

# MAPS IN HISTORY



September 2019  
Newsletter No

65

**Italian cartography and topography in the 16<sup>th</sup> century**  
**Ethnographic mapping in the light of the Peace Treaties**  
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### Cover : The AfricaMuseum in Tervuren

Site of the 2019 Brussels Map Circle Conference

## Intro

Dear Map Friends,

Back in January 2005, the BIMCC Newsletter had an illustrated cover for the first time : No 21 had the title 'Focus on Africa' superimposed on an outline of the continent. Our 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference had indeed been devoted to that theme. The Conference was followed by a visit to the 'Royal Museum for Central Africa' in Tervuren near Brussels, where our president Wulf Bodenstein had guided us through their map collection. In recent years, the Museum has been closed for a complete renovation (five years!); it reopened last year as 'Africa Museum' with modern facilities and a new 'politically correct' museography; and we thought that would be a good opportunity to bring you back to Africa for our next conference on 7 December (see the full programme on page 30).

In this issue, the main article, for once, is not about the history of cartography but about the role of 'Maps in History'! Rick Smit, following on his presentation at the last Map Afternoon (see MiH 64), takes us back one century, when Europe was being reshaped with the creation of a number of new States after WWI; it is quite interesting to see how ethnographic maps were then used to influence the diplomatic negotiations and the subsequent treaties.

Besides the usual mix of exhibition reports and 'Looks at Books', we also run reports on a few cartographic events: our excursion in May to visit the HEK collection in Holland, the Atlas Tage in April (returning again to Schwerte), the International Conference on the History of Cartography in Amsterdam with the preceding Workshop in Utrecht in July.

Wishing you an excellent read!

Cartographically yours,

Jean-Louis Renteux  
Vice-President & Editor  
vp@bimcc.org





# Le Monde en sphères

[The World as a Globe]

**Bibliothèque François-Mitterrand - Paris**

**16 Apr – 21 July 2019**

For many diehard map collectors globes are not where it's at; too big or too small, too difficult to read, too inconvenient, or just simply decorations. Put three or four of them together, and we just give up.

But now Catherine Hofmann, head of maps and charts at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BnF) and François Nawrocki, assistant director of the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, are making us think again.

The exhibition that was running at the BnF in Paris<sup>1</sup> until 21 July after first opening last year at the Louvre in Abu Dhabi (under the title 'Visions of the World'), has achieved two very significant advances:

1. It has considerably expanded our understanding of the globe by placing a number of the most important of these (many from the collection of the BnF) in their contemporary environments. To go with the around 40 globes themselves – both celestial and terrestrial, and including armillary

<sup>1</sup> BnF François-Mitterrand, Quai François Mauriac, Paris XIIIe

A dynamic view of the exhibits, along with comments and videos in French, is available on <http://expositions.bnf.fr/monde-en-spheres/index.html>. The exhibition is accompanied by a descriptive and explanatory catalogue of 172 pages in French with 175 illustrations produced under the direction of Catherine Hofmann and François Nawrocki. ISBN/EAN: 978-2-7177-2798-2; BnF Editions distributed by Interforum Price EUR 45.00 Available, among others, in the bookshop at the BnF and on Amazon.

spheres and some strange artwork at the end – there are another 150 artefacts that answer the where, how and why questions, humanising each globe in the process.

Thus, for example, accompanying the Islamic globes we have star maps, an astrolabe and manuscript images of astronomers and astrologers at work. Similarly, in a large painting by Monsiau (1786), we see Louis XVI with a globe and chart very much in evidence, giving instructions to La Pérouse before his departure on his last voyage.

2. It has situated the globes in their philosophical, religious,

astrological, historical and aesthetic contexts, effectively giving them value not just as concrete, graphic objects but as cultural syntheses of their times.

The most spectacular illustration of this must be the famous clip from Chaplin's film 'the Great Dictator' – playing continuously at the exhibition – of Hynkel working out his megalomania with a large, gas filled world balloon while Wagner is playing in the background.

But it is of course the globes themselves that are the stars of the exhibition. The trip through time starts in the second century BC in



Fig. 1 The oldest celestial globe known. A 6.3 cm diameter silver globe found in eastern Turkey. Dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, it shows 48 constellations. (Paris, collection Kugel - BnF, Éditions multimédias, 2019)



Greece with a beautiful 6 cm diameter, silver celestial globe (see Fig. 1) and moves on through a group of medieval Arab and Iranian copper and bronze celestial globes (including perhaps the oldest one of all, made in Andalusia in the 11<sup>th</sup> century) to arrive in early Renaissance Europe at what for the writer is the cartographic star of the exhibition. The BnF's full size facsimile of 1847 is a representation of the oldest surviving terrestrial globe, that of Martin Behaim dating from 1492. Although 'only' a facsimile, it is far more accessible than the original and gives us a vivid impression of the splendid artefact that the original's 15<sup>th</sup> century owners would have seen.

There then follow, each in its historical and social context, important hand made, printed and even mechanical globes by Waldseemüller (the 'Green Globe' of 1506), Schniepp (1575), Reinhold (1588), Hondius (1600), van Langren (1630) and many more into the twentieth century.

There is also much of interest for those who still prefer a flat map to a globe, including several important world maps, gores, star charts and atlases, along with printed works on spheres and geography that marked their epoch, by Reisch (1504), Strabo (1516), Apian (1550) etc.

That globes and cartography have always been a real part of society is demonstrated in many graphic scenes depicted in the exhibition. Starting in the first century AD with a mosaic showing philosophers debating in the presence of a globe, we then move on through Carolingian, Persian, Arabic, Indian and other decorative manuscripts showing scenes that include a globe or astronomical measuring devices. From the Renaissance and beyond, the curators have chosen paintings (by Holbein the Younger, van der Neer, Lefebvre, Vermeer and many others) and even a tapestry that shows the utilisation of globes and maps for commerce, war,



Fig. 2 A showpiece, geocentric armillary sphere made by Jérôme Martinot between 1709 and 1718. 145 cm high by 37 cm (diameter of the sphere), it was driven by a clockwork mechanism situated above the sphere. (© BnF, département des Cartes et plans, Ge A 355 RES)

scientific and astrological observation, and even for the education of the children of the rich.

If the writer had to select two preferences (not necessarily what he would like to take home with him) among all these remarkable objects on display, he would choose the splendid and very large armillary sphere that greets visitors as they enter the exhibition. Made sometime between 1709 and 1718 by Jérôme Martinot, Louis XIV's official clockmaker ('horloger', a task that involved winding up all the royal clocks and watches), it was originally driven by a clockwork mechanism (Fig. 2).

A second choice, and one definitely not to be taken home, would be the

enormous (240 cm x 130 cm) globe prepared in 1788 by perhaps the most important French cartographer of the turn of the century, Edme Mentelle (1730–1815), as a teaching aid for the eldest son of Louis XVI (Fig. 3). It is in fact three globes in one: a terrestrial globe on the outside which can be separated between the two poles to reveal a celestial globe on the inside and, the most surprising, another globe, the kernel, which is in fact the first ever relief globe of the world.

If, on the other hand, you do not share the writer's gigantomania, there is a wonderful selection of coins and medals from antiquity through to the Renaissance, including one of the stars of the show, the beautiful 8 cm diameter cameo called the





Fig. 3 The wooden globes made in 1788 under the supervision of Edme Mentelle (1730-1816) for the education of the Dauphin

(BnF, département des Cartes et Plans, Ge A 356 Rés)

Triumph of Lucinius (Fig. 4); dating from the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, it shows the emperor in his chariot crushing his enemies. Nothing new here perhaps, but in his hand he is carrying a globe representing the earth, while two figures are presenting him with both a solar and a lunar globe. Here, as with the coins and many of the sculptures and manuscripts, the possession of a globe, in the hand or under the feet, is the unmistakable sign of a ruler's power and dominance.

Finally, whenever you come to the Bibliothèque Nationale, don't forget to pay your respects to the two massive and absolutely superb Coronelli globes that are permanently housed in the same building. These are the painted terrestrial and celestial globes of 1683 prepared for Louis XIV, 4 metres in diameter and weighing 2 tons apiece, that are permanently on display just a

short distance from where you will be.

If one must find a flaw in the exhibition, then it is simply that it is a shame that, while the large explanatory panels are in both French and English, the cards that succinctly describe each item are only in French. Can it really be that onerous to translate these into English, and wouldn't it be worth it in order to transform a truly unique exhibition into a truly unique international exhibition?

The exhibition catalogue is both erudite and visually attractive, illustrating and explaining a large number of the exhibits and allowing the reader to gain a much deeper understanding of their historical and scientific backgrounds. High definition images are also to be found on the exhibition's excellent website (whose URL is given above).

Summing up, the exhibition is simply remarkable, giving a highly understandable overview of the representations of the earth and sky as a globe that has been over 2000 years in the making. There really is something here for everyone, to the extent that it is a tribute to the exhibition that it is impossible to satisfactorily translate its French title into English; neither Abu Dhabi's nor my own English translations adequately reflect the breadth, mystery and importance of the subjects covered.



Andrew Cookson  
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Fig. 4 The cameo called the Triumph of Lucinius. It was made of sardonyx and enamelled gold during the reign of Lucinius (308 to 324 AD). 8.1 cm by 8.3 cm.

(BnF, département Monnaies, médailles et antiques, Camée 308)

# Coming face-to-face with maps The world of C215

[Le Monde de C215]

Mazel Galerie - Brussels

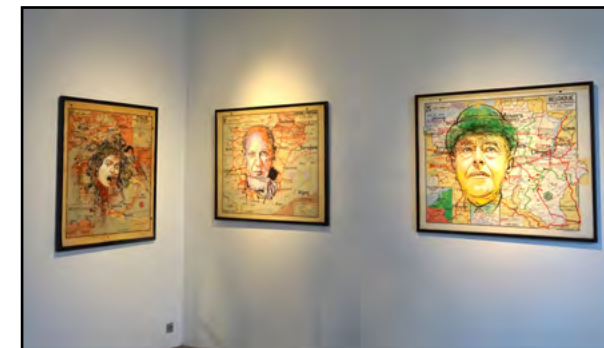


Fig. 1 Part of the exhibition

Many among us – collectors, map historians and antiquarians – spend a lot of time *looking at maps*. But have you ever come across a map that's *looking at you*? Such a singular experience was in store for visitors of a recent exhibition in Brussels, Le monde de C215<sup>1</sup>.

As you enter the exhibition (Fig. 1), you are greeted by the terrifying stare of the Medusa, blood dripping from her severed head, then by Pablo Picasso's inquisitive gaze, and by René Magritte who seems to be looking from his Belgian home country at some distant object behind you. These portraits, your trained eye at once recognises, were painted on classroom maps depicting regions that

represent a historical link with the person portrayed. Let's have a closer look at some of them. The frightening gorgon, with her hair of living snakes, inspired by Caravaggio's 1596 painting of the Medusa, comes alive on a map of Italy (Fig. 2). Picasso emerges from a map of Spain (Fig. 3), and Magritte from a Belgian background, obviously (Fig. 4). Further along we come across Churchill in the British Isles (Fig. 5) and Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space, on a map of the USSR with Finland (Fig. 6).

Apart from some genre scenes with animals or local figures of various parts of the world, the painter has selected personalities who, in his opinion, had a lasting influence on the lives in their country and on the world we live in today. In addition to the ones mentioned, he also used a map of Europe (for Simone Weil), two of the US (for Abraham Lincoln and Barack

Obama), and one of north-west Africa (for Antoine de Saint-Exupéry), to mention just a few.

The artist is Christian Guémy (born in 1973, Bondy, France) who signs his works as 'C215'.

He studied architecture, economy and history of art, developed a fascination for the Renaissance, but pursued various

commercial activities before turning to what has become his life, street art. Since 2006 he has brightened up the urban scene in Paris and in many other parts of the world with impressive murals using spray painting and stencil techniques. He is now considered one of the greatest stencil artists around.



