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67

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#### Cover :

Leen Van Hulst of the Brussels Chalcography printing  
Hendrik Goltzius' intaglio portrait of Christophe Plan-  
tin on a press of the 1930s, 'automated' in the 1950s

## Intro

Dear Map Friends,

In May 2004 I took over the job of 'editor', and this is  
the 48<sup>th</sup> editorial I'm writing for the BIMCC Newsletter  
or for Maps in History! And it probably is the last one.

In issue No 50, I told 'the BIMCC Newsletter Story',  
recalling its evolution, over ten years, from a simple  
newsletter assembled by hand in a local photocopy  
shop to a professionally looking colour magazine with  
high quality historical contributions. I also indicated  
that I was 'eagerly looking for someone to take over  
the editor's job (from initial contacts with potential  
authors to the delivery to the print shop)'. After some  
thoughts, Paul De Candt volunteered to help me: for  
the last five years he has done the magazine layout  
(using professional and complex software) and handled  
the relations with the print shop, while I've continued  
to do the overall coordination and, in particular,  
manage the proof-reading process with the Editorial  
Committee. Now, Luis Robles (who was taking an  
active part in the proof-reading) has bravely accepted  
to take over that part of the process, leaving me free to  
retire!!

Luis is taking over at a very particular time, when the  
Covid-19 pandemic is prohibiting all social events. Our  
AGM and MAPAF have thus been cancelled, as well  
as all cartographic events. Reports on these should  
have represented a significant proportion of this issue  
of Maps in History. Nevertheless, you will find in its  
pages no less than six Looks At Books, a few news items  
and a very erudite study by Wouter Bracke and his  
colleague at KBR, Maarten Bassens, on map fragments  
re-discovered in the KBR chalcography. In addition, to  
close the loop, I have added as a centre-fold Map of the  
Season a map of the county of Hainaut, just as I did in  
2004!

Cartographically yours,

Jean-Louis Renteux  
Vice-President & ex Editor  
jl.renteux@gmail.com





# Quand les artistes dessinaient les cartes. Vues et figures de l'espace français. Moyen Âge et Renaissance

[When artists drew maps

Views and figures of French space. Middle Ages and Renaissance]

by Ed. Juliette Dumasi-Rabineau, Nadine Gastaldi and Camille Serchuk

— Paris, Archives nationales - Le Passage, 2019

— 240 pages, colour ill., hard cover, 24.7 × 29.7 cm

— ISBN 978-2-86000-380-3 and 978-2-84742-427-0. EUR 25.00

The Archives nationales organized a remarkable exhibition of maps representing French cities and countryside from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Fortunately, it resulted in a catalogue of great beauty and scientific value.

A hundred very varied maps called 'figures', mainly manuscript, on parchment or sometimes on paper, representing towns, villages and territories of limited dimensions, were selected from French libraries and archives. They were drawn by some famous painters, such as Jean Cousin, Nicolas Dipre, Bernard Palissy or even Leonardo da Vinci. They are sometimes spectacular by their size, from 25 cm to more than five metres long, but also by their appearance: carefully drawn, beautifully coloured, often annotated, naïve and sometimes clumsy, but also picturesque.

At the request of wealthy customers, their authors draw them empirically, by directly observing the ground, often from a high point like a church tower or a mound. Then they go out on the field and complete their work, so that the spectator has the impression of having the site represented under his very eyes. We do not have to look



here for maps drawn up to orientate us or to give the distances between two places or to take any census. Artists use various processes to depict places: in plan, in profile, in folding perspective, in perspective from a higher viewpoint, in overview, in bird's-eye view, in elevation or even in 360° panoramic view, even by mixing different methods. These documents correspond actually to a type of maps representing spaces of small extent, without a precise method of depiction or projection and usually without scale, orientation or even title. It is therefore no question of documents

drawn up by surveyors, engineers or other professional mapmakers, who produce maps exact in proportion and in scale, often of large territories. However, the authors point out that, especially since the rediscovery of Ptolemy, this latter type of printed map is gradually appearing with its codes (scale, orientation, mathematical measurements, perspectives, a section that cites reference books). Nevertheless the printed maps coexist with the handwritten 'views' and 'figures', of which the purposes are totally different.



Fig. 1. River Aa between Wizernes and Saint-Omer: detail (1459)

These are essentially practical. They are drawn up to solve conflicts between individuals, between lay lords and ecclesiastics, between rural and urban communities, or facing princely or royal agents; the reasons abound. They also specify the line of borders, an important problem when territories are enclosed in foreign territory. They are used to analyse fortifications to detect weaknesses or to repair them, or more generally to prepare development or repair works. They sometimes aim to describe or praise the beauty and opulence of a city, like Paris or Rouen, or to show a power by presenting its possessions in the form of coats-of-arms. They are used to commemorate important events, such as the stages of a battle, eventually to claim victory and make an impression. All these reasons imply a concern for accuracy and veracity, or on the contrary for distortion, or even for overshadowing. Maps intended to settle conflicts were generally accordées: validated by the different parties, often via a dated and signed text accompanying them, then carefully stored in the archives. We can therefore understand their great dispersion throughout France and the hope of rediscovering many more.

The large-scale views of cities and landscapes are a mine of information

on French space, but also on daily life, art and mentality history. They offer exceptional lighting on ancient landscapes: urban areas with houses, streets, monuments; the countryside with villages, churches, wells, gibbets, windmills, but also isolated farms, surrounding fields, pastures, ponds, rivers with watermills and bridges, and finally marshes, groves and forests, hills and mountains.

Among the maps to point out, let us note the course of the Aa, whose unusual dimensions are explained by the subject (33 by 333 cm). It was drawn in 1459 to solve a conflict between the city of Saint-Omer and the Cistercian abbey of Clairmarais. The river is depicted meticulously (up to drawing the dead boy, cause of the conflict, at the foot of the watermill in the

foreground!), according to a folding perspective: it is visible from a close and moderately elevated position, as a rider or a man on a small promontory would see. Other documents included in the catalogue are equally remarkable. For example, the oldest local map of France discovered to date: a view of Albi around 1312; a very large map of the Vie river in Vendée, over five metres long; a woodcut plan of Paris from 1533; a magnificent perspective view of Carcassonne from 1462; a superb bird's-eye view of the Château of Verneuil.

Objects of art and geography, the figurative maps are therefore made by eye, from life, identically, using various already indicated techniques. The results are sometimes surprising: some objects are seen from the side or upside down, buildings are enlarged, such as churches and castles! Only at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century did this 'eye mapmaking' yield its place to 'measurement mapmaking.'



Fig. 2. Perspective view of Carcassonne (1462)



Ironically, some sections of current cartography bring us to a certain extent to the “figures” of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance: maps in GPS satellite navigators or those in Google Maps, Street View and Earth apps make us think of bird’s-eye views on which appears what the operator decides to put there, depending in particular on the financial income. Similarly, city tourist maps show remarkable places and buildings in elevation, on the network of streets.

Here is a magnificent work, produced by specialists, highlighting an important forgotten episode in mapmaking history: the lively rendering of urban and rural landscapes. They are maps indeed, providing a graphic depiction of spatial relationships between places, objects, phenomena. But they are local before national, useful and aesthetic rather than scientific, momentary rather than planned. In addition, the hundred maps reproduced in colour, often accompanied by highlighting of remarkable details, are beautiful precious objects that we contemplate with pleasure. Many of them have never been exhibited or published. These ‘figures’ are artists’ work indeed and are worth being admired as such, in addition to their invaluable contribution to the landscape and mapmaking history from 1300 to 1600. The catalogue allows them to be properly appreciated, via a location map, glossary, list of authors, extensive bibliography and index of persons involved in the conception or production of maps.



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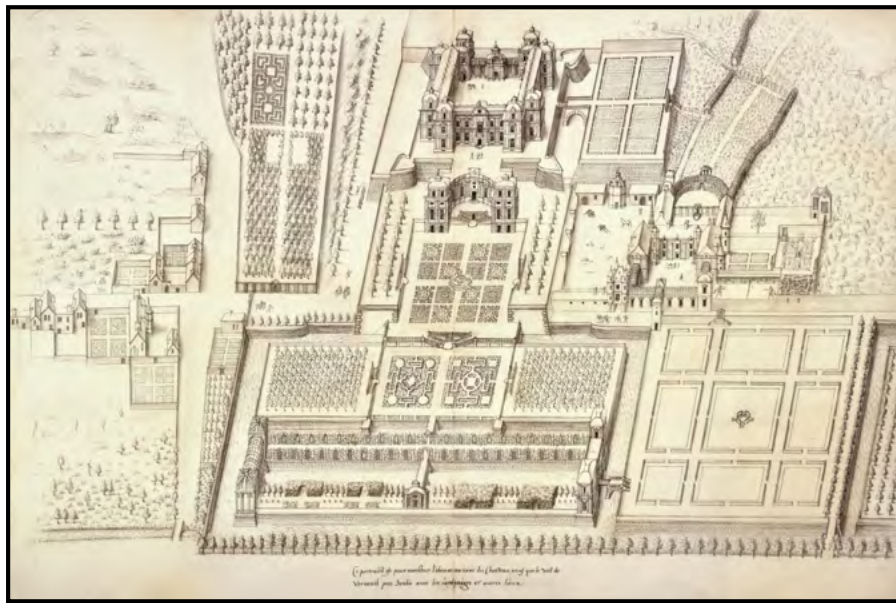
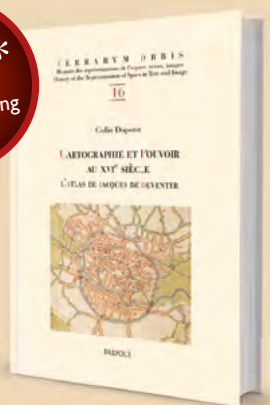


Fig. 3. Bird's-eye view Château of Verneuil (1570)

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# Cartographie et Pouvoir au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. L'Atlas de Jacques de Deventer

[Cartography and Power in the 16th century. Jacques de Deventer's Atlas]

by Colin Dupont

— Turnhout, Brepols, 2019

— Series « Terrarum Orbis », 16

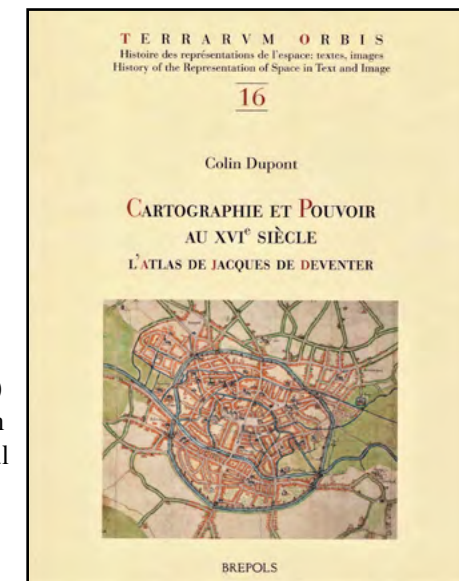
— 351 pages, 89 colour illustrations, hard cover, 21 × 27 cm

— ISBN 978-2-503-58606-9. EUR 120.00

Jacob van Deventer (c. 1500 / 1505–1575) drew, from 1558 for the most part, the plans of approximately 250 cities and their environs of the Spanish Netherlands at the request of Philip II, King of Spain from 1555. A large number of these plans was not discovered until the 19<sup>th</sup> century: loose leaves at the Royal Library of Belgium (KBR) in Brussels, and an atlas (two volumes extant out of three) at the Biblioteca nacional de España in Madrid. Deventer's work is exceptional for more than one reason: its scale, its homogeneity (in the hand of only one cartographer), and its precision. In addition, for most of those cities this is their earliest extant cartographic representation.

There have been many works written on Deventer and his plans, especially since his maps have been digitised. Several debates are underway, such as which surveying technique was used and the actual purpose of the plans. Now, after meticulous work, Colin Dupont, head of the Maps and Plans Department at KBR, offers innovative interpretations.

Jacon van Deventer is a rather enigmatic character. We know that he was not a military engineer, but rather a cartographer, as documents call him kaartmaker or ‘map maker’. As early as the 1530s, he produced maps of several provinces and various maps related to different levels of administrative power e.g. court cases, public infrastructure, borders,



hydrography or maintenance work. He was therefore an accomplished practitioner of this art, and also had a grasp of political and territorial matters; he seems to have possessed an institutional vision of topography. It thus comes as no surprise that he was appointed royal cartographer or geographer.

