/catalog/BV042517568)
What historians can do with maps?

- Maps and politics: development of spatial concepts

http://geoportost.ios-regensburg.de/map/BV042760754
What historians can do with maps?

- Contextualize and visualize

https://worldmap.harvard.edu/maps/886
The librarian access - Maps as records

- Since 1952 cataloguing of „Hidden Maps“
- Maps printed in books, proceedings, journals
- 16,000 catalogue cards referencing 27,000 items
- Indexed by subject
The librarian access - Maps as records

- Retro-conversion of the Hidden Maps-catalogue
- Metadata-enhancement
- Digitization
- Core collection of 1,000 digitized maps
- Geoportal: full text searchable
The librarian access - Maps as records

Import of 2,000 – also digital born – maps

Partners: IEG Mainz, GEI Braunschweig
The librarian access - Maps as records

- Implementation of georeferencing tool
  Georeferencer
- Crowdsourcing
- Locating old maps in real world geography
- Identification of geographic coordinates

Visualization of G. Freytags Karte des Kriegsschauplatzes auf der Balkanhalbinsel, 1917
The librarian access - Maps as records

- Features:
  - Overlay (Compare)
  - Accuracy analyzer
  - Download Geodata (kml, ESRI File)

*Obščij plan S. Peterburga (Ves’ Peterburg, 1910)*
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