Christian Guémy



Fig. 2 Medusa

1 Mazel Galerie, 22, Rue Capitaine Crespel, 1050 Brussels, 29 March - 1 June, 2019;  
www.mazelgalerie.com

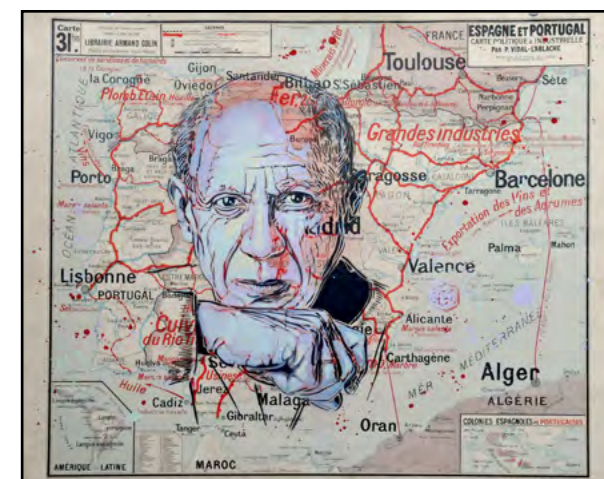


Fig. 3 Picasso





Fig. 4 Magritte



Fig. 5 Churchill



Fig. 6 Gagarin



Fig. 7 Example of Map of Belgium used for the portrait of Magritte (Fig. 4). © Fred Perrin

As a creator of all sorts of 'objects' using diverse materials he has, perhaps not surprisingly, moved on to use maps as a support for some of his most imaginative compositions. Several such map transformations have previously been on display in France<sup>2</sup>, but the Brussels gallery owner Patrick Mazel was the first to devote an entire exhibition to this intriguing subject. Having discovered this artist's cartographic inspirations and realising the scope for a larger historical-geographical coverage, he began to systematically collect such school maps to make them available to the artist. C215 seized the opportunity and created over 20 such portraits, some still available for the collector.

All of these maps were originally conceived by the French geographer

Paul Vidal-Lablache (1845-1918)<sup>3</sup>. Usually printed on cardboard in a standard size of 100 x 120 cm (height by width or width by height), they were first published in 1885 and have marked classroom education in France and in its overseas territories for generations of school children. They became extremely popular both with teachers and their students on account of their uncomplicated design, bright colours and good readability (see an example as used for Magritte in Fig. 7)<sup>4</sup>. Continuously updated, they were only replaced in the 1960s. C215 has literally brought them back to life.

<sup>3</sup> See my review of *Atlas mural Vidal-Lablache – Les cartes de notre enfance* by J. Scheibling and C. Leclerc, Armand Colin, 2014, in: *Maps in History* N° 52, May 2015, p. 15. With thanks to Fred Perrin, owner of the maps illustrated in the book, for assistance with this article

<sup>4</sup> Photo credits : Fig. 1, WB ; Figs. 2 to 6, Galerie Mazel ; Fig. 7 © Fred Perrin

<sup>2</sup> Exhibition *La Douce France*, Galerie Itinérance, Paris, 20 June – 5 July, 2014



Paul Vidal-Lablache

Wulf Bodenstein  
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# Cartografia e topografia italiana del XVI secolo. Catalogo ragionato delle opere a stampa

[Italian Cartography and Topography in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Annotated Catalogue of Printed Works]

By Stefano Bifulco and Fabrizio Ronca, with contributions from Andrea Cantile, Annalisa D'Ascenzo, Fabio Fatichenti – Gaia Andreozzi, Clemente Marigliani, Alessandro Signoretti

— 3 vols., Rome: Edizioni Antiquarius, 2018

— 2561 p., ill. in colour and in black and white

— ISBN 9788890937613 - EUR 600.00

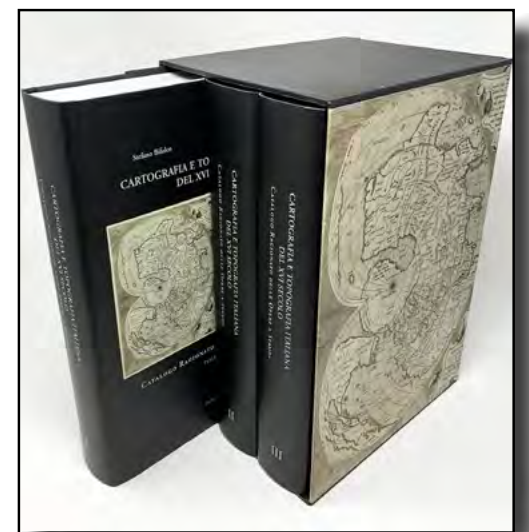
In a recent article, Stefano Bifulco announced the forthcoming publication of what can be considered his magnum opus, but I think one can safely state that nobody had expected its publication at such short notice.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Stefano Bifulco, together with Fabrizio Ronca, who is also the co-editor of this publication, had, only in 2014, published another major work, dedicated to the inventory of 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian topographic maps of Italy and its regions, with detailed descriptions of some 151 maps or 328 states.<sup>2</sup> The latter was already an audacious initiative, but the catalogue under discussion surpasses it by far, comprising 1280 different maps or 2232 different states of topographical maps, city plans and views, news maps and representations of battlefields, published in Italy in the 16<sup>th</sup> century

and later. In fact, the title does not completely cover the catalogue content as it also discusses maps of the 15<sup>th</sup> century which inspired later maps, and 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century states of maps published in 16<sup>th</sup> century Italy.

The catalogue is clearly the result of a titanic enterprise which has taken the editors several years and much intellectual and financial effort to achieve. Except for some very rare items, all maps and states have been studied de visu by the editors of the catalogue who visited over 60 libraries all over Europe and in the United States.

The following information has been painstakingly assembled for every single map:

- a detailed description of the map with transcription of the map's texts;
- an explanation of the map's content and the history of its production and publication;
- a list of different states (sometimes only conjectured due to a lack of copies found);
- a double bibliography of a) 16<sup>th</sup> century atlases that contain the



map and b) monographies and articles on the map;

- a findings list of libraries ordered according to the states of the map (unfortunately without precise bibliographical references of the map's location in the atlas).

For every map a picture is added and where different states have been discovered, pictures are inserted of the map's variants according to its state. Completing the catalogue: a list of about hundred 16<sup>th</sup> century atlases that have been consulted for establishing the catalogue, ordered by country and by library, with bibliography; short biographies of the engravers, printers, editors and publishers mentioned in the catalogue, in alphabetical order; a general bibliography of works cited in the catalogue; and, finally, an index of proper names.



Furthermore, the first volume contains six introductory essays which should cover the variety of cartographic items found in the catalogue: the Ptolemaic tradition and its updates; maps of cities and islands; measuring instruments and world maps.

After a rapid and rather heterogeneous overview of medieval world maps and the location of Paradise, portolans, explorations, the origin of engraving and map printing in Florence, Rome, Venice, Naples and Siena, wall maps (with too many quotations from secondary literature in my view) by Clemente Marigliani <sup>3</sup>, Fabio Fatichenti and Gaia Andreozzi discuss in detail the different editions of Ptolemy's Geographia (or Cosmographia as it was often referred to) with particular attention to :

- the 1477 edition by Domenico de' Lapi in Bologna
- the Roman edition by Arnold Buckinck and Konrad Sweynheym of 1478
- the Berlinghieri edition of 1482 in Florence
- the Roman edition by Marco Beneventano and Giovanni Cotta, printed by Bernardinus de Vitablibus for Evangelista Tosino of 1507
- the Venetian edition by Silvano da Eboli of 1511
- Gastaldi's edition printed by Nicolo' Bascarini for Giovanni Battista Pedrezano in Venice in 1548<sup>4</sup>.

In his contribution on maps of cities and fortresses, Stefano Bifulco concentrates on the first town books printed in Italy from 1567 onwards, those published by Forlani and Zenoi, up to Pietro Bertelli's Theatrum

3 Lineamenti di cartografia tra Medioevo e Rinascimento : dalle mappe manoscritte a quelle a stampa [Cartographic features between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: from manuscript maps to printed ones], 13-64

4 Specificità, fortuna e auctoritas del canone tolemaico [Particularities, fortune and auctoritas of the Ptolemaic canon], 65-115.



The publication of 2014 by S. Bifulco and F. Ronca

Urbium Italicarum (1599) <sup>5</sup>. They account for many of the additions to Ronald V. Tooley's inventory of Italian maps, to which I will return later on.

Andrea Cantile discusses geometrical treatises in Italy (15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century) and briefly describes scientific instruments such as the quadrant, the quadrato geometrico, the compass and the Tabula praetoriana<sup>6</sup>.

Annalisa D'Ascenzo basically updates her study of Urbano Monti, trattato universale descrizione e sito de tutta la terra sin qui conosciuta, on which she has published a monography in 2012 <sup>7</sup> and Alessandro Signoretti

5 Città e Fortezze Principali del Mondo. Le prime raccolte italiane di cartografia urbana e gli isolari del XVI secolo [Main cities and fortresses of the world. The first Italian atlases of cities and isles of the 16th century], 116-152

6 Metodi e strumenti del rilevamento urbano e territoriale nel Rinascimento [Methods and instruments for measuring cities and territories in the Renaissance], 153-164.

7 I più grandi planisferi in proiezione polare della prima età moderna (XVI-XVII secolo) [The largest world maps in polar projection of the early modern time

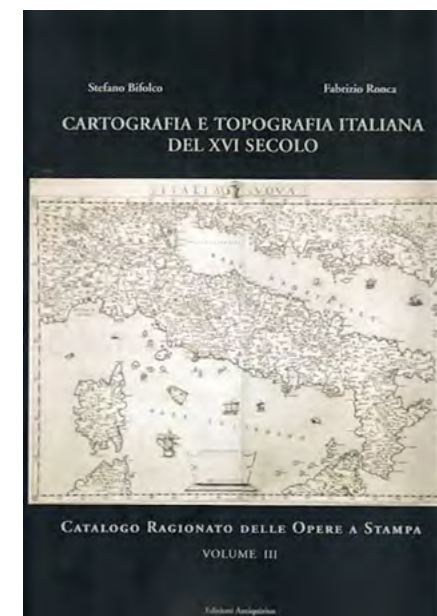
explains the complex history of printing, in particular print making, and its privileges in Venice and in Rome, both being the most important printing cities of Italy in the 16<sup>th</sup> century <sup>8</sup>.

David Woodward has without doubt delivered the most relevant contributions to the history of the Italian map market in the Renaissance, but the work which is most often cited in scholarly studies on Italian maps of the 16<sup>th</sup> century is the inventory by Tooley published in Imago Mundi in 1939.<sup>9</sup> This list of over 600 maps is far from complete and in large part based on information found in secondary literature. During his lifetime Tooley himself was continuously updating the inventory. This second, enlarged,

(16th-17th century.)), 165-184

8 Copyright nel Rinascimento : il privilegio [Copyright in the Renaissance: the privilege], 186-194

9 "Maps in Italian Atlases of the Sixteenth Century, Being a Comparative List of the Italian Maps issued by Lafreri, Forlani, Duchetti, Bertelli and Others, Found in Atlases", Imago Mundi 6 (1939), 12-47. For Woodward's publications, see the bibliography in W. Bracke (ed.), IATO Atlases and Lafreri, op. cit., 23.



The 3-volumes publication of 2018 by S. Bifulco and F. Ronca

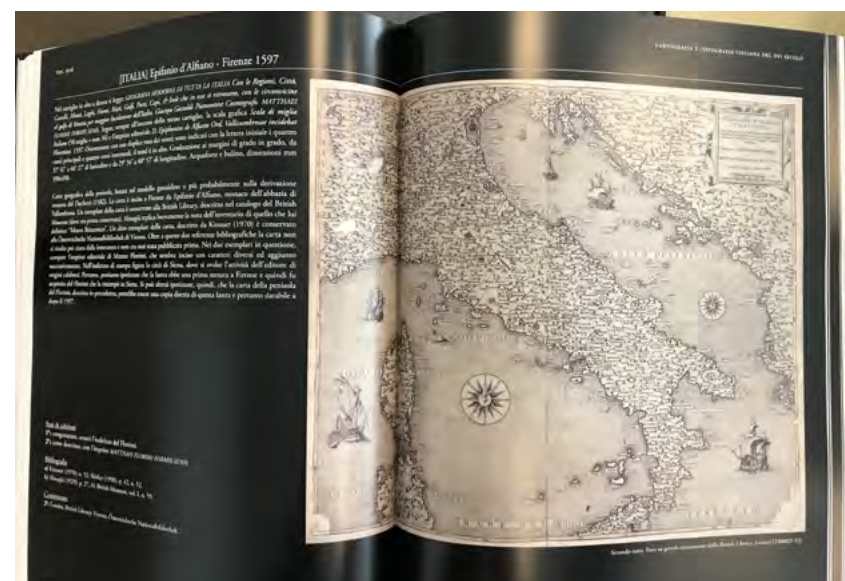
version was never published though and until recently was even considered to be lost. Somehow Stefano Bifulco was able to trace this version, study it and use it for his own catalogue. And so, the latter respects Tooley's ordering of the maps and starts with world maps, which are followed by maps of countries and regions, to finish with urban cartography, all assembled by continent and ordered alphabetically and chronologically. As Bifulco writes himself in the preface, his catalogue could be called '*The new Tooley*', and as such replace the old Tooley.