Colin Dupont has studied Deventer's plans of 96 localities, kept in Brussels and Madrid. Some are accompanied by a carton, i.e. a second plan often supplemented by explanatory texts. Dupont has used new computer-based methodologies to carefully deconstruct the plans in order to analyse them. He has systematically isolated each depicted object (fortification, road, mill, remarkable civil or religious building, etc.) in order to identify and categorise it, and has added its area,

function and location to a database that has enabled him to calculate the frequency with which each element appears.

The applied methodology has led to a great number of insights. One valuable result is the surprisingly high number of gardens and the extent of undeveloped areas found inside cities, which calls into question the conventional view of medieval cities being packed within their walls, as in the figurative cavalier perspective of Oudenaarde by Pierre Le Poivre (1546–1626) where no trace of tree or garden is visible. Another key observation is that Deventer depicted numerous elements of political, administrative or judicial interest, unrelated to the military purpose that has often been attributed to his atlases. Furthermore, Dupont calculates that the hinterland (often drawn in a simplified manner) occupies on average more than 80% of the plans, and this raises the question of the scope of these plans. Drawing the hinterland might have served a military goal, but Colin Dupont does not believe so. At least in several cases, the depicted countryside seems to correspond to the borough, i.e. the territory where the privileges granted to a city applied. This is however an uncertain hypothesis because few studies have so far pinpointed the limits of such boroughs.



Colin Dupont highlights how Deventer's plans are highly homogeneous in drawing style, colour, orientation, scale, focus and type of textual information. While they lack an interpretive key or legend, they are still intelligible today. Their precision is quite remarkable, doubtless the result of measurements carried out on the ground. Deventer seems to have applied the technique of 'polygonisation', in which the surveyor measures the length and orientation of each side of an element by going around it, and also the method of 'successive intersections', where measurements are taken from bell towers, city gates or roads.<sup>1</sup> Deventer may have drawn the fortifications first, for cities where they existed, then outlined the street network and finally added blocks of houses. Remarkable buildings were highlighted by drawing them in perspective and with blue roofs; he used a wide range of techniques, some innovative and others inherited from the Middle Ages.<sup>2</sup>

Colin Dupont's detailed study has led him to de-emphasise the military component of Deventer's work. He points out that some plans show no

<sup>1</sup> This would not be triangulation properly speaking, but Jacob van Deventer must have been aware of triangulation as Gemma Frisius's *Libellus de locorum describendorum ratione* had been published in 1534. Antoine De Smet proved Deventer's priority with respect to Frisius in *La cartographie hollandaise*, Bruxelles, Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier, 1971, pp. 9-11 and 15-16; *Cartographie belge dans les collections espagnoles. XVIe-XVIIIe siècle*, dir. Claire Lemoine-Isabeau, Bruxelles, 1985, pp. 28-29.

<sup>2</sup> See in this same issue, pp. 4-5, the review of *Quand les artistes dessinaient les cartes. Vues et figures de l'espace français. Moyen Âge et Renaissance*, Paris, Archives Nationales, 2019.



Dupont's reconstruction of the borough of Bruges superimposed on Deventer's plan.

fortifications or only an incomplete defence system; that the view of the surrounding countryside is sometimes too narrow to plot artillery deployment, and that several plans are very off-centre. Crucially, Jacob van Deventer was not a military engineer and was given the task of mapping 'touttes' [all] the population centres of the Spanish Netherlands: large cities, strongholds, ports as well as towns and villages, and not only those which lay in strategic areas such as along coasts or borders. Dupont's hypothesis is that Deventer's plans are instead to be viewed as a description of Philip II's possessions, intended to serve both as a source of knowledge for the young monarch and as a means to secure his rule over the land — a political rather than a military tool. In any case, the plans are a precious testimony of our regions in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

At the end of this considerable work, which emanates from his doctoral thesis, Colin Dupont insists on the

many avenues that have opened up to further research on the topic, such as the study of detailed topographies, dating of surveys, analysis of the equipment of cartographer-surveyors, and research in archives for biographical information about Deventer.

This book is definitely a valuable and original contribution to the history of cartography. Thanks to the computerised method of deconstruction, the author achieves a renewed vision of the city, with distinct roles for the intermural space and the extramural lands. He encourages us not to consider Deventer's plans as military instruments, but as much more comprehensive documents with an important role in the time of Philip II.



Plan of Bethune with buildings identified by Dupont.



Map of the cities and towns included in Deventer's existing works ('nette' = included in the Madrid Atlas)

I would like to commend the carefully laid out illustrations and charts that clarify Dupont's approach and support his statements, as well as letting us admire Deventer's work. One regret, however, is the absence of a glossary, as definitions of technical terms are scattered throughout the book. This is, however, more than compensated for by the clear presentation of sources, the extensive bibliography and the index of cities, proper names and works, which make it easy to use this very rich volume.



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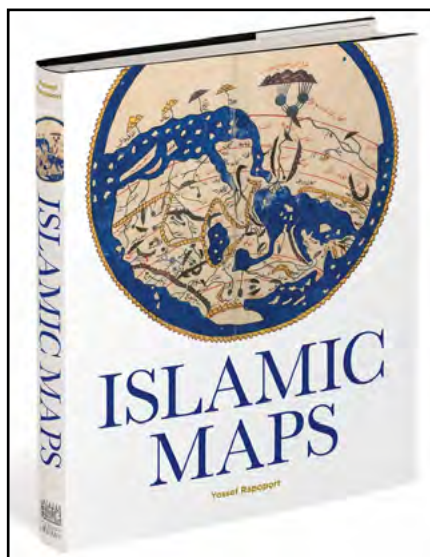
# Islamic Maps

by Yossef Rapoport

- Published by the Bodleian Library, Oxford
- 191 pages, colour illustrations, hard cover, 28.5 × 24.5 cm
- ISBN 978-1-85124 492-8 GBP 35.00

*Islamic Maps* is a beautifully illustrated book that explores behind the scenes of maps made from ninth-century Baghdad to nineteenth-century Iran. Who were the mapmakers, for whom did they make their maps, and what was the purpose of such maps? How and why did stylised, geometrical maps become copied centuries after they were first made, when the knowledge contained in them had been superseded? What was the impact of having to copy maps in a manuscript society? Yossef Rapoport makes the readers work quite hard, as they are left to demystify rows and rows of Arabic with only summary help. But the author writes with a light touch that belies the fascinating facts beneath and opens up an Islamic view of the world complete in itself, maps made by Muslims for Muslims – with the notable exception of al-Idrisi's maps made for the Norman Christian court of Sicily.

We look at the mathematicians whose approach to the world was grounded in Ptolemy. Muhammed ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, who lived in Baghdad in the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, gave us his *Book of the Image of the World* which for the most part consists of tables of place names and their location, expressed in degrees of latitude and longitude. Al-Khwarizmi says he 'extracted' the coordinates from Ptolemy's *Geographia*, and also replicated his usage of 'climes' – horizontal bands dividing up the northern hemisphere. The only surviving manuscript copy contains four maps, one of which is of the Nile (see Fig. 1).



Despite the mathematical detail accompanying the map, it is not plotted and there is no scale. Al-Khwarizmi drew maps that were legible rather than accurate. He developed a vocabulary and grammar for map-making, helping copyists to copy more easily and accurately. Functionality ruled. However, there

was now a move from depicting the whole of the inhabited world to focusing more on Islamic civilisation.

Abu Ishaq al-Istakhri was probably born in Istakhr in southern Iran towards the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. At this time the Islamic world extended from India to Spain, but was fragmented into dynasties and states paying token allegiance to the Abbasid caliph of Baghdad. His treatise on geography – *the Book of Routes and Kingdoms* – is a set of maps accompanied by texts. Only copies of his maps survive, so there is no certainty about the way al-Istakhri wanted them to look, but the maps we have are stunning, and totally different from Al-Khwarizmi's. Al-Istakhri focused on the Islamic world, and produced twenty regional maps. His approach was to disregard mathematical geography; he used a geometrical design to feature land



Fig. 1. Detail from the map of the Nile from al-Khwarizmi's *Book of the Image of the World*, copied 1037.)

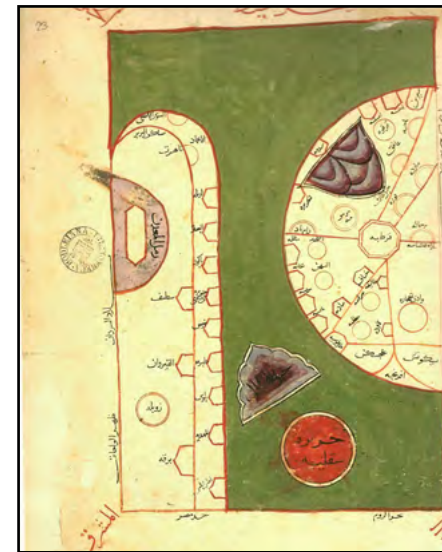


Fig. 2. Map of Muslim Spain and North Africa from al-Istakhri's *Book of Routes and Kingdoms*, copied 1306

routes that would be useful for trade and pilgrimage. As can be seen from the example, he used colour-coding, different types of lines and geometrical forms, plus clear labelling, to get his information across. His treatise starts with a stylised map of the world, as we would have in a modern atlas, so that readers can see where the regional maps fit. The first regional map is by tradition that of the Arab Peninsula, featuring the twin holy cities of Mecca and Medina (see Fig. 2).

Al-Istakhri's maps were copied throughout the eastern Islamic world. Rapoport tells us that Sultan Mehmet II, following his conquest of Constantinople in 1453, commissioned a set of copies of al-Istakhri's treatise, as part of a project to Islamicise the capital which was quickly renamed Istanbul. This is regarded as a slightly odd choice, given that the Sultan was known to be interested in, and used, European maps. But it is thought that the six-century old maps held great symbolic value, representing the link with Islamic tradition and history.

Rapoport next takes us to the *Book of Curiosities*, which has already been described in this magazine.<sup>1</sup> He makes the point that up to now we have been shown the world mostly in terms of land masses. However the

focus of the *Book of Curiosities* is on land bordering the seas and the sea itself – looking at the Fatimid caliphate as a Mediterranean power. The map of Mahdia, the first Fatimid capital, for example, has a maritime itinerary between Mahdia and Palermo, describing the anchorages along the journey and the distances between them in miles.

We then move on to the *Entertainment for He Who Longs to Travel the World* by al-Sharif al-Idrisi, a treatise comprising text and maps. Al-Idrisi worked at the court of Roger II, the Norman King of Sicily; his world map is perhaps the best known coming to us from medieval Islam. Al-Idrisi wrote the *Entertainment* in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but the examples we have are copies from the 16<sup>th</sup>. In his works he combines the traditions of Islam and Christianity. When the Normans took Sicily from the Fatimids they found a mixture of Greek and Arabic and chose to add to it rather than replace it. Many administrative decrees were thus in Arabic, Greek and Latin. Given Sicily's strategic location, it grew in importance as a stopping-off point for Crusaders on their way to the Holy Land and was a linguistic and cultural melting-pot.

Roger sent out travellers and draughtsmen to collect information on the lands he had conquered and had a world map engraved on a silver disc. The engraved silver map was lost, but al-Idrisi's world map is thought to be based on the disc.<sup>2</sup>

The map then had to be tackled in smaller pieces. Instead of dividing up the world by geography, as al-Istakhri had done, al-Idrisi took the seven climes and divided each into ten sections, making a total of seventy in all. So the borders of each map are not rivers or mountains, but

the edge of a clime. Al-Idrisi's use of mathematical geography to represent the world stems from Ptolemy. But he used the latest geographical information gleaned from visitors to Roger's court. His climes and sections method allowed for substantial detail in his maps, detail that was impressively correct for the times. The *Entertainment* and its maps were completed in 1158, long after Roger's death. It was in Arabic, and as it was not translated into Latin, it would have been little use to an increasingly monolingual administration where the Greek- and Arabic-speaking elite were losing favour. Al-Idrisi died in 1165, but his influential treatise lived on, in, for example Genoese mapmaker Pietro Visconte's world map, dated 1321, which shows several aspects of al-Idrisi's world map. In addition there are ten known copies of the *Entertainment*, the earliest made from around 1300, the latest around the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, all seemingly made in North Africa or Muslim Spain (see the book's cover for a late example).

Rapoport moves swiftly to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire, Piri Reis and his 'Book on Seafaring'. Piri, born in 1470, was the greatest Ottoman mapmaker of his time. His maps were 'heavily indebted to Portuguese informants, Catalan charts, and Italian modes of visual expression'. From the time of the Crusades, Europeans had dominated the Mediterranean, and this domination was consolidated with the introduction of the magnetic compass and the portolan chart. Consistently recorded compass bearings enabled Genoese and Majorcan mapmakers to produce the shape of the Mediterranean more or less as we know it today. North African mapmakers began to draw up portolan charts in Arabic. The first description of such a chart is dated 1340 and Rapoport shows us an example from 1571-2.