As already the numbers given in the first paragraph of this review indicate, the Catalogue is far more complete than the 1939 inventory. It is also much more coherent and precise. For every single item, the authors address the difficult question of what map is to be considered an edition and what maps are just different states of one and the same edition. The result of this questioning allows them to link maps with different imprints to a single edition and separate others that until now have been considered different states of the same edition. They also clarify relationships between various

editions and editors, comparing the results of their reading of secondary literature at hand to their own findings based on their rich census. In so doing they could, more than once, on the basis of material evidence and using existing inventories of various print shops, identify maps bearing no imprint and even speculate on editions and states of which no copy has been found so far. Lastly, the authors include some 17<sup>th</sup> century (and exceptionally even 18<sup>th</sup> century) publishers we do not find in Tooley.

As predictably, in the future, references will be no longer to Tooley but rather to Bifulco-Ronca, to help readers in their research for information on a specific map (and its different states) which in literature is until now referred to with Tooley's list number. I have drawn up a concordance between Tooley's number and Bifulco's; it can be found on [www.bimcc.org](http://www.bimcc.org).

In its careful reading of every single state of a map, in its particular attention for the extraordinary and the exceptional, in the small number of printed copies (only 350), the catalogue shows the interest of a map dealer writing for map collectors and devotees.



Re-edition by Matteo Florimi of Giacomo Castaldi's map of Italy engraved by Epifanio d'Alfiano in Florence 1597 (Volume III, Map 926).



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## Making Maps in History

This issue of Maps in History was coordinated and edited by Jean-Louis Renteux and Luis Robbles . Paul De Candt did the lay-out on the basis of a design by David Raes.

Contents have been checked by the Editorial Committee comprising Wulf Bodenstein, Nicola Boothby , Wouter Bracke, Lisette Danckaert, Francis Herbert, Pierre Parmentier and Luis Robles.

## Events , Exhibitions and Auctions Calendars

The calendar of events, exhibitions and auctions is no longer printed but is sent to you with *WhatsMap?* our electronic notice, with hyperlinks to the detailed information on our website.

If you have not received the first issues of *WhatsMap?*, make sure to send us your e-mail address; and do not hesitate to inform us of events and news you would like to share with other members.

## Advertising in Maps in History

Sponsors of the Brussels Map Circle get to run an advertisement (in full colour) in each of our publications: our magazine 'Maps in History', published three times a year (January, May and September) with occasional special issues, as well as in the "hand-out" distributed at our yearly International Conference (traditionally held at the Royal Library of Belgium). They also get a mention on our website ([www.bimcc.org](http://www.bimcc.org)).

The total fee is EUR 150 a year for an eighth of a page (63 mm high x 86 mm wide), EUR 300 for a quarter of a page, EUR 500 for half a page or EUR 900 for a full page; the back cover costs EUR 1000.

Occasional advertisement in only one issue of 'Maps in History' (e.g. for a Map Fair) is also possible, for EUR 120 (quarter of a page), EUR 200 (half page) or EUR 400 (one page).

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This book is no doubt of the outmost importance to all scholars interested in maps and their production, in the Italian print business in the Renaissance, the history of cartography, and the history of collecting maps and prints, then and now. In this regard and on a personal level, I regret that hardly any indication is given of the watermarks on the maps. This would have been a great help to my own research, continuing David Woodward's fundamental study on this topic, based on watermarks and offsets, in order to better understand the Italian map business of the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the production of the so-called IATO atlases.

The catalogue is definitely worth its price. As only 350 copies have been printed, I suppose a reprint or a new edition will soon be necessary. Now that the fundamentals have been laid down, many more maps will come to light, buried in some library or cherished in some private collection. If the authors were to opt for a new edition, I would like to suggest having a closer look at the transcriptions of the Latin texts found on the maps as they need some serious amending.



Southern hemisphere of the first state of Antonio Salamanca's World map, Rome 1553 ca (the box's back cover).



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# Lost Maps of the Caliphs, Drawing the World in Eleventh-Century Cairo

by Yossef Rapoport and Emilie Savage-Smith

— 349 pages with 25 full colour plates plus black and white illustrations, hard cover, 16 x 23.5 cm

— Published by Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, 2019

— ISBN 978 1 85124 491 1, GBP 37.50, EUR 57.45

*“The Book of Curiosities is not only one of the greatest achievements of medieval mapmaking. It is also a remarkable part of the story of Islamic civilization... It is a rediscovery of the sea as an integral part of a civilization that supposedly originated in the desert, of an outward-looking scientific enquiry that was built on the foundation of the classical Greek legacy, and the power of cosmographic and cartographic images in a culture that is too often reduced to texts. The Book of Curiosities opens an unexpected unmediated window to the medieval Islamic view of the world.”*

Thus concludes the main body of the **Lost Maps of the Caliphs**.

The newly discovered treatise known as the *Book of Curiosities*, was acquired by the Bodleian Library, Oxford, in 2002. The original had been drawn up in around 1020 – 1050 and this was a copy dating from 1200. Emilie Savage-Smith, who recently retired as Professor of the History of Islamic Science at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford, in her YouTube introduction describes the work as a sort of ‘Reader’s Digest’ – essential knowledge for every upwardly mobile Egyptian in 11<sup>th</sup> century Cairo. <sup>1</sup>

Lost Maps of the Caliphs is a follow-up to the duo’s 2013 ‘An Eleventh-Century Egyptian Guide to the Universe (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies)’ which deciphers and translates the text of

<sup>1</sup> [www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgUe5gUleF4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgUe5gUleF4)

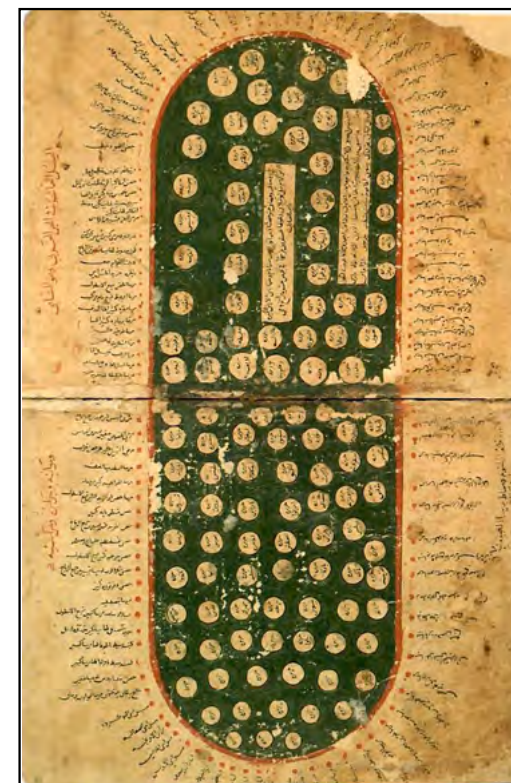
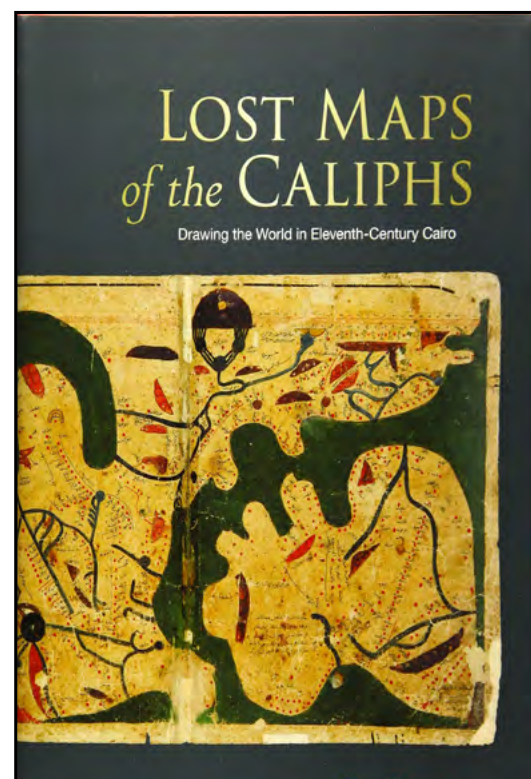
the Book of Curiosities, but does not analyse the treatise as a whole.

This book starts with the story of how the Book of Curiosities was discovered, and the huge efforts made to acquire it for the Bodleian Library so that it could be open for research by a wide audience, rather than being hidden away in a private collection.

The Book of Curiosities was put together in the eleventh century and Rapoport and Savage-Smith take us on a journey through ninth- to twelfth-century Cairo, explaining the sources used and influences the author may have come under. We read, among others, about ninth-century al-Khwarizmi and the Balkhi school – al-Istakhri, ibn Hawqal and al-Muqaddasi

— of the tenth century. The writers go back to 2nd-century CE Ptolemy’s ‘Geography’, and forward to the works of al-Idrisi, who was working in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. post the original of the treatise, compiling information for Roger II of Sicily.

From chapter two onwards the basis of the analysis is the Book of Curiosities, in much the same order as the treatise itself, although not at all in the same proportions. The ‘raised-up roof’ influences what happens on Earth – the ‘laid-down bed’. The book’s structure reflects the Ismaili-Shia analogies between the celestial and terrestrial worlds.



Map of the Mediterranean from the Book of Curiosities

The stars of the show are of course the maps, one of the key elements of the treatise being the move from text-based information to visual information accompanied by text. The visual impact of the world, the Mediterranean, particularly the Eastern Mediterranean, plus the routes to India and China, and the trading hubs of Mahdia, Sicily (Palermo) and Tinnis provide an excellent view of Fatimid power and ambition in the era.

The rectangular map of the world is different first of all because at the time most world maps were circular. Typically of most of the maps from the Islamic world, south is at the top. Unusually there are many cities (395) marked in an era where maps for the most part showed only regions. For cartographers, however the most exciting aspect of the map is the calibrated scale near the top of the map, as this is the earliest surviving example, as far as the authors know, in any cartographic tradition, of a world map showing such a scale bar.



Explanatory diagram



Map of Mahdia from the Book of Curiosities

The map of the Mediterranean shows a stylised oval green background – indicating salt water – filled with circles representing islands, and two rectangles – Sicily and Cyprus. All around the oval are labelled red dots for the ports, the distribution of the labels making it quite clear that the author and his sources were far more familiar with the eastern Mediterranean. We find the same stylisation in the map of the Indian Ocean, although here the clean oval is broken up with mountains and volcanoes breaching the line.

The three city maps are interesting. Tinnis, a trading city in the Nile Delta that has since disappeared, where the ‘map’ is a rectangular diagram showing the city walls and the port. Mahdia, founded by Caliph Abdallah al-Mahdi in 921 – is slightly more decorative, showing the palaces of the imams. Mahdia served as a model for several building projects in Palermo, which completed the Fatimid trading triangle at the time of writing. The map is in fact of Sicily as whole, but the port and palace complex of Palermo dominate.

These are just six of the fascinating maps and diagrams in the Book of Curiosities which form the basis of cartographic comparisons in 11<sup>th</sup>-century Egypt; there are many more.

The book is a great pleasure to read. The format is sturdy yet comfortable, and the system of notes/references/index allow the reader to simply read the book, or to delve as lightly or deeply as s/he wishes with ease. The appendix – A Technical Discourse on Star Lore and Astrology – which I have not yet tackled – underlines the philosophy of giving the reader a choice as to how far into the subject to go. The colour plates form a middle section, but black and white versions are given on appropriate pages and thus make the text easy to follow. All in all, an excellent introduction to cartographic thought in Fatimid Cairo, and for those who wish to take it further, a mine of references to continue reading.

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## Mediterranean Cartographic Stories: Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-century Masterpieces from the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation Collection

Editor: Panagiotis N. Doukellis

— 175 pages, hardcover, cloth, 17.5 x 24.5 cm

— Published by Athens, AdVenture SA, 2019

— ISBN Athens, AdVenture SA, 2019

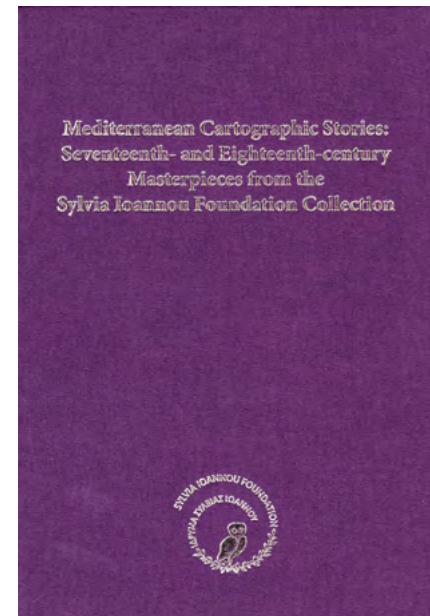
This book is a selection of revised papers from a conference held in 2016 at the University of Cyprus.

All selected papers focus on three manuscript cartographic works from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries acquired by the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation and here studied for the first time and reproduced in as much detail as allowed by the format of the book.