<sup>2</sup> A modern re-creation of this map in metal was part of the Bodleian Library's exhibition *Talking Maps* (5 July 2019 - 1 March 2020).

<sup>1</sup> See *Look at Books of Lost Maps of the Caliphs in Maps in History* No 65.



When the Ottomans conquered Constantinople in 1453 the balance of power changed. Sultan Mehmed II collected all the maps and charts he could find and his successor Bayezid II sought to expand the Ottoman navy, bringing onside pirates operating in the Mediterranean and offering them positions in the navy. Piri was recruited in this way. This was the era of Columbus' voyages and Vasco da Gama's circumnavigation of Africa. The Portuguese were now becoming a threat on the world stage and Piri reacted. He produced his own world map in 1513, a practical map for those at sea. Only a fragment of this map has survived, but it is enough to demonstrate the wealth of information; the rich iconography marking a departure from the traditions of Islamic mapmaking. The sailing vessels are drawn with particular care, Piri was, after all, a sailor.

Piri then produced his *Book on Seafaring* – 130 chapters based on his own experiences, with the text of each chapter devoted to a Mediterranean region or port and accompanied by a chart, produced using compass bearings. The information is precise and practical. Piri chose to make his texts and charts deal with small chunks of the Mediterranean. His text is in Ottoman Turkish, aimed at the Turkish-speaking pilots of the Ottoman navy.

In 1524 or 1525 the Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha advised him 'to compose a more polished version of the book and present it to the Sultan'. Piri did so and had it ready in 1526, shortly after Sultan Suleiman's accession to the throne. It was a beautiful presentation copy, as the map of Venice (Fig 3) indicates.

Following Piri's book, town views gained popularity, with the works of a 'jack-of-all-trades – occasional miniaturist, Arabic translator,

mathematician and sword-maker' – Matraqi Nasuh, providing some outstanding examples. Matraqi depicted many inland towns of the Empire, rather than concentrating on the ports, as Piri had done. His town views are often 'political'; Aleppo for example is shown in 1537, when the map was made, complete with minarets, even though the town had come under Ottoman rule only a couple of decades before. Aleppo is therefore represented 'not as it was, but as it ought to be'.

The last chapter takes a different turn, as we go back in time and trace the development of qibla charts from the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The direction of the Kaaba can first be found in a diagram in a copy of a treatise from a follower of al-Istakhri, al-Muqaddasi, in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, and the style continued. The Kaaba is shown on the chart, with lines radiating out. Given that Mecca was in a different direction depending on where you were, charts were produced to provide qibla directions from different regions/countries. The introduction of the compass, which had had such an impact on navigational charts, also made an impact on qibla charts which became increasingly accurate. A problem arose: when Muslims had

started building mosques eight or nine centuries earlier, they did not have the same recourse to mathematical calculations. Although Mecca is due east of Cordoba, for example, the prayer wall at the Grand Mosque faces southeast.

Craftsmen excelled at making beautiful instruments under the Safavids based in Isfahan – 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century, where they were produced mainly as presentation objects. This era saw new inventions, among them the production of astrolabes on which world maps showed Mecca at the centre. Here a ruler revolves around the axis of Mecca and, once aligned, shows the direction of Mecca and the distance from any locality.

In *Islamic Maps* Yossef Rapoport shows the reader how the combination of art, science, geography and highly-talented mapmakers from very different walks of life, produced stunning maps. A most rewarding read.



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Fig. 3. Map of Venice from the second version of the Book on Seafaring by Piri Reis, copied c.1700.

# Johann George Schreiber (1676–1750) – Kupferstecher und Atlasverleger in Leipzig

[Johann George Schreiber (1676–1750) – Copper plate engraver and atlas publisher in Leipzig]

by Eckhard Jäger

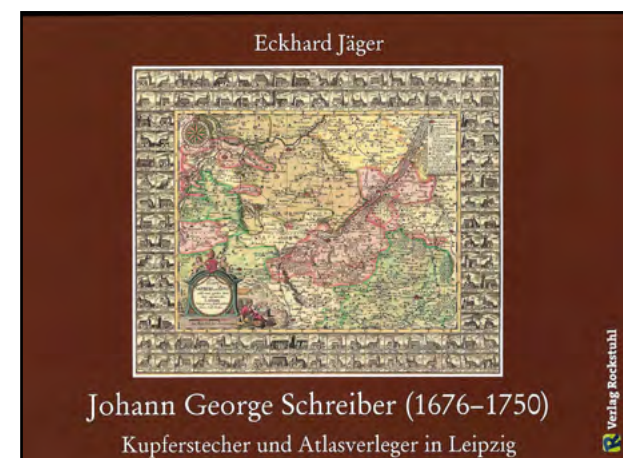
— Bad Langensalza, Thüringen: Verlag Rockstuhl, 2019

— 96 pages, 82 colour ill., hard cover, 21.0 × 29.7 cm

— ISBN 978-3-95966-430-1. EUR 39.95

Within the space of only one year, Eckhard Jäger has offered us another original work on a little-known German mapmaker. In *Maps in History* No 63 (January 2019) I reviewed his 2018 book on Karl Kolbe, the creator of Rundkarten, or circular maps, with a novel description of the German map scene in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. This time we move from Prussia to Saxony, and into the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Leipzig had eclipsed Frankfurt with its book fair, and it is here that Schreiber published, as of 1727, the work that is probably best known internationally among his cartographic output, the *Atlas Selectus*.

Johann George Schreiber was born in 1676 in the small town of Neusalza near Bautzen in the province of Oberlausitz (Upper Lusatia), the eastern part of Saxony, close to the border with Bohemia. He was the fifth of seven children in a master joiner's family which, in spite of its limited means, permitted the boy to receive a solid education at the Bautzen Gymnasium. He showed a great artistic talent with wood carving and even created Hebrew block letters for a printer who lacked cast metal letters for a book in Hebrew. Having taught himself copper plate engraving, his first work on record is a small prospect of the city of Bautzen (1698). Encouraged by its



public success, he continued to refine his art and delivered bird's-eye views of that city in 1700, and again in 1709, recording the disastrous fire that had ravaged half the town that year.

The governing authorities of Upper Lusatia, having become aware of Schreiber's work, commissioned the young man to produce a new map of the province, to replace the then current version that dated back to 1593, over a hundred years earlier. Schreiber, an autodidact in the disciplines of mathematics, geometry and surveying, set to work in 1700. It took him four years to produce a final draft which he submitted for approval to Frederick Augustus I, Prince Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, with the request for a privilege: this was obtained in 1705, for five years. A revised edition with a linguistic boundary between the German- and Sorbian-speaking populations was published in 1709.

For a while he settled in Leipzig where he published a large bird's-eye view of the town's market-place, but he was also active in nearby Zeitz, engraving and printing a bird's-eye view of the ducal castle of Moritzburg, and a most decorative large-scale (ca 1:130 000) map of the Duchy of Naumburg/Zeitz, reproduced on the book's cover. The surrounding border shows no fewer than 120 views of regional churches, an example of Schreiber's efforts to augment the topographical content of a map by encyclopaedic additions. These came in the form of separately printed notices, as in the case of the map of Upper Lusatia and the one just mentioned, or appeared as extra drawings or explanatory notes in the margins of the map, frequently engraved in its left or right-hand margins.

Established back in Leipzig, Schreiber found it difficult to remain in business with the scarce resources at his disposal for the engraving and printing of individual folio maps. He had lost ducal patronage and was faced with the competition of Dutch and also German maps available in profusion at the Leipzig book fair. At this point he discovered a market gap which was to ensure him lasting recognition in the map publishing world. He started with a more or less experimental Saechsische Post-Charte in 1727 in reduced format (17 × 25 cm), which,



after some problems with a copy right, sold quite well.

Schreiber then set to compile, as of 1727, the first world atlas to be published in Saxony. It had the same miniature format and was entitled, in translation, *Atlas Selectus [Select Atlas] of all Kingdoms and Countries of the World, for the practical use in schools, for travelling and for the perusal of journals, designed and engraved in copper by Johann George Schreiber in Leipzig*. The earliest recorded list of contents enumerates 37 maps, essentially of German and European regions plus a planisphere, the four continents (Europe, Asia, Africa, America) and the Holy Land. Their number constantly increased in successive editions, reaching 147 in about 1760. None of Schreiber's maps is dated, except the one of Greece, 1749.

Of prime importance for the collector is Jäger's 18-page catalogue of atlas maps that follows the historical overview. One of the largest editions of the *Atlas Selectus* surviving, the one of ca 1760 with 147 maps, served as the basis for this catalogue.<sup>1</sup> Into this listing Jäger inserted, in the geographical sequence, 145 entries of map variants he discovered during his carto-bibliographical research. These are from editions by Schreiber's successors: firstly by his widow, and then by his nephew Christian Schreiber and by Christian Gottlieb Riedig, who married into the family in 1795 and published as *Schreibers Erben* [Schreiber's Heirs] until 1848. Thanks to Eckhard Jäger, we now have a first complete inventory of Schreiber's atlas maps.

Following the catalogue is a survey of different map designers, engravers and publishers of these maps; of Schreiber's maps copied and published elsewhere; of other publications by Schreiber's Heirs, and of a

<sup>1</sup> Undated, Dresden, Sächsische Landes- und Universitätsbibliothek, shelf mark Geogr. A.201.m

little-known product of Schreiber the miniature calendars (35 × 50 mm) which were on the market between 1725 and 1875.

As is now customary in Jäger's publications, a special chapter is devoted to the daily life and work of a cartographer active, as in our case, in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with a discussion of map production costs, number of copies printed and of Schreiber's personal engagement.

This is another ground-breaking publication by Harald Rockstuhl who had already produced Jäger's book on Karl Kolbe, in the same top quality of binding and lavish illustration – an indispensable addition to the library of any collector interested in this period of German cartography.



Title page of the *Atlas selectus*.



Africa, map 7 of the *Atlas selectus*, an example of a typical Schreiber map, with an explanatory border text (16.6 x 24.5 cm)

(scan of map in Wulf Bodenstein's collection which Jäger used in his book as Fig. 50).

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# Le Massif des Écrins : Histoire d'une cartographie, de l'Antiquité à l'aube du XXe siècle

[The Massif des Écrins: History of a cartography, from Antiquity till the dawn of the 20th century]

by Jacques Mille, Jean-Marc Barféty and Michel Tailland

— Editions du Fournel, L'Argentière-La-Bessée, France

— 285 pages 27 × 29 cm

— ISBN 978-2-36142-149-6. EUR 35.00

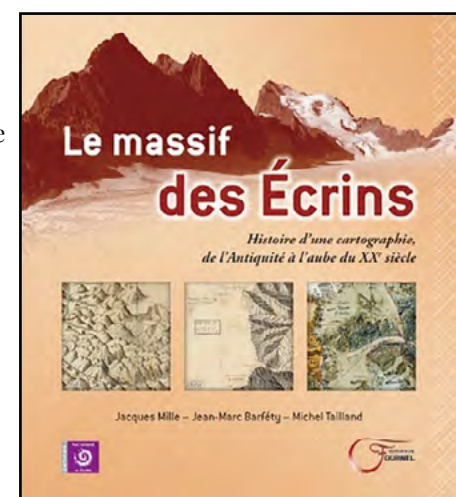
## INTRODUCTION

The Massif des Écrins is situated in the Alps in the departments of Hautes-Alpes and Isère in the south-eastern part of France on the Italian border, roughly in between the towns of Grenoble in the north-west, Briançon in the east and Gap in the south. It is also bordered by the Durance and Drac rivers in the east and south. This Massif is part of the Dauphiné region and, after several name changes, a major part was included since 1973 in the National Park of the Écrins.

The name of Les Écrins is relatively recent, as it was used only for the first time in a technical description for a map in 1832 and adopted by cartographers since. The core of Les Écrins is a very rough area with many high peaks topping around 4 000 metres, numerous glaciers and deep valleys, many of which were not easily accessible, connected by steep mountain passes and were very sparsely populated. This region was visited by very few, except for the military until 1850 and thereafter by alpinists.

## THE BOOK AND ITS AUTHORS

After many historical and recent publications covering this region, this book is a very welcome addition, as it traces for the first time the entire cartographic history of Les Écrins



There are three sections, sub-divided into a number of chapters:

1. From antiquity till the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century
2. From the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> till the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the exploration of the Massif des Écrins, the development of its cartography and the conquered summits
3. From the maps of the General Staff to those of alpinists by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

in a very detailed and chronological approach. With a few exceptions, it covers the period between the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is printed on quality glossy paper and its illustrations faithfully respect their original colours. Its narrative is lively and easy to understand.

The book has been written by a trio of authors: our well-known member Jacques Mille, with Jean-Marc Barféty and Michel Tailland. These very complementary specialists in the history of the cartography and cultural aspects of the Dauphiné and the Alps, have combined their knowledge and various studies in a very readable and interesting manner.

The authors reviewed an extensive list of many maps of this region made by different cartographers, whose official titles evolved from surveyor to ingénieur -géomètre and to ingénieur-cartographe. Several very useful and well-presented annexes complete the book: A chronological listing of major historical and cartographical events, a bibliography, a listing of the toponyms used on the maps, a table of the illustrations and an index.

This history of the development of the cartography of the Écrins is a fascinating tale of the numerous difficulties encountered and the slow progress made over the centuries in mapping such an area. During the Middle Ages this region's very scarce population moved around



very little, hindered by the absence of roads, natural barriers and tough climate. Few maps remain from this time. People mostly relied on orally-transmitted 'mental maps', which used local names in dialects that varied from valley to valley. The identification of mountains also depended on what the locals could see from their villages.

### THE MAPS

The oldest extant representation of the region is found in the Tabula Peutingeriana, a medieval manuscript copy of a possibly Roman map, which depicts the road through the Alps between Italy and Gaul, but without indicating the Massif des Écrins. The travellers in those times avoided these mountain areas and tried to pass around them.

The first major contribution to the cartography of this region was made in 1525 by Oronce Fine, with a very detailed map of the Dauphiné with the north at top. Fine was very familiar with this region because he was born close to Briançon and signed his maps with his name followed by 'Dauphinois'. On his map the adjacent Savoy and Provence were drawn with few details, as obviously he had never been able to visit these provinces. On the contrary the Piedmont was depicted with great accuracy, as he was able to copy a map by Gastaldi. The original Fine map was lost, but as many copies were made during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, his work is still available (Fig. 1).

In 1601 King Henri IV of France requested Jean de Beins (1577 – 1651) to draw maps of the newly acquired regions following the Treaty of Lyon. Beins was in the military and appointed Engineer of the King for the Dauphiné and Bresse in 1607. Between 1604 and 1611 he produced a complete set of detailed manuscript maps on about 30 sheets, scale 1:110 000 with, for the first time, the Massif des Écrins included, but not precise and without

names. These maps were used for a printed reduction to a scale of 1:250 000 in 1617 and kept under lock and key by the military. In 1622 Beins prepared smaller size maps used in a kind of atlas, with a much larger print-run for a wider public. This very successful publication was copied widely in France and in other European countries even until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, therewith establishing the presence of

the Écrins in most maps. (Fig. 2)

The French military staff was increasingly interested to obtain much better and reliable maps. The army's cartographic engineers achieved this by drawing so-called 'minute maps' during their field trips, using ink and watercolour, at scales between 1:14 400 and 1:28 000. These sheets were forwarded to the Dépôt de la Guerre in



Fig. 2. A section of the map of the Dauphiné by Jean de Beins of 1617, with south at top. It shows the entire Massif des Écrins with villages and rivers clearly indicated. Mountains are shown in a fine perspective view, but still without names.



Fig. 1. A section of Oronce Fine's map of France of 1525, covering the south-east with the Dauphiné, surrounded by Savoy, Piedmont and Provence.



Fig. 3. Copy of the original cartouche of the 1787 map by Louis Capitaine, with an allegory of the mountains and its rivers. The map is dedicated to the King and the head of the region and was destroyed during the Revolution, which started two years later.

Paris, and there reduced to a scale of 1:250 000 and engraved to print maps for the Central General Staff. Only very few copies were made and these remained a military secret by royal order.

Pierre Joseph Bourcet (1700 – 1780), a military scientist who rose up to Royal Engineer and the high rank of Lieutenant-General, was assigned by the King Louis XV in 1754 to draw up maps of the frontiers of the Alps from Provence to Savoy. For this complex task he received under his command quite a team of engineers and in 1758 he completed a set of very detailed 'minute' maps of the Haut-Dauphiné on a scale 1:14 400. The topography was much improved.

Cassini III (César-François Cassini de Thury) from the Cassini dynasty of map makers, was commissioned in 1747 by King Louis XV to develop much better maps of the entire French territory with 181 sheets on a scale of 1:86 400. He applied the most up to date scientific procedures of that time, such as triangulation, but did not have access to the higher quality

maps of Bourcet, which the military kept locked up until 1820. His maps were the first and only widely available to the public and remained as such for close to a century, until the public distribution of the general staff map at a scale of 1:80 000 in 1866.

A totally new approach in map making was introduced in 1787 by Louis Capitaine (1749 – 1797) by drawing a very original map, including for the first time a table with the altitudes of most of the settlements, mountain passes and peaks. Very few copies of his public maps are still available, as he became a victim of the French Revolution. In the cartouche he dedicated his work to King Louis XVI and the old regime, so most of the printed copies and the copper plates were destroyed (Fig. 3).

Revolutionary France ordered that provinces, towns, (Saint was dropped) and even a few mountains, should be renamed. This is the reason why the inferior Cassini map, devoid of place names, long remained the only publicly available map. The revolutionary and later imperial governments needed better maps for their armies and ordered the registration of all land property in France (the cadaster), but still without topographical information. They also founded the École Polytechnique in 1794, which taught courses in cartography. This resulted in a much stronger scientific



Fig. 4. A section of the Briançon map by the team of Durand, engraved by Ferdinand Prudent, detailing the Meije mountain at a scale of 1:40 000. This high-quality map was drawn based on 'minute' maps and distributed in 1875 with the first year book of the French Alpine Club. It shows the names of mountains, glaciers and villages, but no altitudes. The level contours are a real novelty and of practical use for alpinists, which started two years later.



approach to map making. Captain Durand of the army undertook in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century several field trips in the Écrins to accurately measure and depict its mountains. The result of his physically tough work was sheet 'no. 189' of the so called 'Briançon map' (Fig. 4).

By around 1850, English alpinists discovered the Massif and started to climb the local peaks, opening up a poor region to tourism. These Englishmen recorded their experiences with many new facts on the topography, which promoted the further improvement of maps and the creation of travel guides.

### CLOSING COMMENTS

This very interesting book has an attractive layout and its numerous illustrations make it a real pleasure

to read. During the reported four hundred years of cartographic history, the Écrins region evolved from a remote and unknown area with no interest by travellers to a centre of mountain climbing. Despite long periods of inactivity, the cartographers continued to gather valuable information to improve their maps, in particular during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The influence of the military and alpinism were determining. On top of the numerous other publications of the authors, this book about a very specific region is a very welcome addition to general publications of the cartography of the Alps, such as the epic work by Laura and Giorgio Aliprandi, *Le grandi Alpi nella cartografia 1482 – 1885, Vol. 1 Storia della cartografia alpina* published in Italy in 2005.

The vivid narrative on the frequent and important challenges of the cartographers to obtain better information is well worth reading. This book is highly recommended to be added to the libraries of scholars and map lovers alike.

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*A map enthusiast with 40 years of pure passion.  
Discover maps from all over the world.*

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## La 'CARTE TRES PARTICULIERE DU HAYNAUT' de Naudin (ca 1709 – 1728)

[A very special map of HAYNAUT by Naudin (ca 1709 – 1728)]

Back in 2004, when I took the job of editor of the BIMCC Newsletter, I introduced a new feature in issue No 19: the 'Map of the Season' which appeared on the centrefold, in black-&-white and A3 format, accompanied by an explanatory text of one or two pages. After a couple of years, the 'Map of the Season' was abandoned, but the centrefold map continued to be published, as one of the illustrations of the main historical article.

In Newsletter No 19, I had presented the 'Map of Haynaut, by Jacques Surhon, 1579' and told the curious story of that map which Ortelius could publish in his *Theatrum* only 31 years after it had been surveyed by Surhon, under a 1548 commission by emperor Charles V.

In this issue of Maps in History the 'Map of the Season' returns, again a map of Haynaut! This one has been surveyed by Jean-Baptiste Naudin, an engineer of French king Louis XIV, 161 years after Surhon. As it has never been published, it is not so well known: it is part of the manuscript cartographic treasures preserved in the Military Archives at the Château de Vincennes, near Paris.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, this map is mentioned<sup>2</sup> in the catalogue of the *Atlas Historique* covering a collection of thousands of maps and plans relating to military operations during the reign of Louis XIV; where it is listed under the heading 'Bataille de Malplaquet'.

<sup>1</sup> Reference: GR 6M LIB903

<sup>2</sup> PONNOU C., de VILLELE M.-A., FONCK B., 2013, *Champs de bataille du Grand Siècle - Catalogue des cartes de l'Atlas historique jusqu'à la fin du règne de Louis XIV*, Paris : Archives & Culture / Ministère de la Défense

This battle (on 11 September 1709) marked a turning point in the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1713). The armies of Louis XIV had suffered a series of setbacks and France was threatened with invasion by a coalition led by the duke of Marlborough. Although the French army eventually had to retreat from the Malplaquet battlefield, the enormous losses inflicted on their enemies stopped their progression and, no doubt, saved France and eventually allowed Louis XIV to keep most of the territories he had conquered over the Spanish Low Countries during half a century of wars.

The catalogue lists 18 plans of that battle; but Naudin's map is different. It not only represents the position of the French and Allied armies around the hamlet of Malplaquet (south of Mons), but it also shows the position of the French lines before the battle (in the plain near Quiévrain) and, more importantly, the strong defence lines to which they retreated afterwards between Valenciennes and Le Quesnoy and across the Mormal forest. In fact the map can be considered as a masterpiece of military engineering: Naudin was one of the first *ingénieurs des camps et armées* whose job was to organise the logistics for the