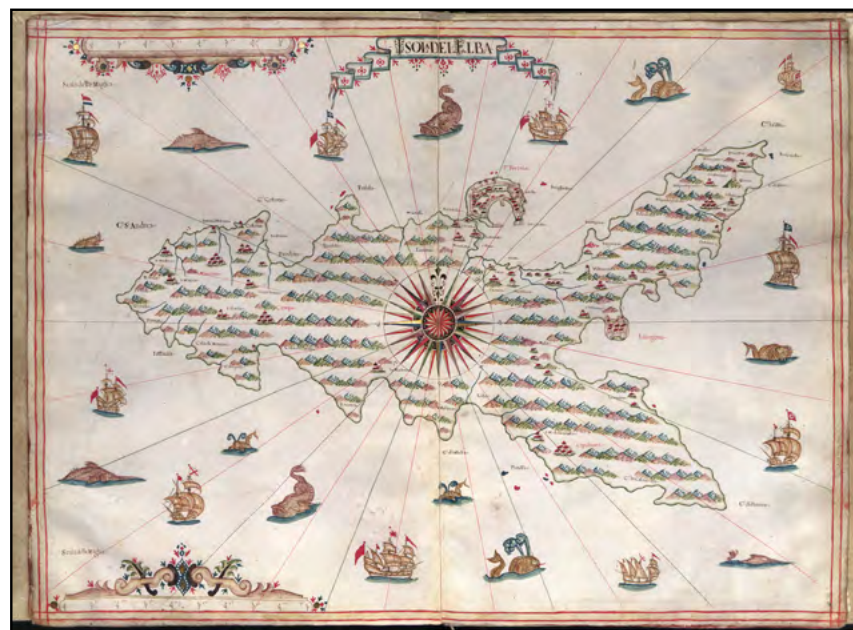
The first three essays are devoted to an atlas signed in 1635 by Giovanni [Jouan] Battista Cavallini in Livorno, the main port of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. This luxurious codex includes three portolan charts of the western, central and eastern Mediterranean, nine maps of individual islands of the Mediterranean and one world map. The heraldic emblem on the cover

reveals it was probably made for Grand Duke Ferdinando II.

Corradino Astengo outlines a biography of Cavallini, who seems to have been the successor of Joan Oliva, a mapmaker who settled in Livorno after working in Messina and Marseilles; and depicts the historical context of this atlas: Livorno's emergence as the main port of Tuscany, the foundation by the Grand Dukes of the Order of Santo Stefano to fight Ottoman navies and pirates and Tuscany's short-lived colonial ambitions. Astengo also reviews other maps by Cavallini and delves into one particular issue, the alignment of the east-west axis of the Mediterranean, which varies between the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation atlas and other maps by Cavallini.



Emmanuelle Vagnon and Sean Roberts sign two somewhat overlapping essays on the same atlas. Both researchers focus mainly on the pictorial items drawn by Cavallini so as to provide insights into the author's intentions and the contemporary perception of the work. Vagnon points out that, while the flags of cities located in Christian lands are diverse, those of Muslim-ruled territories are homogeneous, making it easy to identify the declared enemy of the Knights of Santo Stefano. Another political message lies in the choice of islands to be mapped, with Cyprus, Rhodes, Malta and finally Elbe paralleling the westward retreat of crusader knights from the Holy Land to the strongholds of Malta, for the Knights of Saint John, and Elbe for those of Santo Stefano. Some of the numerous animals drawn throughout the atlas puzzle Vagnon due to their strange placing (e.g. a lion in Provence, a bear in Africa) but Roberts clarifies that all the animals in Cavallini's atlas are similar to those drawn earlier by Joan Oliva and were simply copied from a 'model book' to decorate empty regions, without much thought about their actual habitats.



Map of the island of Elbe in the 1635 atlas by Cavallini. 55 x 76.5 cm. Sylvia Ioannou Foundation, B.2063.



Manuscript Ottoman chart of the Mediterranean. Unsigned and undated. 112 x 256 cm. Sylvia Ioannou Foundation, M.0313.

For Roberts, the ships and fortifications depicted on the map 'would have spurred the imagination of stay-at-home crusaders such as [Grand Duke] Ferdinand' while Vagnon builds on two gross errors made by Cavallini regarding the geography of the Holy Land to suggest that the Tuscan rulers did not really have in mind that territory as target for a crusade. Vagnon concludes that this atlas was not conceived as particularly accurate or up-to-date but as 'a luxurious reminder of the geography and history of maritime powers in the Mediterranean area'.

The second part of the book consists of two papers on an anonymous and undated Ottoman nautical chart of the Mediterranean that has the peculiarity of including lines of latitude and longitude. Agamemnon Tselikas provides a valuable detailed description of the map that includes a comprehensive list of toponyms.<sup>1</sup> For her part, Pinar Emiralioglu places the chart in the context of Ottoman cartography, including an interesting comparison with two adaptations of the Dutch Atlas minor and Atlas maior by, respectively, Kitab Çelebi and Al Dimashki. Tselikas tentatively dates the map to the last quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, based on the paper

<sup>1</sup> A very useful view of all the toponyms overlaid on a digital image of the map is available at the site of the Foundation: [bit.ly/2WBtjPG](http://bit.ly/2WBtjPG)

watermark, whereas Emiralioglu proposes a date "sometimes after 1652" because another Ottoman chart from that year does not present lines of latitude and longitude — a rather unconvincing argument, from my humble point of view. Emiralioglu rightly points out that this "is the first portolan chart that marks the lines of longitude and latitude", but neither of the two papers analyses these lines in detail or tries to explain their construction or their purpose.

Some readers may remember that this unusual Ottoman chart was mentioned in the MapHist listserv in 2009, when a similar map was sold at Christie's for GBP 1.07 million.<sup>2</sup> The Christie's chart, which is not mentioned in this book, has not surfaced again, so we are very fortunate that the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation has fostered the study of its own map.

The final essay of the book is a study by Veronica della Dora of a manuscript copy of the map of Cyprus included in Alexander Drummond's Travels of 1754, which was the most authoritative Western description of that island until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> The copy is as large

<sup>2</sup> The conversation can be consulted at <https://www.mail-archive.com/maphist@geo.uu.nl/msg00191.html> and <https://www.mail-archive.com/maphist@geo.uu.nl/msg00218.html>

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Drummond, Travels through Different Cities of

as the original and mounted on linen for protection and easy folding. Della Dora points out that, while Drummond published his map for armchair travellers, this copy 'becomes a mobile object to be carried along in the field'. The author also postulates the author was French, as the work is a 'selective summary of Drummond's Cyprus' that focuses on the Frankish past of the island and on Roman Catholic churches, with limited interest in classical Cyprus and zero interest in its Orthodox or Muslim sites. The identity of the putative French traveller remains nevertheless elusive.

Overall, this book is a valuable contribution to the study of manuscript maps from an age when printed maps had become the dominant form of cartography. The approaches taken by the authors of the six essays are varied, and often refreshing, and if questions have been left open it should be celebrated as an opportunity for follow-up research.

Germany, Italy, Greece and Several Parts of Asia as Far as the Euphrates in a Series of Letters Containing an Account of What Is Most Remarkable in Their Present State, as Well as in Their Monuments of Antiquity, London: W. Strahan, 1754.

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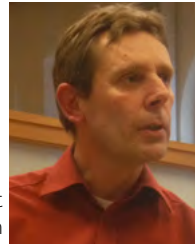
# Ethnographic mapping in the light of the Peace Treaties

An example from 100 years ago:

Juozas Gabrys – Carte Ethnographique de L'Europe

by Rick Smit

Rick Smit  
indewijzeuil@gmail.com



This year marks 100 years since most of the Peace Treaties were signed at the Peace Conferences in Versailles. On 11 November 1918 the Allied Powers and the defeated Central Powers agreed upon a ceasefire which brought an end to fighting on the Western Front. During the following year the Allied Powers presented a series of peace treaties to the Central Powers which aimed to define the conditions for future peace in Europe. The many paragraphs in the treaties included terms on armament reductions, territorial cessions and financial reparations. Woodrow Wilson, the then President of the United States, proclaimed the *Fourteen Points* to Congress on 8 January 1918 which included among others the necessity to provide conciliation for the nationalities involved. Conciliation was to be based on the principle of national self-determination, although this wording was nowhere to be found in Wilson's *Fourteen Points*<sup>1</sup>. To achieve this, Germany would cede territories while the Habsburg Empire would be dissolved and replaced by a series of new states to house the different nationalities that had up to then been residents of the empire.

It was thought that the award of particular territories could be decided by scientific experts, whose knowledge and impartiality would assure a fair

<sup>1</sup> Steven Seegel, *Mapping Europe's Borderlands*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 2012, p. 269

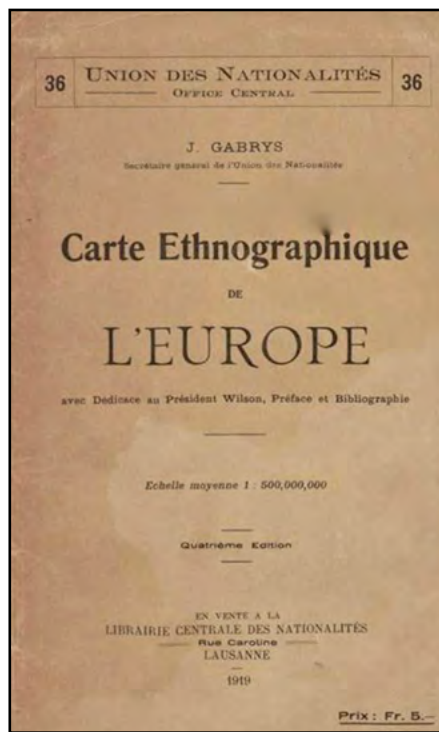


Fig. 1 Cover of the map

result<sup>2</sup>. However, developments went differently: many nations, seeing the opportunity to declare independence and to create their own state, provided arguments to claim territory that should belong to their own state. Territorial claims put forward by different nationalities were often in conflict with each other as many areas were home to different nationalities, the definition of a nation was unclear and many ethnographic enclaves situated in Central and Eastern

<sup>2</sup> Jason Hansen, *Mapping the Germans*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 155

Europe made the connection to the home country complicated if not impossible. As most nationalities had had time to prepare during the war – Czechoslovakia had already declared independence in October 1918 whereas the demand for Poland's independence had already been recognized by the United States, England and France in 1917—, many made their claims visible by creating ethnographic maps depicting the areas whose inhabitants claimed to belong to their nationality, and thus to belong to their new state. These maps, frequently found among incomplete, subjective or falsified statistics, were presented by the different nationalities to the Supreme Council and were usually controversial. Misinterpretation of statistics, uncertainty about how to define nationality and conflicting views on history would finally not solve the nationality issue in Europe.

Local and regional maps claiming areas that would belong to a given nationality had already been published in previous years: Eugeniusz Romer, a Polish geographer and cartographer, had started to prepare the Great Statistical and Geographical Atlas of Poland and had it published in Vienna in 1916. This atlas included the first maps depicting areas in e.g. Silesia, the Poznań / Posen area and Ukraine as being part of future Poland<sup>3</sup>. These

<sup>3</sup> Eugeniusz Romer, *Geograficzny i statystyczny atlas Polski*, Warsaw/Krakow, Freytag u. Berndt, 1916

maps became relevant for eventually defining the western borders of this new state. Bulgaria issued a complete atlas in 1917 to support their claims to vast areas in today's North Macedonia<sup>4</sup>. A few ethnographic maps for Europe were published with the purpose of giving a general and uncontroversial overview, as was the objective of the map discussed in this article. Although the small scale 1:500 000 000 is an excuse not to depict detail, we will see evidence that this map is also controversial.

Juozas Gabrys (1880–1951) was a Russian citizen and Lithuanian nationalist, who died in Switzerland. He published his *Carte Ethnographique de L'Europe* in 1918 (Fig. 1 and 2). He used clear colours to ensure that the map was attractive to look at. The map, measuring 87 x 107 cm, underwent at least four editions during 1918 and 1919 and was published by the *Union des Nationalités* located in Lausanne, Switzerland. Gabrys constructed the map using mapping materials from the cartography publisher *Kümmerly & Frey* in Berne. The map still showed pre-Versailles borders drawn on the map as dotted lines. Gabrys dedicated the map to President Woodrow Wilson.

In 1911 the *Union des Nationalités* organisation was founded by Juozas Gabrys and a French journalist, Jean Pellissier. In 1914 its headquarters moved from Paris to Lausanne in order to be able to hold national group meetings on neutral territory. Their objective was to ventilate national minority grievances and to secure the rights of minorities all over Europe by united action<sup>5</sup>. The map was published to support this objective.