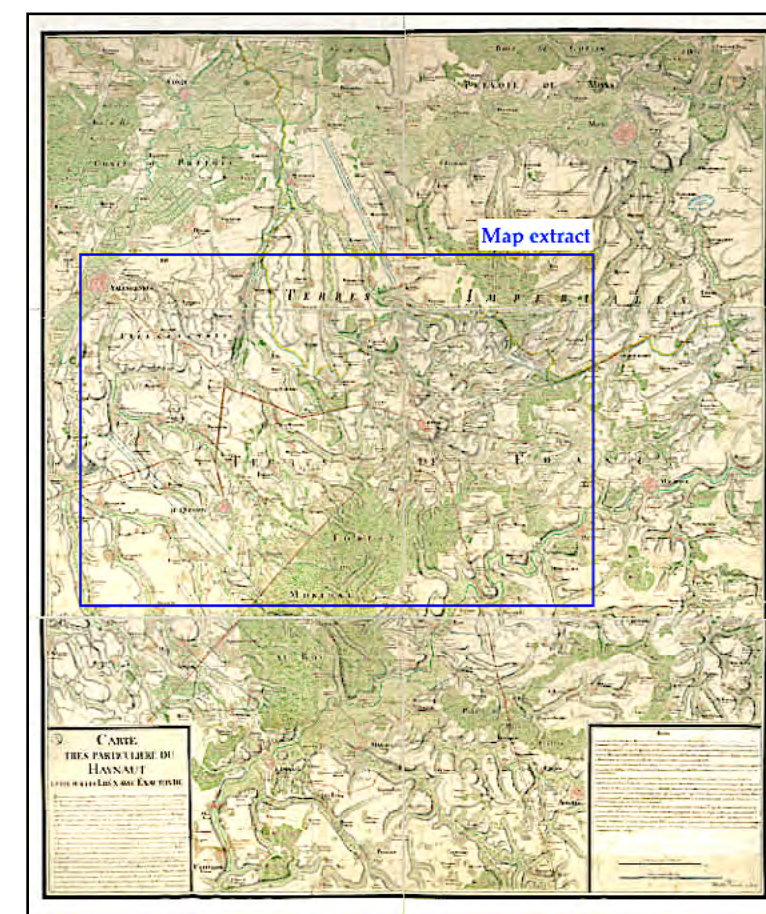
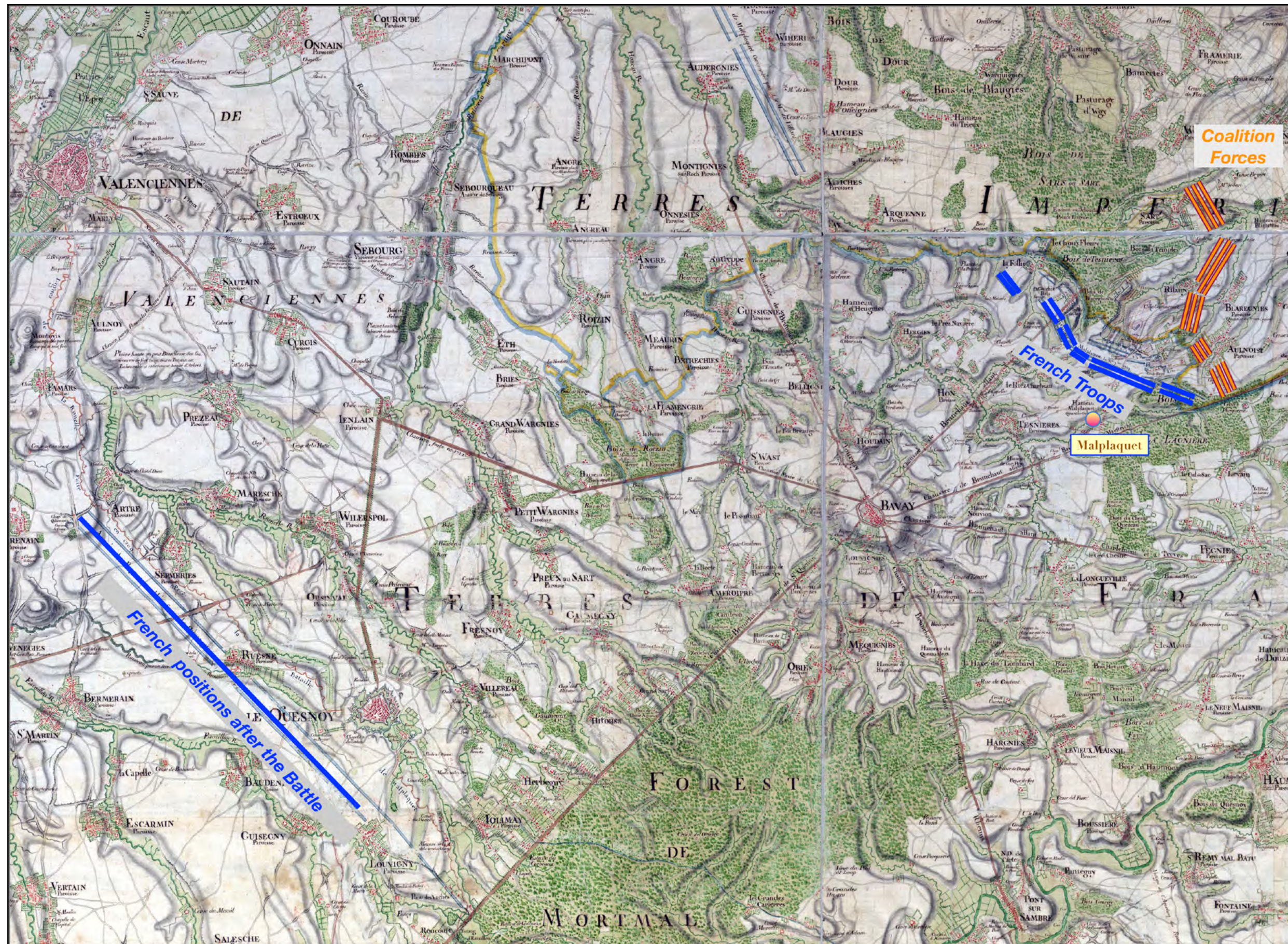


Fig.1 : « CARTE TRES PARTICULIERE DU HAYNAUT levée sur les Lieux avec Exactitude » (SHD, GR 6M LIB903)





Part of the 'CARTE TRES PARTICULIERE DU HAYNAUT levée sur les Lieux avec Exactitude' [VERY SPECIAL MAP OF HAYNAUT surveyed in the Field with Accuracy] (SHD GR 6M LIB903)

This extract covers about a quarter of this very large map (ca 160 x 143 cm) and shows the French and Allied armies in battle order around the hamlet of Malplaquet on 11 September 1709 (in the top right corner, north-east of Bavay); the position of the French lines before the battle (at the top centre, near the village of Audregnies, north of Bavay); and the defence lines to which the French retreated, protected by the valley of the 'Rosnel' [Rhonelle] river, between Valenciennes (top left corner) and Le Quesnoy (near the 'Forest de Mortal' at the bottom).



campaigning armies: explore the terrain, prepare itineraries, select and organise the camps, advise on battle field operations, etc. During the months which followed Malplaquet, the French expected the Allied armies to attack and besiege the nearby stronghold of Maubeuge. On this map, Naudin analyses the situation and proposes an approach to relieve Maubeuge, with a long text in the two cartouches describing precisely how the army should manoeuvre.

This very large map (160 x 143 cm approximately (Fig. 1)) represents the landscape of the entire theatre of operations: in fact most of the French part of the county of Hainaut (Condé, Valenciennes, Le Quesnoy, Maubeuge, Landrecies, Avesnes, etc.) and the region of Mons. This, therefore, fully justifies the title given by Naudin: 'CARTE TRES PARTICULIERE DU HAYNAUT levée sur les Lieux avec Exactitude' [VERY SPECIAL MAP OF HAYNAUT surveyed in the Field with Accuracy].

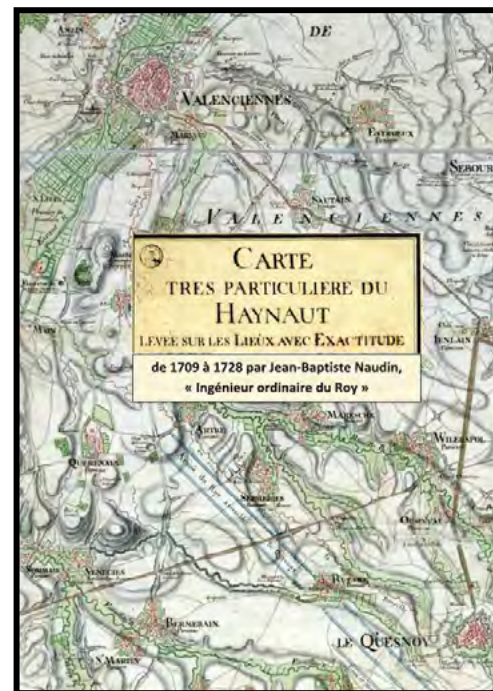
Although Marlborough never attacked Maubeuge, Naudin's clever plan became obsolete, his map kept its information value. Indeed it was the first time that the landscapes of Hainaut were depicted in such detail (the scale is about 1:29 000): we see the valleys, woods, ploughed land and areas in pasture; villages are represented, house by house, as well as hamlets, isolated farms, chapels or castles; detail of the cities' fortifications is also given, as well as their inner structure. This indicates that Naudin kept updating his map long after the war was over and after the death of Louis XIV: he depicted the new boundary with the then Austrian Netherlands (resulting from the treaty of Utrecht of 1713), as well as new roads and fortifications until 1728, and even the discovery of the first coal mine on French territory in 1718.

Today this map represents a unique source of information on the state



Fig. 2: General view of the Battle of Malplaquet (11 september 1709) by Huchtenburg and mentioning all major actions... (BnF- ref - <http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb415061215>)

of these territories 300 years ago. Readers interested in this local history can find more information in my original 15-page article (in French)<sup>3</sup>.



<sup>3</sup> Jean-Louis Renteux, « La 'CARTE TRES PARTICULIERE DU HAYNAUT' de Naudin (ca 1709-1728) », Cartes & Géomatique, bulletin du Comité Français de Cartographie (CFC), n° 238, décembre 2018, p. 115-128. The article is also available as a separate reprint.

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# Mare Nostrum

## Cartografia nautica a stampa del Mar Mediterraneo

[Printed nautical cartography of the Mediterranean Sea]

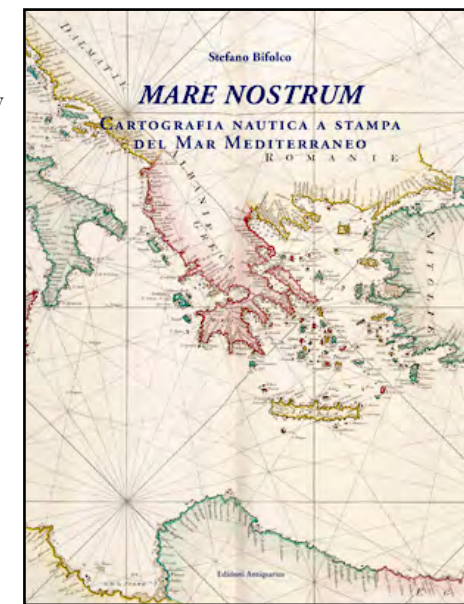
by Stefano Bifolco

— Roma, Edizioni Antiquarius, 2020  
— 304 pages, hardcover, 24 × 32 cm  
— ISBN: 978-88-909376-3-7. EUR 100.00

Mare Nostrum is a carto-bibliography of printed nautical charts of the Mediterranean Sea. Its author, map dealer Stefano Bifolco, got the idea of writing this book after acquiring a large collection of such charts for his shop. He then realised that, while manuscript and printed charts have sometimes been studied locally, for a single centre of production or school, an overall study was missing till now.

Bifolco has managed to identify 134 printed charts of the Mediterranean, between the items he purchased and those located in libraries worldwide, and has listed them all in the book, arranged in four chapters based on their geographical origin: Italy, the Netherlands, England and France – all four regions defined according to their current political borders. Bifolco has followed the criterion of including maps that depict the entire Mediterranean or at least its western half, but not those of subregions like the Adriatic or Aegean seas. As the author explains, excluding charts that show the Western Mediterranean only would have removed too many items – mostly by Dutch authors – from the book.

Every chart is reproduced in full and in some cases smaller high-resolution images allow the reader to zoom in on specific details. Each title is transcribed *in extenso*, as



well as the cartouche if there is one. Along with a description of the chart, Bifolco provides a biography of the author and a bibliography. The book greets the reader with a brief general introduction to the topic that is complemented by richer introductions to the nautical chart production of each country.

The series starts with the chapter devoted to Italy – fifteen works that include both the earliest and the latest of the book: respectively a map from Benedetto Bordone's *Libro* of 1528 (Figure 1) and one authored by Giovanni Fileti in 1802. Most of the maps of this chapter were published either in Venice or in Rome but there are also examples from Genoa, Padova and Palermo.

Questions that quickly arise when inspecting these are: What is the meaning of the term 'nautical chart'? Should it be restricted to those designed specifically for mariners? Perhaps to those which look like manuscript portolan charts? Bifolco has adopted a stylistic definition that encompasses any map or chart with a wind rose or a network of rhumb lines. This definition has the advantage of being quite clear but also the drawback of including maps that other authors would not necessarily agree to call nautical charts. An example is the 1528 Bordone map, mentioned above. The shape of its coastlines and the indication of *climes* along the left edge are both clearly derived from Ptolemy's *Geography*. However, an 8-direction wind rose has been drawn in the background and that, for Bifolco, makes it qualify as a nautical chart. Another problematic case is that of several 18<sup>th</sup>-century maps where grids of meridians and parallels are clearly drawn and the coastlines have been plotted according to cylindrical or conical projections, very unlike traditional portolan charts. That said, I fully understand the author's need to establish a clear-cut definition for his carto-bibliography and the impossibility of tackling the probably endless debate of what 'truly' was a nautical chart.





Fig. 1. Map included in the Libro di Benedetto Bordone, Venice, 1528.

Returning to the book: the chapter on Dutch charts is by far the longest, with 67 items ranging from one of 1583 by Lucas J. Waghenar to one published by Gerard H. van Keulen after 1763 that followed his purchase in that year of a large set of manuscript nautical charts owned by a Sicilian pilot. The latter information incidentally illustrates that manuscript charts of the Mediterranean were still in circulation at such a late date.

The English section ranges from some charts engraved by a Dutchman (Jodocus Hondius the Elder) for an English edition of Waghenar in 1588 to William Heather in 1791, with 24 charts overall. The maps by English *émigré* Robert Dudley are included here, even if they were printed in Italy. Finally, the French chapter includes 28 charts, mostly from Marseilles where the Olives family seems to have been dominant, but also from the Paris region and one from Normandy. In this chapter the oldest chart, authored by Nicolas de Nicolay in 1544, would be the earliest extant printed chart of the entire Mediterranean basin if one excluded the aforementioned Bordone work. (Figure 2).



Fig. 2. Map by Nicolas de Nicolay, 1544.

Luis A. Robles Macías  
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elaborate cartouches or as tables of geographical data. On the other hand, two of the classic colour conventions of portolan charts had to be abandoned: the distinction of rhumbs by red, black and green lines, and the hierarchy of coastal toponyms where the most important ones were written in red instead of black ink. Interestingly, an alternative was devised by some printers, who used bold type to highlight important toponyms.