<sup>4</sup> *Die Bulgaren in ihrem historischen, ethnographischen und politischen Grenzen*, William Greve, Berlin, 1917

<sup>5</sup> Henry Robert Wilkinson, *Maps and Politics: a review of the Ethnographic Cartography of Macedonia*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1951, pp. 203–205

It was published with a preface (in French) and a 13-page bibliography listing maps and references used as a basis for Gabrys' map; no doubt he was knowledgeable and well introduced to the topic of ethnography in Europe. The preface gave insight to the methodology of mapping, used to portray the dispersion of nationalities in Europe.

Since the first efforts at ethnographic mapping, methods regarding how to measure and how to define nationality have been subject to discussion. Ethnographic mapping in the 1840s should be seen as approximations rather than absolute statements about distribution of nationalities<sup>6</sup>. Things changed when in the wake of the national revolutions in 1848 questions on nationality as a social characteristic feature (next to e.g. age, sex, religion, birth and death rates) started to play an important role all over Europe. At that time the Habsburgs were leading in statistical cartography and as the Austrian Empire was home to many nationalities, demand for ethnographic mapping of the Balkans was high. During the 1850s, state institutions started to play a more relevant role and statistical bureaux expanded. Professionalism and bureaucratisation increased while cartographic methods were standardised.

How can you count nationalities? How can you define nationality? Popular references to defining national belonging were language, place of birth or citizenship. However should one's mother tongue prevail over one's daily language? And how should bilingualism be handled? Place of birth and citizenship as references assume a correlation to participation in national institutions. Other common parameters for counting nationalities refer to traditions, moral virtues, religion and national consent. Although distribution of language

<sup>6</sup> Jason Hansen, *Mapping the Germans*, Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 64

finally became the most relevant characteristic when defining belonging to a nationality, any reference remains subject to suggestion. In all ethnographic mapping, and in mapping to support claims to territory in 1918 in particular, mapping was controversial while suggestive mapping based on false claims was frequent.

In the preface to the map, Juozas Gabrys claims to present a neutral map based on research and available sources. The bibliography of 13 pages listed many reference books, maps and atlases but it is evident that some relevant and recent maps were not included. He indeed mentioned that the map did not claim to be free of errors and shortcomings: they may especially occur in controversial areas. Examples mentioned below will describe some of them.

The methodology applied for constructing this map is, as stated in the preface, based on elements assigned to specific ethnographic categories. Nationalities are grouped in many sub-nationalities and are all designated by area colouring. Ethnographic enclaves (e.g. Germans were a majority in urban areas in Eastern Europe whereas other nationalities were in the surrounding rural areas) are drawn as coloured enclaves. Larger areas with mixed nationality were usually more difficult to depict in detail and most controversial as this made for a suggestive approach. Silesia, the region later called Polish Corridor, border areas between Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece, and Alsace/Lorraine are typical examples of mixed nationality areas. Gabrys' map used hatching lines to depict a mixture of nationalities in these areas. This method of representation lacks precision and is in fact a relative and rather poor methodology as ethnographic categories are not defined, making the representation subjective.



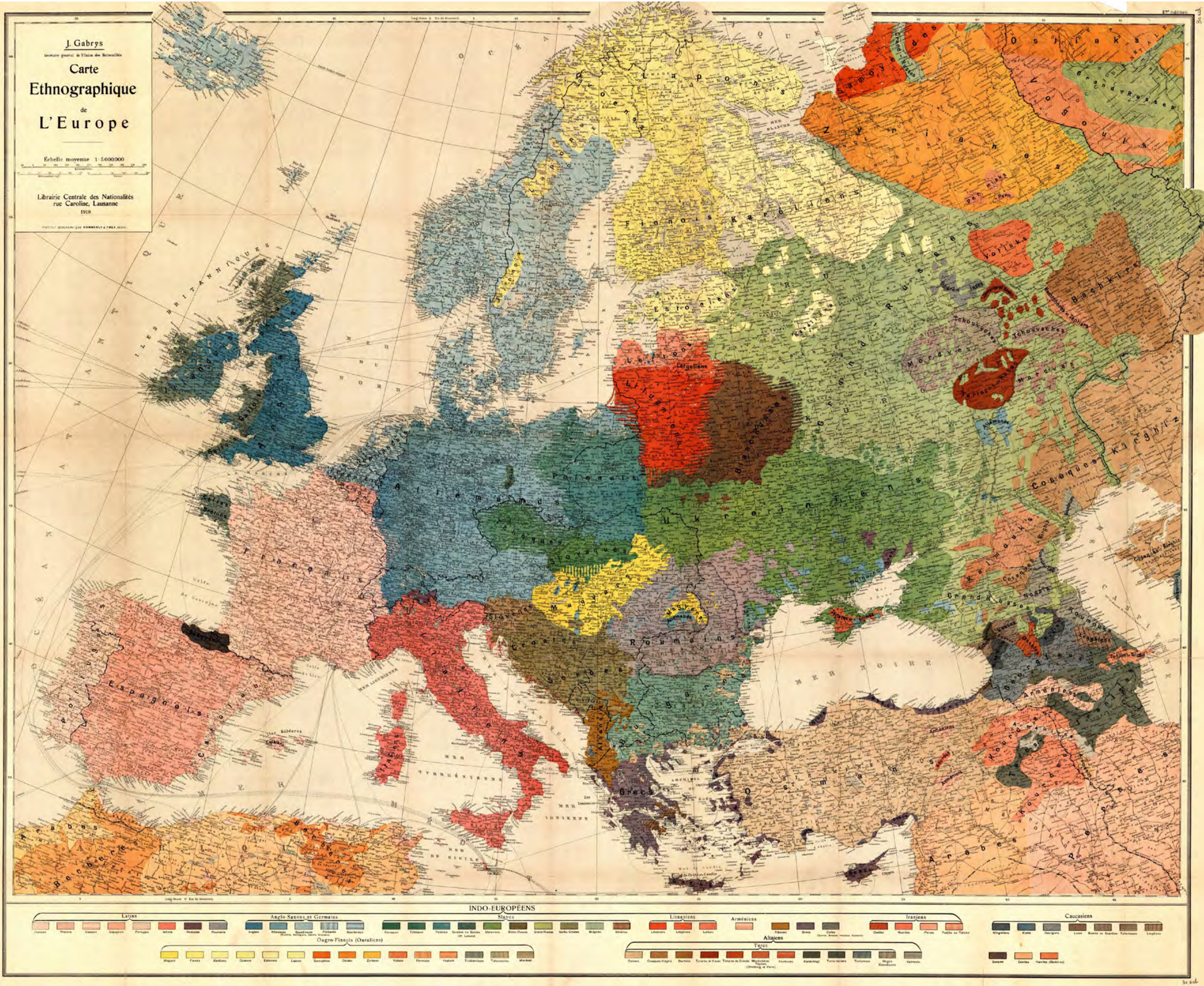


Fig. 2 Juozas Gabrys' Carte Ethnographique de L'Europe



Nevertheless, it was a common method at the time. To be more precise, several other maps had small charts as insets showing the distribution of nationalities by percentage with the purpose of providing more precise statistics.

Jews were not regarded as a nationality and were not depicted as such on the map. They were scattered and considered to be a religious entity. Some other ethnographic maps published in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century depict Jewish dispersion by using black dots.

Gabrys' map has several shortcomings:

1. Methodology; elements defining the nationalities are not detailed and specified, nor is it stated how elements are rated and measured;
2. Areas with mixed nationalities are represented by hatching as a relative distribution without further precision. More frequent enclave colouring could have contributed to more precision;
3. Several nationalities are represented in a suggestive way and are inaccurate

The following examples illustrate this:

#### Lithuanians

The map depicts a large ethnographic space for Lithuania, reaching further south than Grodno and far further east than Vilnius. Figure 3 shows the wide expansion of Lithuanians. If you compare Gabrys' mapping with the distribution of Lithuanians shown on Dietrich Schäfer's map *Länder- und Völkerkarte Europas*<sup>7</sup> published by Dietrich Reimer's Verlag in Berlin in 1918 (Fig. 4). Lithuanians designated in white colour), one may see a much smaller Lithuanian territory. German enclaves in Lithuania depicted on

<sup>7</sup> Dietrich Schäfer, *Länder- und Völkerkarte Europas*, Berlin, Dietrich - Reimer, June 1918



Fig. 3 Distributions of Lithuanians according to Juozas Gabrys (above)

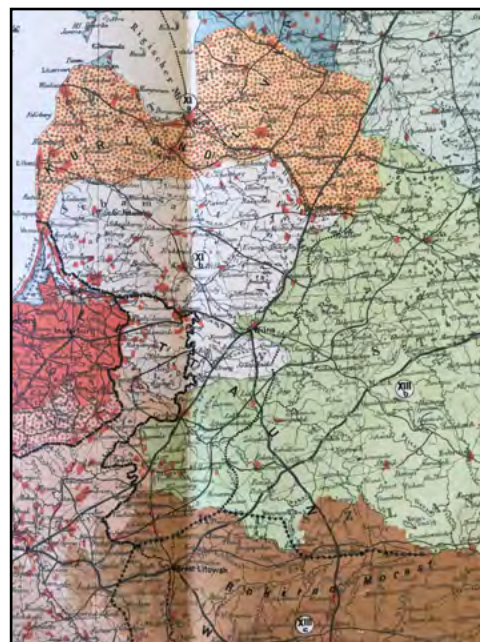


Fig. 4 Distributions of Lithuanians according to Dietrich Schäfer

Schäfer's map (in brown colour) cannot be found back on Gabrys' map.

Besides, former Polish-Lithuanian Livonia is also defined as Lithuanian by allocating it to *Letgalians* and *Letts* (Fig. 3). All other maps show Letts as a separate nationality. Here, you can see the relationship between the large Lithuanian area depicted on the map and the person of Juozas Gabrys as a politician who pleaded for a free and independent Lithuania.

#### The Polish Corridor

The Polish Corridor is the area that was allocated to Poland after the Great War. The area is situated between German Pomerania and the Free City of Danzig and gave the new state of Poland access to the sea. The area was claimed by both Germany (Germans represented the majority in the cities and major villages) and Poland (Poles mainly inhabiting the rural areas). In absolute numbers, Germans exceeded Poles whereas the Poles dominated the rural areas



Fig. 5 Detail from Dietrich Schäfer's map, showing German interests

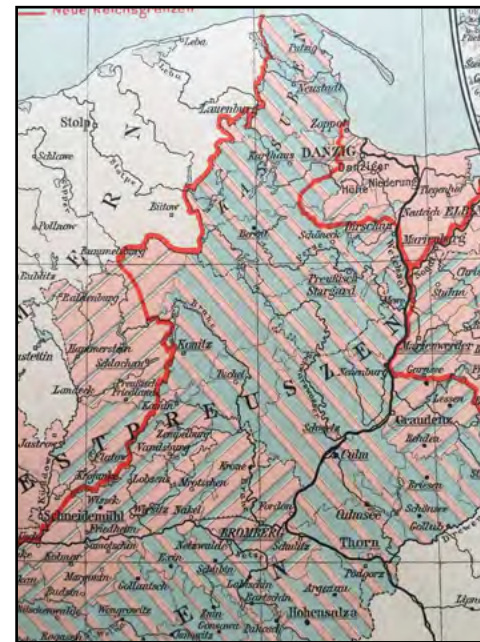


Fig. 7 Detail from Andree's language map, 1921 (Andree's Handatlas)

(80% of the surface). Kaschubes, a relatively small group that had always been living in the northern part of the Corridor were usually ignored or designated with the colour of Poles.

This gave reason to a wide variety of methods depicting the distribution of nationalities. Most common methods were :

- Area colouring with coloured enclaves; areas may be different in size depending on the interest of the

publisher (Fig. 5);

- Hatching lines depicting mixed nationality (Fig. 6 and 7); they do not show details;
- Depicting areas with small charts added, presenting shares of nationalities expressed as a percentage;
- Absolute representation: coloured dots and squares, true representation of the precise geographical distribution of the different languages (Fig. 8) supporting German claims to 'the corridor';



Fig. 6 Detail from Gabrys's map, showing hatching lines



Fig. 8 Detail from Heydrich Heyde's map, 1919, showing absolute representation

- Depicting Kaschubes as a separate nationality or connecting them to the Polish nationality; only after the war, Germans mentioned this group separately in its efforts to convince the others that the Polish Corridor is not Polish and to make a claim for revision.

Besides, using a large or small scale and/or soft or dominant colours were tools to impact and to influence the map user.



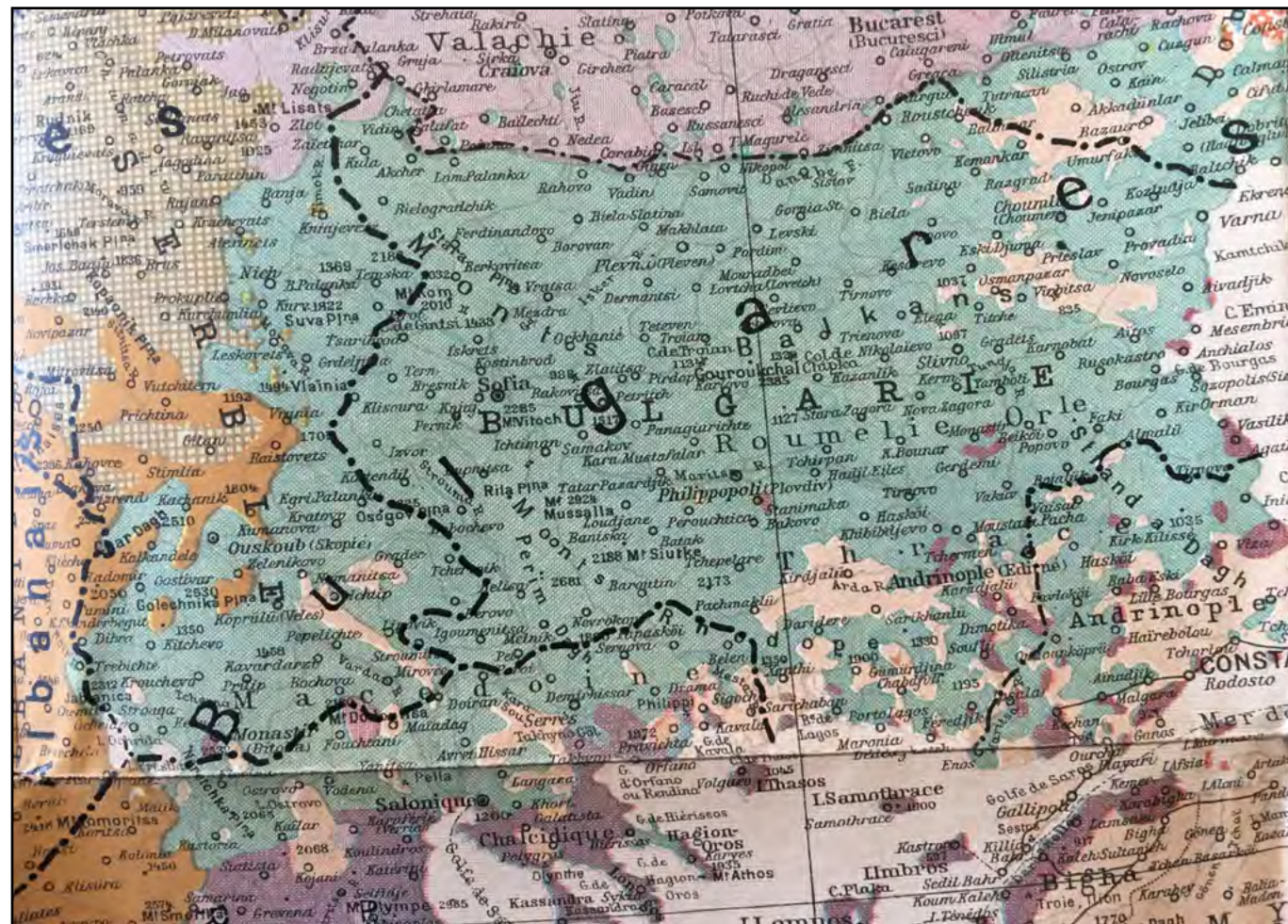


Fig. 9 Depiction of Bulgarians by Gabrys, detrimental to Macedo-Slaves and Greece

## Bulgarians

Gabrys saw the Slavs of Macedonia as Bulgarians and because of this, this map can be regarded as pro-Bulgarian. The map was based on Bulgarian sources. Serbian claims in northern Macedonia were ignored and all Greek claims were likewise disregarded. He does not mention Macedo-Slavs as a nationality and the map's bibliography did not even have any reference to Jovan Cvijic's map of 1913<sup>8</sup> which by then was considered as a main reference for ethnographic mapping of the Balkans.

Many further details on Gabrys' map provide evidence that the map is controversial, making this map unreliable as a source for Europe's ethnography. As the methodology is

not defined in detail and given the examples of suggestive mapping, we may conclude that the map is a subjective depiction of nationalities in Europe. Having said this, it is relevant to know that most maps published at the time had shortcomings or served (new) states' interests.

In 1919 most of the treaties were signed, new states were drawn on the map and a new era started in Europe. The Great War was ended, but many borders were still disputed, would still be revised or would still have to be decided upon.

In the end Juozas Gabrys played a role in the formation of a Lithuanian state but his career ended in failure<sup>9</sup> and he was excluded from the Lithuanian political stage.

<sup>8</sup> Jovan Cvijic, *Ethnographische Karte der Balkanhalbinsel*, Gotha, Justus Perthes, 1913, map 22, Petermann's Geographische Mitteilungen

<sup>9</sup> Alfred Erich Senn, *The activity of Juozas Gabrys for Lithuania's Independence, 1914 - 1920*, Lithuanus, volume 23, 1977

# The Brussels Map Circle as a case study

## Interview with Diane Staelens

Master of Arts KUL & UvA, currently working at My Sherpa (Brussels) as Educational Advisor

by Jean-Christophe Staelens

*When you completed your MA degree in History at KU Leuven in 2016, you decided to specialise in an MA in Public History at the Universiteit van Amsterdam. Can you briefly describe what Public History is about?*

I have always been very interested in the way people interact with history and how it impacts their daily lives. The MA in Public History at the Universiteit van Amsterdam is a more practical programme developed to form academic historians who bring history to a larger, mostly non-academic, public.

This programme made me reflect critically on how we remember and commemorate the past in our contemporary society. When hearing the word remembrance, many people will immediately think of museums, organised commemorations, what students learn from their teachers in schools, academic historians, (fiction and non-fiction) books or movies. But what we remember or forget and, most of all, the way people in our current society interact with history, is not only dictated by the institutions, events and/or people I just mentioned. This phenomenon has always retained my interest, which is why I decided to conduct my thesis research into it.

*Your masters' thesis at UvA intrigues our members as our Circle is being mentioned. What was the objective of your thesis?*

<sup>1</sup> Are we all Historians?! What is the role of amateurs, professionals and the historical society in our contemporary historical landscape: a case-study based on the Brussels Map Circle

I was first of all very curious to see how history was presented once you leave the beaten paths of how (non-academic) people interact with the past in general and their past in particular. I felt as if things were missing, but I could not really put my finger on it. After many discussions with peers and reading articles about the subject, it became clear to me that some important 'history-makers' were left out of the equation: the 'amateur historian', the collector and the member of the historical society or circle seemed, in my eyes, to have an extremely important place in the shaping of what we remember (and forget) of the past. Yet, not much had been written about it. For my thesis research, I wanted to take a small step towards changing this.

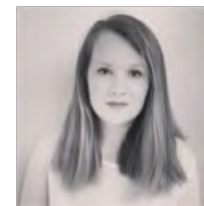
*How did you start your research?*

I decided to take the collector and/or amateur-historian (often members of historical societies or circles) as a starting point. Those people, if I can call them 'the growing mass of amateur-historians', seemed to belong to a certain group of 'history-lovers' who were sometimes looked down upon by professional historians. It was something I had difficulty understanding, for it seemed that a society or circle that had certain parts of its population who felt the need to provide 'historians', was a healthy one. Their members wanted not only to reflect critically about the past, but also help shape society for the future. In this process, amateur historians such as collectors and members of historical societies or circles not only

help us remember the past, but show societies how to build a true heritage for the future and pass on important knowledge to next generations.

*But how did you arrive at the Brussels Map Circle?*

To find the exact place the previously mentioned historical societies or circles had in a contemporary historical landscape, I needed to look closer to the people active on those societies on a daily basis, the people who made history their hobby, their passion. I came in contact with the members of the Brussels Map Circle because I already knew some of them and saw it as a perfect opportunity to conduct my research. The members I knew were clearly dedicated to historical cartography and the quality of their activities indicated important interactions with the academic world. The newsletter Maps in History but also the activities of the Circle such as their conferences included various contributions of academic researchers from institutions such as universities, libraries and archives. After careful consideration, I decided to highlight the Brussels Map Circle as a case-study and draw conclusions that would help create a bigger picture of the place and importance of amateur-historians and historical societies in a contemporary historical landscape. The fact that the Brussels Map Circle has a clear international character was also a very important trigger. It allowed me to draw broader conclusions that applied on a wider scale than a local (Brussels) or national (Belgium) level.





### ***What was your next step after you decided to base your thesis case study on the Brussels Map Circle?***

First of all, I needed an overview of the different people engaged in the Circle. In order to do so, I sent out a survey to all the members (159 from 22 different countries) asking questions about age, gender, how they got involved in (historical) cartography, if they were professionally active in (historical) cartography, how and why they became members of the Circle etc.

Using the data collected from the surveys, I conducted 15 in-depth interviews with both members of the Circle and professionals in the world of the history of cartography. It was important to talk to both amateurs and professionals as I was looking for any distinctions that could be made between 'professionals' and 'amateurs'. One of my main focus points was to investigate whether or not the place 'amateurs' have in the historical landscape does depend on the place 'professionals' are willing to give to those 'amateurs' in a contemporary landscape.

To be able to put the information I received both from the survey and the interviews in the right context, I also analysed the newsletters of the Circle since the Circle was founded in 1998.

### ***What did you find out?***

My most important research result is that I managed to show how the boundaries between amateurs and professionals are, in fact, not as black and white as ought to be thought. The more I immersed myself in the subject and interviewed people, the more I realised there was and is a problem with the words 'amateur' and 'professional'. After critical reflection, the conclusion was simple: these concepts are not accurate any more. Strictly speaking, a professional historian has studied history, has a masters or a doctorate degree and is paid to do historical research. An amateur does not necessarily have any of those (in the field of history) and has to work very hard to 'prove' him/herself. But amateurs contribute a lot and study subjects professionals do not

necessarily have the time or available budget to highlight. Getting a degree is not the only way to acquire authority on specific historical subjects. I talked to amateurs who knew more than professionals about historical cartography, and who published and talked about the past with at least as much insight and expertise as a professional. And I talked to professionals who are top-notch in their field of expertise, of course. But allow me to quote *De Vreugden van Houssaye* from the historians Jo Tollenbeek and Tom Verschaffel: "Every research that studies the past with no other intention than to know and understand it, is historical research. Why divide people with the same goals and intentions into categories, when they could simply work together without competition and learn from each other as individuals with diverse knowledge?" The Brussels Map Circle is, on a small scale and a dedicated historical subject, the most perfect example possible.

### ***All right, but what is the place of members of historical societies or circles?***

Once I established that 'amateur' and 'professional' were not the only categories a historian should be put in, it was possible to raise a more in-depth question: What is the actual place of those 'new historians' – especially members of the historical society or circle – in a contemporary historical landscape? A lot of academic research into the ways the 'public' interacts with the past has been done these last decades, but the historical society or circle seems to be a forgotten child. During my research I realised that the historical society or circle is by definition a grey zone: not fully professional, but also not fully amateur, which is complicated for a researcher to investigate without deviating too much from the known paths. I hope my thesis will offer a much needed stepping-stone to further research into the place of those new historians in our contemporary historical lesson. There are also other reasons why the historical society or circle is

a forgotten child in historiography. One of the most important ones is that historical societies or circles are often perceived as a bit "closed" and "mysterious". Especially the more so-called 'elitist' circles, such as the Brussels Map Circle, are frequently exposed to stereotypes. Many people get the feeling they do not belong in such circles, because those historical societies or circles are only meant for "wealthy, highly educated, old, white men". Totally denying that such stereotypes exist would be wrong, but it is very important to look further than them. Historical societies should not be reduced to such stereotypes. It would mean that their importance in society would always be underrated. And these societies and circles are indeed very important: like no other and through their existence and study, they help shape what we – as a society – remember and forget. It is therefore necessary to salvage the historical society or circle from its dusty image and to show its very important place in the contemporary historical landscape.

### ***Anything you would like to add to conclude this interview?***

Yes. I want to specifically mention the following people for their support and their substantial contribution to my thesis. Their insights were of great help to me: Wulf Bodenstein, Nicola Boothby, Caroline De Candt, Karen De Coene, Jan De Graeve, Henri Godts, Hans Kok, Eric Leenders, Eddy Masschalk, Jean-Louis Renteux, Soetkin Vervust, Peter van der Krogt, Bram Vannieuwenhuyze and of course the promoter of my thesis, Arjan Nobel, lecturer at the Universiteit van Amsterdam.

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# Brussels Map Circle excursion

## A visit to the HEK collection – a unique opportunity.

### A report by Floria Benavides

On Saturday 18 May 2019, on a sunny spring day, a group of some twenty members and friends of our Circle visited the HEK collection – one of the most – if not the most – comprehensive and splendid private map collections in the Netherlands.

We started the afternoon with a convivial and delicious lunch at a very nice restaurant and headed straight afterwards to our visit.