One element I missed in *Mare Nostrum* is a table listing all included charts, which might have made the book easier to navigate and to consult as a reference work, but that is probably a minor detail. Overall, Stefano Bifolco's book is a welcome addition to the scholarship on the relatively neglected intersection between nautical cartography and print publishing. It will be of immediate use to map collectors, and definitely a pleasant experience for general amateurs of early modern maps.

## The rediscovery of some map fragments on copper printing plates in the Brussels Chalcography

The Royal Library of Belgium (KBR) can in some ways be considered as a rather oversized cabinet of curiosities. With its rich collections, its ever scrutinising scholars and its long-standing tradition of research, wondrous discoveries can – so to speak – be made on a daily basis. It was in the Royal Library where, more than a century ago, the then nearly forgotten artist Pieter Bruegel the Elder was rediscovered. It is in this exact same institution where, today, the latest techniques of digital imaging and image processing are used to re-examine the master's prints and drawings.<sup>1</sup> Many of the retrieved insights into Bruegel's draughtsmanship and the edition history of his graphic work were presented in the exhibition *The World of Bruegel in Black and White*, which ran at KBR from 15 October 2019 till 16 February 2020. However, as always, not all the new findings made it into the final 'curator's cut'. One of the omitted, but nonetheless interesting discoveries has to do with the re-use of obsolete printing plates.

In the run-up to the exhibition, curator Maarten Bassens got somewhat sidetracked. Dismissing the idea that all of the printing plates for Bruegel's original etchings and engravings were now lost, several attempts were made to retrieve one of the copper plates.<sup>2</sup> Because copper

<sup>1</sup> Cf. <https://www.kbr.be/en/projects/fingerprint>.

<sup>2</sup> An unfinished woodcut is the only print medium after Bruegel that has survived the ages. See: L. Watteuw, 'Bruegel's Drawing of The Dirty Bride (C. 1566). A FINGERPRINT Project case study', in: M. Bassens and J. Van Grieken (eds.), *Bruegel in Black and White. The Complete Graphic Works*, Furnes and Brussels, 2019, pp. 50-57.



Making high-quality prints from original plates at KBR

was quite expensive at the time, it was common practice to re-use or melt down the plates when they were worn out or of no further use. Starting from this simple idea, Maarten began delving into the collection of the Brussels Chalcography. The **Chalcography**, a component of KBR Print Room, houses more than 9 000 ancient and modern engraved plates on wood or in copper. It is one of the four chalcographies that exist in the world: the others can be found in Paris (Musée du Louvre), Madrid (Real Academia de Bellas Artes) and Rome (Istituto Centrale per la Grafica). They all share the same fundamental ideal; to offer the general public high-quality prints from original plates at a reasonable price.

Instead of re-examining the already known recto (front side) of several of the late 16<sup>th</sup>- and early 17<sup>th</sup>- century engraved compositions, specific attention was paid to the verso side of these copper plates. Although no new leads for Bruegel's printing plates were

found, the whole quest was not without merit. On the reverse of three small plates, engraved by different members of the Wierix family, faint traces of 16<sup>th</sup>- century maps could clearly be distinguished. Wouter Bracke, who in 2018 and 2019 was the head of both the Map Room and the Print Room of KBR, kindly offered a helping hand for the identification of these map fragments. What follows are the preliminary results of their joint research.

The retrieval of the three re-used copper plates of the Wierix family is certainly not the first of its kind.<sup>3</sup> Several examples of worn-out printing plates of maps yielding delicately painted compositions on their respective reverse sides have already been described in the literature.

<sup>3</sup> For examples of re-use of worn copperplates for the engraving of maps see M. Hamelers, 'Copperplates in the Northern Netherlands', *The Map Collector*, 47 (1989), pp. 36-39 and G. 't Hart, *De kaart van Rijnland door Floris Balthasar*, 1615, Alphen aan den Rijn, 1969.



To our knowledge the first to publish on one of these was Martin Holmes who in the 1960s identified fragments of an anonymous 16<sup>th</sup>- century large-scale map, the so-called Copperplate Map of London. Today, no less than three separate pieces of copper of the printing plates of this old map can be found as support for paintings with attributions to Marten van Valkenborch (1534–1612) or his circle and Hieronymus Francken I (1540–1610).<sup>4</sup>

Holmes attributed the ‘lost’ map of London to Anthonis van den Wijngaerde (1525–1571, as the designer) and Frans Hogenberg (c. 1538 – c. 1590, as the etcher).<sup>5</sup>

In 1998, Markus Heinz and Cornelia Reiter published an article on another, but similar, case. A fragment of one of the printing plates of Abraham Ortelius’s eight-sheet wall map of Asia (1567) was discovered as the copper base for a painting representing the Day of the Last Judgement. This painting was attributed to the circle of the Antwerp Francken family and dated around 1608.<sup>6</sup> Part of a second plate of this map was found in 2005

4 Two parts – one *Tower of Babel*, the other *The Coronation and Assumption of the Virgin* – can be found in the Museum of London and a third piece – another *Tower of Babel* – in the Anthaltische Gemäldegalerie Dessau at Schloss Georgium in Dessau.

5 M.R. Holmes, *Moorfields in 1559: an engraved copper plate from the earliest known map of London*, London, 1963; Idem, ‘An Unrecorded Map of London’, *Archaeologia*, 100 (1966), pp. 105–128; P. Barber, ‘The Copperplate Map in context’, in: A. Saunders and J. Scofield (eds.), *Tudor London: a map and a view*, London, 2001, pp. 16–32.

6 ‘*Asiae Descriptio* und Jüngstes Gericht: Beispiel für die Zweitverwendung einer Kupferplatte von Ortelius’, *Cartographica Helvetica*, 17 (1998), pp. 25–32. An English version of the article was published in M. Van den Broecke, P. van der Krogt, P. Meurer, *Abraham Ortelius and the First Atlas. Essays Commemorating the Quadricentennial of his Death 1598–1998*, ‘t Goy-Houten, 1998, pp. 125–131.

on the back of a painting attributed to Jakob Ernst von Hagelstein (1588–1653).<sup>7</sup> And finally, a third piece of the same wall map of Asia was identified in 2016. The copper bore on the reverse The Holy Family in a flower wreath, which was regarded as a collaborative work of Jan Brueghel the Younger (1601–1678) and Frans Francken the Younger (1581–1642). We find Ortelius’s wall map of Asia in the accounts of Christophe Plantin until at least 1579. The painted *Last judgement* was dated around 1630–1640.<sup>8</sup>

A third and last example of the retrieval of yet another map fragment concerns the *Galliae Narbonensis ora marittima recenter descripta* by Ortelius. Part of its copperplate was found in 2013 on the reverse of a *Harrowing of Hell* attributed to the atelier of Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568–1625) and Hans Rottenhammer (1564–1625).<sup>9</sup> The map forms the left half of a folio in Ortelius’ *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*. On the right half of the folio we find Gilles Boileau de Bouillon’s *Sabaudiae et Burgundiae comitatus descriptio*.<sup>10</sup> Part of the plate for that map has also been found and identified.<sup>11</sup> This time the painting,

7 *Judith mit dem Haupt des Holofernes*, 1605. Cfr. C. T. Seifert, ‘Beiträge zu Leben und Werk des Lindauer Malers Jakob Ernst Thomann von Hagelstein (1588–1653)’, *Wissenschaftliches Jahrbuch Zeppelin Museum Friedrichshafen, Friedrichshafen*, 2005, pp. 103–105.

8 Cfr. Wolfram Dolz in U. Neidhardt and K. Krüger (eds.), *Das Paradies auf Erden. Flämische Landschaften von Bruegel bis Rubens*, Dresden, 2016, pp. 128–131, no. 28.

9 M. Neumeister and C. Melzer in M. Neumeister (ed.), *Brueghel. Gemälde von Jan Brueghel der Ältere*, Munich, 2013, pp. 184–189, nos. 21, 22.

10 M. van den Broecke, *Ortelius Atlas Maps. An illustrated Guide*, Second revised edition, Houten, 2011, pp. 192–194, no. 48.

11 O. Damme, ‘Un cuivre d’Ortelius aux Musées royaux des beaux-arts à Bruxelles’, in W. Bracke (ed.), *Margaritae cartographicae. Studia Lisette Danckaert*, Brussels, 2006, pp. 61–68.

a landscape, has been attributed to Jan Brueghel the Elder. The map was published in the *Theatrum* until 1581, after which it was replaced by another plate.

To these examples of re-used printing plates of maps, we can now add the following three fragments from the Chalcography of the Royal Library. In contrast to the above-mentioned examples, these pieces have not been used as a support for painting; their respective reverses were used by members of the Wierix family for prints, i.e. to be engraved once again.

The Antwerp engraver Hieronymus Wierix (1553/4–1619) can, in all respects, be regarded as an utterly compelling artist. On the one hand, he can be identified as a graphic wonder boy who carried out his first commissions for Christophe Plantin at the age of 17. On the other hand, however, alcoholic tendencies, an unreliable track record and even a case of involuntary manslaughter, made his career rather unstable. Nonetheless, what he left behind are prints, often in smaller format, in a really virtuoso technique. This is also the case for two of the re-used plates in the Brussels Chalcography that were engraved a second time by this artist. The first plate (inv. no. 4423a; fig. 1.a) depicts *St Francis of Assisi in a landscape, kneeling before the crucified Christ* (Hollstein 1454). The second (inv. no. 4437a; fig. 2.a) shows *Christ on the Cross* (Hollstein 363). These two fragments of copper were once part of the printing plate of the same map, i.e. the map of Bavaria (*Vindeliciae sive utriusque Bavariae secundum antiquum et recentiorum situm...*) published by Ortelius in his 1570 edition of the *Theatrum orbis terrarum*. After 1573 the map was replaced by Apian’s map of Bavaria. 4423a (Fig.1.b) is cut from the plate’s upper right part, while 4437a (Fig.2.b) is cut from the plate’s lower middle part (fig. 3).



Fig. 1.a *St Francis of Assisi in a landscape, kneeling before the crucified Christ* (inv n° 4423a)

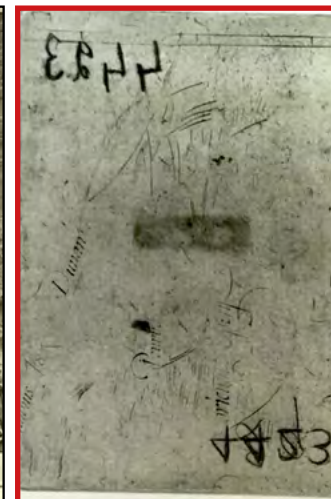


Fig. 1.b inv n° 4423a verso



Fig. 2.a *Christ on the Cross* (inv n° 4437a)



Fig. 2.b inv n° 4437a verso

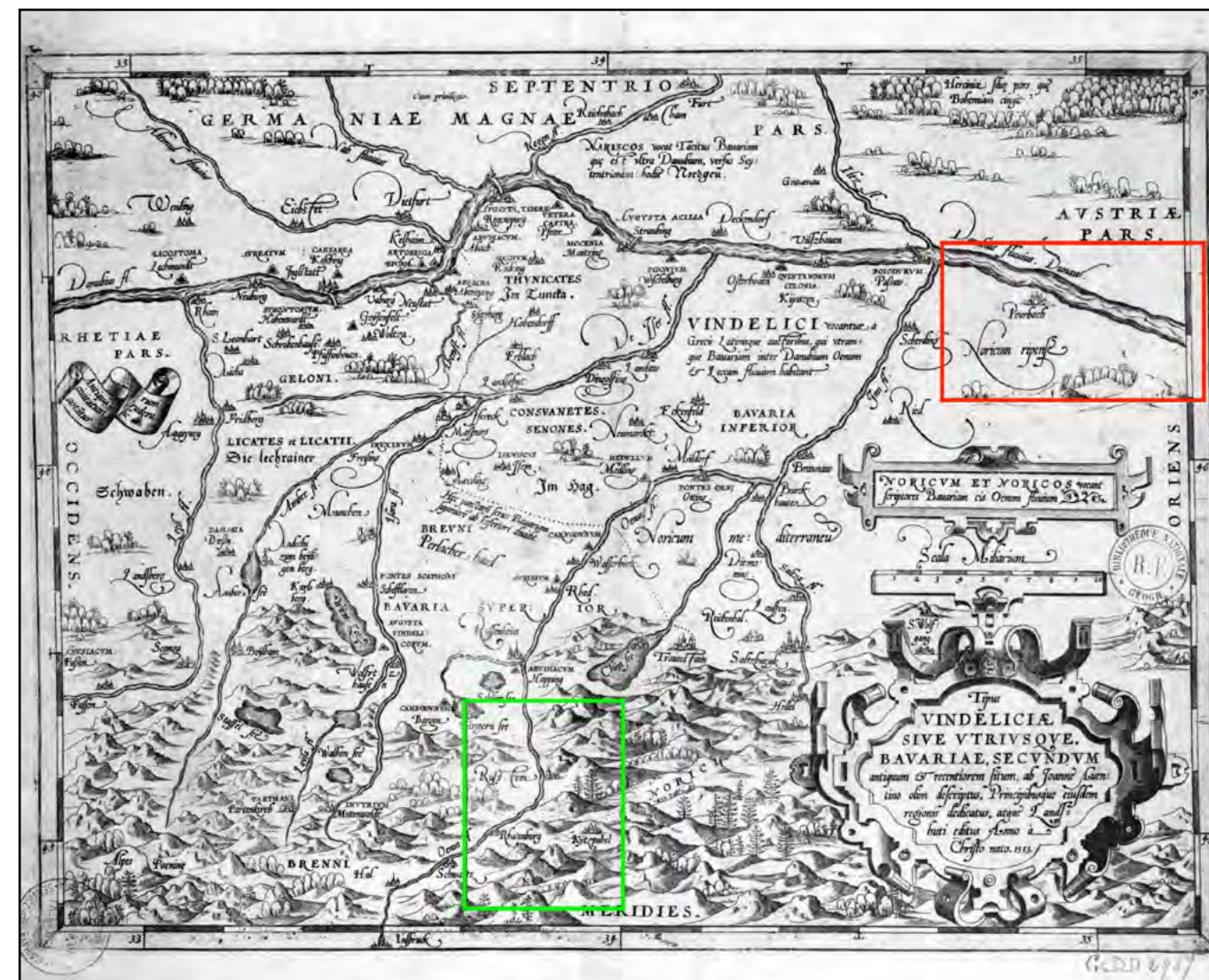


Fig. 3. Map of Bavaria (*Vindeliciae sive utriusque Bavariae secundum antiquum et recentiorum situm...*) published by Ortelius in 1570





Fig. 4a .Christ on the Cross by Antonius III Wierix (1596-1624) (inv n° 4415a)



Fig. 4.c Actual plate view of Fig. 4b



Fig. 5: One of the 5 plate fragments of the map by Gerard de Jode of 1567

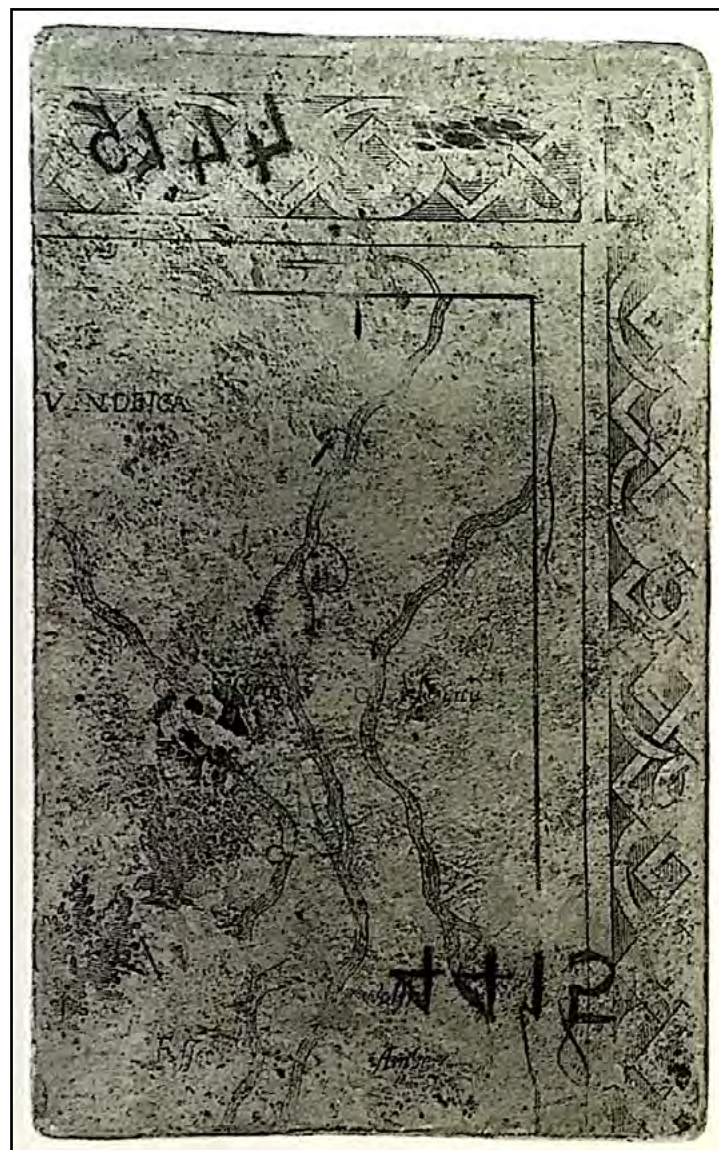


Fig. 4.b inv n° 4415a verso

Who can help to identify the map this plate fragment once belonged to?  
Suggestions can be sent to Wouter Bracke :  
wouter.bracke@kbr.be

Approximately 1300 copies seem to have been printed from this plate.<sup>12</sup> As Wierix's prints are not dated, nor precisely datable, it is of some interest to know when the outdated plate with Ortelius's map was cut into smaller pieces and re-used for new graphic endeavours. Notwithstanding the possibility of a rather trivial rejection of Ortelius's plate after 1573, we should look at two other more specific occasions on which the plate was re-used. In 1600, when two years after Ortelius's death his sister Anna also passed away, the copper plates were sold to the Antwerp publisher Johannes Baptista Vrints (c. 1552-1610); and when Vrints died a decade later, the printing plates came into the possession of Plantin's successors, the Moretus family.<sup>13</sup> As Hieronymus Wierix's *St Francis and Christ on the Cross* both carry a privilege granted by Joachim de Busschere, a prudent terminus ante quem (the latest possible date) might be put forward.

12 M. van den Broecke, *Ortelius Atlas Maps. An illustrated Guide*, Second revised edition, Houten, 2011, pp. 340-341, no. 109.

13 J. Denucé, *Oud-Nederlandsche kaartmakers in betrekking met Plantijn*, II, Antwerp, 's Gravenhage, 1913, p. 89.

De Busschere, secretary to the Council of Brabant, passed away on 7 October 1613.<sup>14</sup> We might therefore propose to place the re-use of the cut-up Bavaria plate at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century, at the time of Jan Baptista Vrints.

The third map fragment was found on a small plate (inv. no. 4415a; fig. 4) with a *Christ on the Cross* by Antonius III Wierix (1596-1624; Hollstein 72), a nephew of the aforementioned Hieronymus Wierix. Unfortunately, this piece shows the upper right corner of a map that has not yet been identified. However, the border is very characteristic. The cartographic information seems to imply the same area as the two other plates, although no clear link has to be expected. The faint traces of the toponyms still visible on the re-used copper are the following: [?]vindeica (an error for Vindelicia?), [Ab?]sberg, [?]uacu, Fusse, Ambe(rg?), Wolf[es?].

14 J.A. Rombaut, *Bruxelles illustré ou Description chronologique et historique de cette ville*, Vol. 2, Brussels, 1779, p. 310.

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Perhaps, dear reader of this article, you have an idea?

While finishing this contribution for the Newsletter five other fragments of one and the same map have been identified on the back of as many plates from the Chalcography (see fig. 5). This time the map is the eight-sheet wall map *Hungariae typus* by Gerard de Jode of 1567. The find, to which another publication will be dedicated, illustrates again the frequency with which worn plates were re-used in artistic circles in Antwerp at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup>- and in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup>- century.

Furthermore, it suggests it might be worthwhile studying the back of copperplates more systematically as they can possibly tell us more about the trade in that period as well as a map's commercial success, and procure some chronological information on the paintings and prints for which they were re-used.

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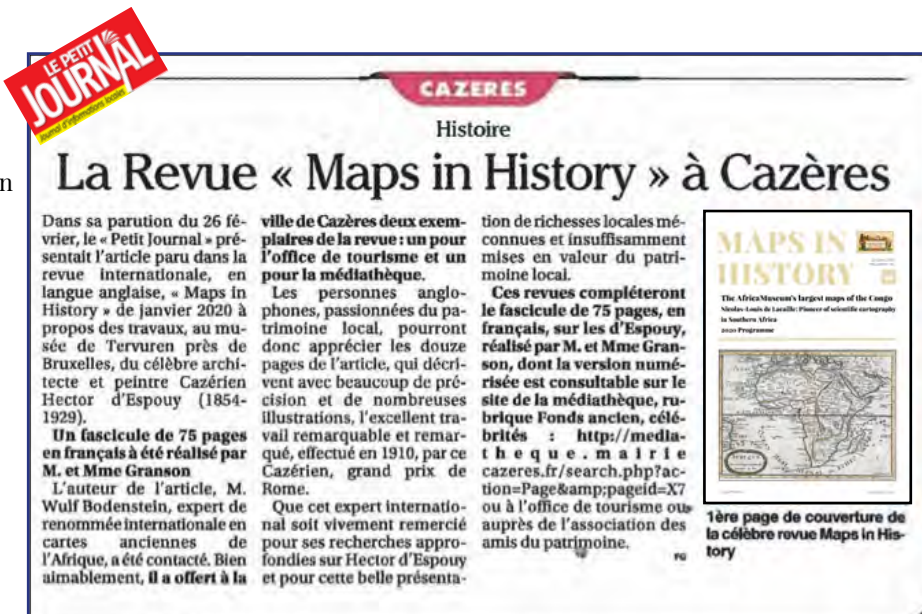
Panoramic view of the Chalcography at KBR



# Maps in History is now famous in Cazères

The very comprehensive study published by Wulf Bodenstein in our last issue has been noted in Cazères, a small town of about 5 000 people on the Garonne river, 50 km south of Toulouse in south west France. This is where Hector d'Espouy had built a covered market in 1884, just after obtaining the Grand Prix de Rome in architecture, before orienting his career towards painting and internal decoration; years later, he produced the huge Congo maps in the Tervuren museum, as analysed by Wulf's 12-pages article.

Two editions of Le Petit Journal du Cominges, local weekly of the Haute Garonne (26 February and 3 March 2020), have reported on this publication in the 'famous', 'sumptuous review... on glossy paper Maps in History', with a picture of the cover and one of Wulf standing in front of the map with the itineraries of explorers (1816 – 1900).

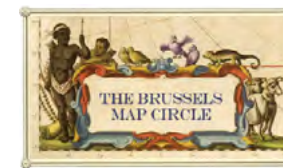


The hall, a work of Hector d'Espouy from 1884, replacing an old wooden hall from the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The statue in front of it is from the sculptor Frédéric Tourte.

## Making Maps in History

This issue of Maps in History was coordinated and edited by Luis Robbles and Jean-Louis Renteux. 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, Francis Herbert, Pierre Parmentier and Luis Robbles.



## The Brussels Map Circle Activity Report 2019

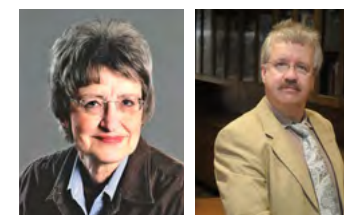
On Saturday 23 March 2019 the Annual General Meeting took place in the Boardroom of the Royal Library of Belgium (KBR) in Brussels. You can read the full report in Maps in History No 64 (May 2019).

In the afternoon, as is our tradition, the MAPAF (organised by Henri Godts, with the full support of the KBR) was held. Again, we refer to the May 2019 issue of our magazine, where you can admire the pictures taken of the presentations by Luis Robbles, Hans Kok, Gérard Bouvin, Jacques Mille, Rick Smit, Francis Herbert and Claire Dejaeger and of the treasures of the Library that were shown to us.



Hans Kok commenting one of his numerous maps

On 18 May our annual excursion took us to The Netherlands, where we could admire the splendid collection of Hans Kok, displayed in all the rooms of his house! And not only that: Hans had also booked a very nice restaurant for us and the weather was splendid, which allowed us to sit in a marquee (!) that Hans had placed in his garden to present a selection of his maps; at the end of the day, we enjoyed drinks offered by Hans and Evi: read all about it in Maps in History No 65 (September 2019) issue.