We were first invited to wander through the house and discover at leisure, individually or in groups, the numerous magnificent treasures displayed in every room, and even in the garden – thanks to the nice weather.

The living room was mainly dedicated to atlases, globes, travelogues and books containing early maps.

I was personally fascinated by the following items :

- Atlas Sanson, published in Utrecht in 1683
- Hugo Grotius, *De Mari Libero*, a miniature edition of the famous treatise on the right of free access to the seas for all
- the extraordinary, re-strike large celestial Coronelli globe gores, Ex Louvre original copperplates, 1688
- the terrestrial (1825) and celestial (1797) 21 inch diameter globes by Carey.

The second room housed cartographic curiosities such as:

- a very large copperplate of the east coast of Sumatra 1924
- a copperplate 1922, Batavia roadstead with German updates till 1941
- an amazing city street view of Rotterdam, bombed away in 1940

Framed on the walls were fascinating maps and on the shelves an impressive reference library. Especially beautiful framed maps:

- the map of the world with Halley Magnetic variation state 6, Joshua Ottens, ca.1745
- the chart of the Meuse exit to the North Sea by Harbour Master Quack
- a Japanese map of Yokohama Harbour 1859



Hans Kok explains the Lootsman's atlas of 1680, 'Le grand & nouveau Miroir ou Flambeau de la Mer', to the President and her husband.



The terrestrial (1825) and celestial (1797) 21 inch diameter globes by Cary decorate the living-room.

Our parcours continued through other rooms where maps had been displayed on tables, beds, etc. We could even peep into the collector's study where a number of map drawer chests house his collection.

To the delight of all of us, navigation instruments such as an octant, a sextant, a ship's compass and a spare compass rose were displayed on a separate section on the patio.

Last but not least, when most of us thought we had seen it all, the collector invited us to a personalised presentation of his favourite items (about 100 of them!) which we could admire, sitting around a table under a tent, set up for the occasion in the lovely garden; he gave us a short but precise explanatory introduction to each map, proving that he had studied them in detail and could relate them precisely to their historical context. Maps and charts were divided into categories, such as 'historical maps', 'manuscript maps' and 'topographical maps'. Among these magnificent





Members examine various atlases in the living room, surrounded by globes, framed maps and various other curiosities

pieces, which were classified in different categories, I particularly noted the following maps :

1. Historical Maps

- Anonymous. 1592 Vellum map of the Western Netherlands
- Brittenburg, Roman Fort, Ortelius 1566, the only known copy

2. Manuscript Maps

Certified facsimile (1859) of the Duke's Map of Manhattan of 1664.

3. Printed maps

World

- World map Visscher 1652
- World map Joan Blaeu, Atlas Maior 1662

Africa

- Africa, Deutecom 1598
- Booklet Visscher 1649, Africa section in rare reduced size

North America

- Hondius Virginia 1606
- Eastern USA, New Amsterdam Novi Belgii with Manhattan inset, Nic.Visscher 1674

South America

De Jode South American continent 1593

Europe

Ortelius United Kingdom, Enlarged version. 1592



Map of the Netherlands from 1608 by Mathias Quad with many manuscript notes



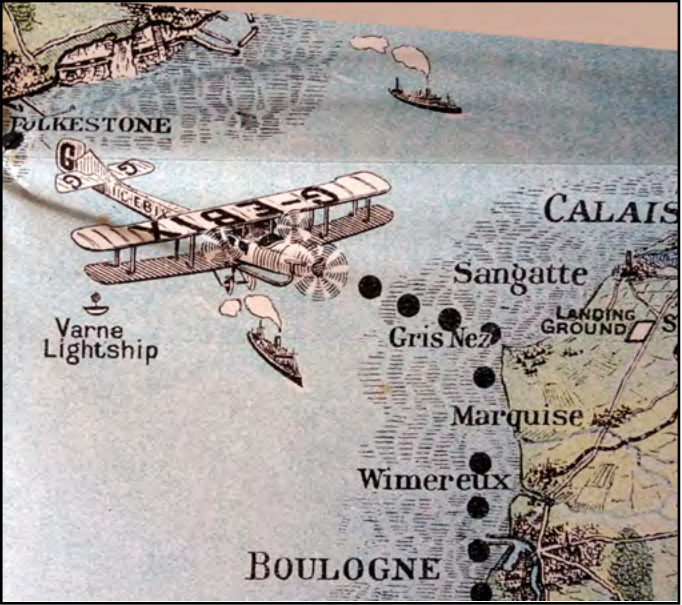
Participants discuss a rare atlas, the 1669 Goos atlas (French edition) of the Mediterranean Sea, called 'Straetsboeck' (after Gibraltar Straits and beyond)



Participants gathered under a special tent follow the explanations of the map selection



Hans Kok provides lively details on the maps presented



Detail of an Imperial Airways map of the 1930's



Stock of maps that are getting categorized and described

More than 100 loose maps had been prepared for viewing but, regrettably, we did not have enough time to look at the later sections. The Japanese maps, the cartographical oddities, the aviation maps and quite a number of sea charts had to be left out.

The day ended late that evening, with a perfect selection of wines and beverages, coffee and delicious pastries, plus dynamic and enthusiastic conversation about the monumental and extraordinary collection we had just visited.

The collection's focus was initially on the route from Amsterdam to the Dutch East Indies and beyond - which by the way provides a lot of room for manoeuvre for a collector. We saw that the focus later changed to incorporate more maps referring to Dutch national history in other regions of the world.



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## Mapping Africa

### Final Programme

In the morning (starting with coffee at 10.00), four short presentations will give a broad introduction to the mapping of this fascinating continent.

**10:30 – 10:45 Absurd Mistakes and Blunders...** Prof. Dr. Imre Demhardt

Although the ancient Mediterranean cultures knew the northern edge of Africa and the Portuguese uncovered its coastal outlines in the fifteenth century, the geography and history of the hinterlands remained rumoured about but seriously explored only since the late eighteenth century. After sketching the physical geography and introducing to post-discovery history of the African landscape, the presentation will focus on the colonial partition and drawing of boundary lines in the nineteenth century, the pivotal period to the modern map of the continent.



**10:45 – 11:00 A Short Overview of Printed Maps of Africa from 1505 to 1800** Prof. Em. Elri Liebenberg

Ever since the Portuguese rounded the Cape of Good Hope and reached India in 1498 the map of Africa has undergone various changes. The first map of the continent which represented the shape of Africa reasonably correctly was the Cantino Planisphere of 1502. This presentation will give a short overview of printed maps of Africa from 1501 to 1800 by referring to three of the six key characteristics Richard Betz mentions in his seminal book entitled *The Mapping of Africa* (2007):

- the depiction of the shape of the continent
- Information on the hydrography (the lakes and river systems)
- the depiction of mountain ranges

Following Betz, these characteristics will be used to identify specific landmark maps which served as basic models for numerous maps of Africa by other and later cartographers well into the seventeenth century and beyond.



**11:00 – 11:15 Questions and answers and short break**

**11:15 – 11:45 Sisyphus in the Desert: The Strange Story of the Unfinished Map Series of German South West Africa, 1892-1918** Prof. Dr. Imre Demhardt

It was only in the second half of the nineteenth century that serious commercial and missionary interest for South West Africa took off. These explorations resulted in route and basic overview maps of a rugged and for the most only sparsely populated region. The need for more detailed mapping arose with the 'Scramble for Africa', when German merchant Adolf Lüderitz in 1883 bought Angra Pequena, one of only two natural harbours on that coast. Along with subsequent acquisitions this nucleus was declared the Protectorate of German South West Africa, the first and soon most important German colony in Africa. After establishing the boundaries and succeeding in pacifying the indigenous communities, colonial penetration and valorisation was only possible based on topographical knowledge. The presentation will introduce highlights from the most active period in cartographic coverage of southwestern Africa, but also try to explain why the famed Preußische Landesaufnahme [Prussian Survey] failed to conclude any but one (large scale) series – and why this torso still was unsurpassed until the 1970s...



Map of South Africa 1841 from the Stieler Atlas.



Map of South Africa (1885) showing the contested area where diamonds were discovered in 1971-72.

**11:45 – 12:15 The Cartography of the South African Diamond Fields, 1871 to 1876** Prof. Em. Elri Liebenberg

It has long been known that South Africa is a leading producer of high-quality gem diamonds and that diamonds have played an important role in the history of the country.

This presentation will deal with the cartography involved in the struggle for the possession of the diamond fields and how a "doctored" map was used by the British Government to expropriate the diamond fields from the legitimate ownership of the Orange Free State in 1873 and to annex the area then called Griqualand West as British territory. Attention will also be given to the territorial disputes which continued and the eventual "settlement" with the Free State of 1876.

**12:30 – 14:00 Lunch** at Bistro TEMBO restaurant on the first floor of the new glass building appended to the museum, with a view over the park of Tervuren; the price will be EUR 52 (to be paid on site) for a three course African menu with drinks<sup>1</sup>. This is optional and should be decided when reserving for the Conference.

**14:30 – 17:00 Exploring Africa with Ancient Maps**

In the afternoon, a selection of maps from the collection of the Museum will be presented by Wulf Bodenstein (volunteer curator of this collection, author of *Exploring Africa with Ancient Maps*, 2017 – also available in French and Dutch translations – and founder of this Circle); the selection will include many of the maps referred to during the morning lectures.

This viewing of the maps will take place in alternating groups, to ensure good visibility of the maps to all.

While waiting their turn to see the maps, participants are free to visit the newly refurbished museum at their leisure (they will be given a free entrance ticket to the museum for the day). Besides the two famous mural maps of Belgian Congo, they can discover some of its 27 collections covering various facets of Central Africa, from pre-history until current day life: ethnography, history, art, religion and traditions, landscape and biodiversity, mineralogy, music, etc.

**REGISTER NOW ON OUR WEBSITE: WWW.BIMCC.ORG**

### VENUE

Royal Museum for Central Africa (now known as Africa Museum), Leuvensesteenweg 13, 3080 Tervuren, Belgium. The venue is located in the close vicinity of Brussels and is accessible by public transport (tram 44) or by car (see the access plan and parking lot location on [https://www.africamuseum.be/en/visit/plan\\_visit/access/parking](https://www.africamuseum.be/en/visit/plan_visit/access/parking)).

<sup>1</sup> Tarte Tatin with baked vegetables, touch of balsamico vinegar and mesclun salad;  
- Chicken « Moambe » ( Central Africa gastronomic recipe) with saka-saka (cassava leaves) and peanuts;  
- Duo of speculoos and chocolate mousse with crunchy middle part and roasted hazelnuts;  
- Drinks : Unlimited water, 2 glasses of wine or pils, a cup of coffee or tea.

Caroline De Candt  
president@bimcc.org





# News from Germany

## 14<sup>th</sup> International Atlas Days break new ground

Jürgen Espenhorst, founder of the Atlas-Tage in 2006 and well-known author of Petermann's Planet, the standard work on German atlases from 1800 to 1950, this time called his flock of map and atlas enthusiasts back to his hometown **Schwerte**. Over thirty participants mainly from Germany, but also from the US, from Belgium, France, the Netherlands, and the UK enjoyed a three-day meeting at the Protestant Academy in Villigst near Schwerte, from 26 to 28 April 2019.

In the past, the emphasis had been on aspects of atlas production of essentially German atlases and their derivatives, from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This year, Jürgen focused the discussions on the changes in cartographic concepts that became apparent as a result of the dramatic historical events one hundred years ago, the end of WW I and the Treaty of Versailles.

In general, he pointed out, one may observe numerous conceptual differences between German atlases and those produced in France, Great Britain, Italy, the Soviet Union and the USA. However, in the period from 1919 to 1939, this divergence became more pronounced. With the exception of the USA, a general trend emerged in the four other countries to manifest their superiority in the cultural and political sphere vis-à-vis the defeated Central Powers. Large-volume world atlases were published, not only as items of national prestige, but specifically to outclass the German Andree and Stieler handatlases, considered to be superior to their own



Participants at the 14<sup>th</sup> International Atlas Days in Schwerte]]

up to that time. In contrast, atlases in the USA continued to be issued as a pure consumer product, without any apparent political connotation. In Germany, on the other hand, the scene was less favourable to atlas developments. The military debacle was followed by an institutional and commercial collapse, and in a situation of inflation and social instability only the Stieler Handatlas managed to survive. A number of German cartographers and engravers of other publishing firms had to emigrate, many of them moving to Italy.

Five working groups formed by volunteers among the participants set to the task of examining atlases from the five countries targeted. Fortunately, a pool of more than 60 atlases brought along by collectors provided the required source material for this first evaluation. Reports by the groups are currently being edited by Jürgen, in German.

In the morning of the last day, the traditional atlas and book fair took place. Many of the atlases, books and maps changed hands at reasonable prices, dealers not being admitted to the event.

Next year's Atlas Days will be held on the theme of Mapping Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. For the first time they will take place outside of Germany, in Strasbourg, from 26 to 29 March, 2020. Francis Fischer, the French member of the Group, has agreed to organise the meeting. He is willing to provide local information and assist with accommodation arrangements (francis.fischer90@sfr.fr). More about the Atlas Days from Jürgen Espenhorst at pan@schwerte.de. It should be remembered that the working language is German, although occasional drifts into English are accepted. Interestingly, the number of foreigners practising their German is growing, a trend wholeheartedly encouraged by Jürgen.

# ... and from London

## IMCoS/Helen Wallis award 2019

Each year the London-based International Map Collectors' Society (IMCoS) offers an award to an individual who, in the opinion of the Selection Committee, has been responsible for cartographic contributions of great merit and wide interest to map collectors worldwide. The presentation is usually made at the Society's annual dinner in London, preceded by cocktails and the Malcolm Young Lecture.

For this year's event, on 7 June, Mario Cams, Assistant Professor at the University of Macau's Department of History, had been invited. The title of his lecture was '*Novus Atlas Sinensis (1655): The Story Behind Europe's First Atlas of East Asia*'. He gave us a fascinating account of his research into the Eurasian connections during the reign of the Ming-Qing dynasties, 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

After Dinner, Valerie Newby, Vice Chairman of IMCoS, delivered the citation for the winner of the 2019 IMCoS/Helen Wallis award who is, you've guessed it, **Jürgen Espenhorst**. She drew a lively picture of Jürgen's initially hesitating first steps into cartography, a topic soon to develop into a lifelong passion. Focussing all his efforts on the study of German handatlases and their European re-editions from the early 19<sup>th</sup> to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he became the leading expert in this domain. He has published numerous articles and books that have become standard references. The creation of the Atlas Days offered the opportunity of sharing his encyclopedic knowledge with a growing number of other



IMCoS President Peter Barber (right) presents the IMCoS/Helen Wallis award to Jürgen Espenhorst, with Vice Chairman Valerie Newby (at left)]

collectors. With time his interests widened and have now spread, for example, to pre-GPS navigation (the Auto-Mapic device) and early aeronautical maps.

**Peter Barber**, IMCoS President, then handed him the silver plate engraved with his name added to 36 previous award winners, and Hans Kok, Chairman of IMCoS, presented Jürgen with the award certificate. In his reply, Jürgen expressed his sincere thanks for the international recognition of his work in this prestigious form which, he said, was an encouragement to continue his detective-style investigations of the remoter corners of cartography and related disciplines.

Congratulations, Jürgen!

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# 28<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the History of Cartography. Amsterdam, 14-19 July 2019

## OVERVIEW

For those seriously interested in old maps, the International Conference on the History of Cartography (ICHC) has become the unmissable event. Held every two years at a different location, this year it took place – for the second time (the first was in 1989) – in Amsterdam, close to home for many members of our Circle, who were therefore numerous in attendance (I counted 12 of us).

The numbers of this week-long conference look quite impressive: 281 names on the handout ‘List of

participants’, 105 presentations plus three longer keynote speeches at the opening and closing ceremonies, seven workshops and a morning-long poster session. The full programme can be found on the conference website; an abstract of each paper and poster presentation forms the major part of the 204-page A4-format illustrated ‘Programme’; a summary ‘pocket-portable’ version as an A5 booklet of 18 pages was also provided.

In addition to this, no fewer than six visits to map exhibitions and map-rich institutions were scheduled

throughout the week, all of them included with the registration fee. Each of these exhibitions would definitely deserve a separate report, so here I will only list the six locations: Allard Pierson Museum of the University of Amsterdam; Royal Palace on the Dam; Royal Library and National Archives (both in The Hague); Amsterdam City Archives and Maritime Museum of Amsterdam.

As ‘icing on the cake’, a map fair was held all day on Wednesday, which gathered prestigious dealers of old maps and many keen collectors.

## NOTEWORTHY TALKS

To accommodate the more than 100 accepted papers, the organisers opted this year for a blend of plenary and parallel sessions. In the latter, three speakers delivered their talks simultaneously in separate rooms. I heard good and bad opinions on this arrangement, with some frustration at having to choose between two interesting talks taking place simultaneously and at the disturbance



Wulf Bodenstein, Jean-Louis Renteux and Andrew Cookson during a coffee break in the gorgeous Marbled Hall of the KIT.



You could actually walk on maps in Amsterdam when you see this floor in the main hall of the Royal Palace!



This circular mosaic of 624 cm in diameter depicts the western terrestrial hemisphere.

These maps are claimed to be ‘the largest maps in the world’, but there is a monument in Mongolia (the *King's Monument* or *Monument for Mongol states* near Kharkhorin) with maps of 16 metres high and 12 metres wide! (see MiH41 p. 15).

generated by people going in and out of rooms in the middle of talks, whereas others valued the larger number of speakers and broader diversity of topics that this format allowed. Being split up in smaller groups also made the question-and-answer sessions more agile and spontaneous.

In any case, given that parallel sessions made it physically impossible to attend all talks, I polled the members and friends of the Circle to help me select the most noteworthy talks to sum them up for the readers of MiH.

By definition, keynotes are among the most important talks of any conference. In the opening ceremony, Peter Barber gave a historical perspective of the ICHC conferences classifying papers into ‘traditional’, ‘internal’ (i.e. in the line of David Woodward’s work) and ‘socio-cultural / contextual’ (i.e. following John Brian Harley’s approaches). He concluded that, while the internal and contextual approaches naturally gained predominance since the 1980s, “the

traditional approach remains alive and vigorous, and the field is all the better for it.”

Djoeke van Netten then took us to the Amsterdam of the Dutch Golden Age on a quest to understand how maps were read at the time. One common pattern that emerges is that, irrespective of where maps were found – be it taverns, battlefields or aboard ships – they were always read in groups, much like books were normally read aloud collectively too.

The third keynote was given at the closing ceremony by Günter Schilder, who reviewed Dutch maritime cartography including a set of charts printed on vellum about which he has just published a celebrated book. Professor Schilder shared memories of his early years of research, in the times before the digital revolution, and warned the younger generations that, even if the internet now greatly facilitates the researcher’s work, many of the key maps he has discovered in libraries worldwide are not yet

digitised or available online.

Among the ‘regular’ talks, there was unanimity to highlight the presentations that Mario Cams and Lin Hong gave separately on the same topic: Martino Martini’s influential *Atlas of China*, published in 1655. Using two very different and complementary approaches, the two historians convincingly showed that Martini had been much less scientific than was thought so far, even fabricating an alleged measurement of longitude. Martini turns out to have relied mostly on Chinese sources for his geographical information and seems to have decided to publish an atlas only after leaving China and falling prisoner to the Dutch in Batavia. Mario Cams was awarded the biennial *Imago Mundi* Prize at the closing ceremony.

Chet Van Duzer, in a session chaired by our Circle’s member Francis Herbert, presented a novel study of the use of hand stamps on manuscript portolan charts made by the Maggiolo family in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Monarchs, cities,



animals and even the entire Atlas mountain range seem to have been drawn in outline by this technique, and later coloured by hand. The use of hand stamps had so far only been mentioned in a footnote thirty years ago, and numerous questions were raised about how and why a mapmaker would use such a method.

Another startling revelation was made by Thomas Horst, who announced that the maps of the Royal Bavarian Army Library, generally assumed to have been destroyed in 1945, have in fact mostly survived. Some of them are now in the Bavarian State Library and have only recently been catalogued. The majority, after a long journey, ended up in the library of a provincial Bavarian museum whose curator refuses to devote efforts to even a basic inventory of the map collection. Excitement was high during the questions and answers, as this collection includes four manuscript early 16<sup>th</sup>-century charts that are essential to the history of Iberian maritime discoveries. It was suggested that diplomatic action from Spain and Portugal could hopefully nudge the Bavarian government to allocate funds to cataloguing these long-lost maps.

Andrew Cookson, also a member of the Circle, gave a stimulating talk on the early printed maps of France, presenting the wide diversity of representations that coexisted in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and proposing sources for several of them, namely those in different editions of Ptolemy's Geography and Oronce Fine's map of 1525. We were left with the question of what a country map really was at the time, when accuracy and utility seem not to have been a priority.

One plenary session was devoted to novel technologies for the study of old maps. The Gough Map and the Albi Map were taken as examples by, respectively, Catherine Delano-Smith

and Emmanuelle Vagnon, for the use of hyperspectral imaging (which was explained in detail by David Messenger, a physicist), microscopy and non-invasive or minimally-invasive chemical analyses. My overall impression was that historians seem to still be learning how to apply these new techniques, which so far raise more questions than they answer.

Other well-received talks were those by Éloi Ficquet, who presented the ETHIOMAP project's digital indexing and systematic study of early maps of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa, and by Junia Furtado, who contrasted two maps of the same conflict – 'The War of Salvador city (1624-25)' – made by the opposing sides (Dutch and Portuguese).

## IMPRESSIONS

We were unanimously impressed by the impeccable job done by the organisation team, while they remained friendly and helpful. They also deserve applause for the choice of venues for the conference (the Royal Institute for Tropics, or KIT) and the exhibitions, an excellent conference hand-out and programme, clear communication and even some amusing touches such as the harp and mezzo-soprano duo's intermezzi during the opening ceremony.

Our honorary president Wulf Bodenstein observes that one of the best points of ICHC is the opportunity to make and renew contacts in a convivial atmosphere that permits the exchange of personal and professional news and the discussion, appreciation and critique of the presentations offered.

Workshops allowed attendees to participate more actively than in regular talks and led to some thought-provoking exchanges. However, their scheduling conflicted with the map fair and the poster session,



Cartographic outfits were very fashionable at the conference ...

which included some really valuable contributions that would have deserved our undivided attention.

The only unambiguously negative point was the passing away, a fortnight before the conference, of Jean-Baptiste Piggin, who was scheduled to speak about the Tabula Peutingeriana.

One point for improvement was the diversity in the choice of session chairs, that were overwhelmingly male and mostly from northwest Europe and the US. Stay tuned for more interviews with female historians of cartography in upcoming issues of MiH.

To conclude, thanks again to the organising committee for having set such a high bar for the 29<sup>th</sup> ICHC, which will take place in Bucharest in 2021.



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# The Brussels Map Circle

## AIMS AND FUNCTIONS

The Circle was created, as the Brussels International Map Collectors' Circle (BIMCC), in 1998 by Wulf Bodenstein.

Now known as the Brussels Map Circle, it is a non-profit making association under Belgian law (asbl/vzw 0464 423 627).

Its aims are to:

1. Provide an informal and convivial forum for all those with a specialist interest in maps, atlases, town views and books with maps, be they collectors, academics, antiquarians, or simply interested in the subject
2. Organise lectures on various aspects of historical cartography, on regions of cartographical interest, on documentation, paper conservation and related subjects
3. Organise visits to exhibitions, and to libraries and institutions holding important map and atlas collections.

In order to achieve these aims, the Circle organises the following annual events:

- A MAP-AFTERNOON in March or April, bringing together all those interested in maps and atlases for an informal chat about an item from their collection – an ideal opportunity to get to know the Circle.
- An EXCURSION to a map collection or exhibition.
- An INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE on a specific major topic in December.

The Brussels Map Circle also publishes *Maps in History* (formerly known as *BIMCC Newsletter*), three times a year and a monthly electronic news bulletin 'WhatsMap?'. It also maintains a website.

Information on events and exhibitions to be placed on the calendar of our website and announced in WhatsMap? should be sent to [webmaster@bimcc.org](mailto:webmaster@bimcc.org)

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## BECOMING (AND STAYING) A MEMBER

Members receive three issues of our magazine 'Maps in History' per annum and have free admission to most of the Circle's events.

Non-members pay full rates.  
Annual membership: EUR 40.00,  
Students and Juniors under 25:  
EUR 15.00.

To become (and stay!) a member, please pay the membership dues EXCLUSIVELY by bank transfer (no cheques please) to our bank account: IBAN BE52 0682 4754 2209 BIC: GKCCBEBB and notify the Membership Secretary ([treasurer@bimcc.org](mailto:treasurer@bimcc.org)) indicating your name and address.

## MAPS IN HISTORY

The Brussels Map Circle currently publishes three issues per year. It is distributed, not only to members of the Circle, but also to key institutions (universities, libraries) and to personalities active in the field of the history of cartography, located in 16 different countries. Please submit articles and contributions to the editor (e-mail: [editor@bimcc.org](mailto:editor@bimcc.org)) by the following deadlines:

- 15 March for the May edition.
- 15 July for the September edition.
- 15 Nov. for the January edition.

Items presented for publication are submitted to the approval of the Editorial Committee. Signed articles and reviews reflect solely the opinions of the author.





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