Prof. Em. Elri Liebenberg & Prof. Ihmre Demhardt

Finally, on Saturday 7 December a special annual conference was held, focussing on Africa. It was special because for once we didn't choose the KBR as our venue but the renovated AfricaMuseum, in Tervuren near Brussels. There were (only) two speakers but very seasoned ones: Professors Elri Liebenberg and Imre Demhardt, who gave a general overview of the mapping of Africa, plus two more 'special cases': the mapping of what is today Namibia and of the South African Diamond Fields. After lunch in the Museum restaurant everyone had an opportunity to visit the Museum itself, alternating with a guided tour by Wulf Bodenstein of a selection from the Museum's map collection. For a detailed account, see Maps in History No 66.

As a small bonus, the Circle organised a guided visit by the curator to the exhibition held in the Mercator museum in Sint-Niklaas on missionary cartography. A most interesting experience; see Maps in History No 66.

As has become a tradition, twelve digital short newsletters, called WhatsMap? were addressed to our members by Chris Van Hauwaert, pointing to the latest information in the field of history of cartography, maintained on our website by Pierre Parmentier.

The Executive Committee held three meetings, dealing with the usual topics. The most special ones were the decision, thanks to the good offices of our friends of the Italian Almagià association and Alex Smit in particular to organise an excursion-cum-conference in Venice in October 2020 and the expressed intention to cooperate with the KBR in the organising of the IMCoS Symposium in Brussels in 2021.



Map Circle members Eric Leenders and Jan de Graeve never missing an opportunity to study a map...



Caroline De Candt  
president@bimcc.org





# The Brussels Map Circle

## 2020 Programme

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) AND MAP AFTERNOON (MAPAF)

**CANCELLED DUE TO CORONA MEASURES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

### JOINT CARTOGRAPHY CONFERENCE IN VENICE (OCTOBER 2020)

*THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME FOR VENICE IS PUBLISHED AS PROVISIONAL, ALSO BECAUSE OF CORONA RESTRICTIONS AND NEEDS TO BE CONFIRMED. IN THIS UNCERTAIN PERIOD IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE ANY ACCURATE PREDICTION OVER THE SITUATION IN THE NEAR FUTURE.*

*A FURTHER REASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF THE IMPACT OF THE VIRUS AND THE RESTRICTIONS WILL BE MADE IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE, ONCE MORE UP TO DATE INFORMATION WILL BECOME AVAILABLE. WE WILL TAKE A FINAL DECISION BY THE LATEST TOWARDS THE END OF JUNE. WE WILL KEEP OUR MEMBERS UPDATED.*

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE :

*TO ALLOW THE ORGANISERS TO ASSES THE POTENTIAL INTEREST THIS EVENT AROUSES AND CONTINUE THEIR PREPARATORY WORK, ALL THOSE INTERESTED ARE REQUESTED TO FILL IN A NON COMMITTAL FORM ONLINE. IT DOES NOT ENGAGE ANYONE. ITS SOLE PURPOSE IS TO ESTIMATE THE NUMBER OF POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS. PLEASE GO TO OUR WEBSITE TO FILL IN THE FORM BEFORE MAY 31.*

### 16 and 17 OCTOBER 2020 : JOINT CARTOGRAPHY CONFERENCE IN VENICE

In close collaboration with our Italian sister organization Roberto Almagià, the city of Venice has been selected as the venue for a conference to be held in October 2020. Venice is the city of many famous cartographers, such as Fra Mauro, Forlani, Bertelli, Gastaldi and Coronelli. collections.

The two-day conference will focus on the interaction between cartographers of Italy and the Netherlands during the period 1550 to 1750, regarding exchanges, copying and pirating of maps, which took place extensively (and without shame).

The idea is to hold on Friday 16 October a full day of lectures in the prestigious Aula Magna of the Ateneo Veneto and on Saturday 17 October to make private visits to the famous **Correr and Marcina Libraries**. These both have very rich cartography collections and Marciana also the famous Fra Mauro map, which has been recently restored.



The Libreria Marciana in Venice

The venues are all situated in the heart of Venice, on or close to the San Marco Square. We have already received a confirmation for participation by several illustrious speakers for the conference and the preliminary programme is :

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| • Vladimiro Valerio | Introduction                             |
| • Marica Milanesi   | Coronelli                                |
| • Giorgio Mangani   | Ortelius                                 |
| • Daria Perocco     | Travelling in 16 and 17th centuries      |
| • Wouter Bracke     | Dutch maps in “ <i>Lafreri</i> ” atlases |
| • Pieter Martens    | City views in mid 16th century           |
| • Hans Kok          | Blaeu maps copied in Italy               |

On the evening before the conference, on Thursday 15 October, an informal dinner will be organized in a typical restaurant for participants of the Brussels Map Circle only (estimated cost around EUR 35.00 pp).

On Friday evening all participants to the conference will be invited to attend a very special evening on the island of Murano in the lagoon of Venice. Artistic glass blowing is their world-famous specialty and a demonstration and exhibit will be followed by cocktails and a gala dinner (estimated cost around EUR 100.00 pp). Transfers to the island by a private boat.

For the organisation a small team has been composed of Alex Smit, Emilio Moreschi, president of Almagià, and Prof. Vladimiro Valerio. Emilio lives part of the year in Venice and is very well introduced in different associations there. Many thanks to Prof. Vladimiro Valerio, who has volunteered to take care of the scientific coordination of the conference. Until recently he lectured at Venice University and is internationally recognised as a leading expert in Italian cartography. He is very well known in academic circles in Venice and lives there since many years.

Recommendations for the lodging of the participants in the vicinity of the location of the conference will be made in due time. This will be announced on our website ([www.bimcc.org](http://www.bimcc.org)), by e-mail (WhatsMap?) and in the next issue of Maps in History.

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Alex Smit  
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# Two *Grandes Dames* in the History of Cartography have recently left the stage.

## MONIQUE PELLETIER (1934 – 2020)

Monique Pelletier spent her entire career at the Bibliothèque nationale de France [BnF, National Library of France] after studying at the prestigious École nationale des chartes [National School of Charters].

She entered the BnF Print Department in 1960, and produced the paper catalogue of prints for the years 1960 – 1970. Appointed director of the maps and plans department in 1976, she modernised it and, in particular, implemented the computerisation of the general catalogue of cartographic collections, the outcome of which in the early 2000s offered users an exceptional tool for finding ancient and modern maps, plans, and globes.

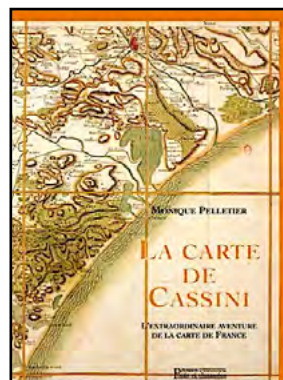
In addition, she was the overall commissioner of the major exhibition of the history of cartography, *Couleurs de la Terre* (Paris, 1999), and the author of numerous publications which were compiled in a tribute volume when she retired that year: *Tours et contours de la Terre : itinéraires d'une femme au cœur de la cartographie* [Tours and outlines of the Earth; itineraries of a woman at the heart of cartography]. Her name is associated in particular with the history of the Cassini map from *La carte de Cassini : l'extraordinaire aventure de la carte de France* [The Cassini map: the extraordinary adventure of the map of France] (1990) to the revised, pocket-book, (3rd) edition *Les cartes des Cassini : la science au service de l'État et des régions* (2013) [The Cassini maps: science serving the country and the regions].

Members of the Brussels Map Circle will recall her participation in the earlier conferences of the BIMCC at the Collège Saint-Michel: at the second BIMCC Conference in 2000, the title of her lecture was 'From Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (1570) to Bouguereau's *Théâtre François* (1594)'.

In 2002 she spoke about 'The Mediterranean and French hydrography of the 18<sup>th</sup> century', and in 2006 her subject was 'Cosmography and Sea Charts in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century; Martin Waldseemüller's case'. She developed the subject further in an article in BIMCC Newsletter No 27.



Her strong involvement in national and international authorities, her insatiable curiosity and her profound taste for research into the history of cartography will leave a lasting imprint on the international community of cartographic historians.



## LISETTE DANCKAERT (1930 – 2020)

Lisette started her professional career as a librarian at the Royal Library of Belgium way back in 1954, hardly a year after obtaining her M.A. degree in geography from the Université libre de Bruxelles.

But it was 1969 before she entered the Map Room. By then she had already participated in various projects relating to the history of cartography and had published notable contributions in this field. In 1958, within the framework of the Brussels World Fair, she was responsible for the exhibition *Brussel in kaart en beeld* [Brussels in maps and images] and in 1965 she helped Antoine De Smet, the then head of the Map Room, to organise the exhibition on Dutch cartography. In 1967-68, she curated a second exhibition on city maps, with maps not only of Brussels but also of 18 other Belgian cities. Both exhibitions announced what would be the focus of her research: the attentive scrutiny and description of the cartographic document. In 1968 she published her fundamental work on the topography of Brussels: *L'évolution territoriale de Bruxelles. La cartographie de 1550 à 1840*. Bruxelles, Arcade, 1968, which would form the basis for her bestseller 21 years later, *Bruxelles. Cinq siècles de cartographie*. Tielt, Lannoo; Knokke, Mappamundi, 1989.

In 1974 Lisette took over from Antoine De Smet as Head of the Map Room and Secretary-General of the National Centre for the History of Sciences (NCHS) which was housed in the Map Room. For the NCHS she published a selection of scientific contributions by Antoine De Smet on the history of cartography. Three years later, in 1977, under the umbrella of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) she mounted the exhibition *Belgica in Orbe*. It was her last major initiative in the field as an administrator with all attendant responsibilities; the care of her readers and personnel, and the collection, required her full attention. Lisette knew her collection as no other and was thus able to identify important gaps and to acquire significant documents. She had a special 'penchant' for modern cartography, e.g. the charts of the British Admiralty.



Lisette was only 60 when she left the Library. But even if she no longer directed the Map Room, she continued as before to participate in conferences, occasionally presenting a paper (which she wasn't really fond of), and contributing small but precious pearls of scientific research.



In October 2006 she was honoured at the Royal Library of Belgium on the occasion of her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday with a *liber amicorum* entitled *Margaritae cartographicae. Studia Lisette Danckaert 75um diem natalem agenti oblata*, edited by Wouter Bracke, who inserted the 18 pages of her bibliography. The book contains, among others, an article by Monique Pelletier.

In December 1998 she participated in the Ortelius Conference, the first event of the newly founded BIMCC, today the Brussels Map Circle. She joined the Circle in November 1999 and its Executive Committee in December 1999. She became our *scientific advisor* in 2003, a post she held until end 2014 when Wouter Bracke took over.

Over the years, she made numerous contributions to our Conferences, Study sessions and publications (starting with an article in BIMCC Newsletter No 5, September 1999). In particular, she was a member of the Editorial Committee until the end of 2014 and proof-read with a very sharp eye all contributions for publication in the Circle's Newsletter/ magazine.

At the beginning of this year, although she was in constant pain in her room at Clinique Saint-Michel, she still reviewed the January issue of 'Maps in History'.

Lisette would have been 90 at the end of May 2020.

She will be missed by friends and colleagues !

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# In memoriam:

## Peter H. Meurer (10 April 1951 – 11 March 2020)

(Summary of the Obituary to be published in *Imago Mundi* – by permission)

Peter Heinrich Meurer was born on 10 April 1951 in the small village of Horst (now part of the city of Heinsberg, North Rhine-Westphalia, close to the Dutch provincial border of Limburg), the son of a shoemaker. Upon the early death of his mother, his grandfather brought him up and formed his attitude to life.

Having been educated at the classical secondary school of Heinsberg, and following his military service, he studied geography and history of architecture at the Technical College of North Rhine-Westphalia in Aachen from 1972 to 1977, with history, town planning, history of art and geodesy as secondary subjects. He obtained his M.A. with a study of the fortified settlements in the Duchy of Jülich.

In 1981, Peter Meurer enrolled in Bonn University to read history of science. His dissertation on 'Atlases published in Cologne', terminated in 1984, was rejected owing to some academic rivalry between professors. It finally appeared in book form in 1988, entitled *Atlantes Colonienses: Die Kölner Schule der Atlaskartographie 1570–1610*, one of Meurer's most successful publications. He then launched a new project with the publisher of *Atlantes Coloniensis*, Dietrich Pfahler of Bad Neustadt: the publication of *Speculum Orbis*, a scholarly cartographic periodical which started in 1985 but unfortunately ceased to exist in 1988.

In 1987, Peter Meurer married Heike, née Raschdorf, his friend of many years, who became the pillar of his life.

In order to enable his return to the academic world, Professor Wolfgang Scharfe of the Berlin Free University invited Peter Meurer to undertake his PhD as a post-graduate external student. It so happened that his new work, the *Fontes Cartographici Orteliani*, was nearly completed and it fitted well into the programme of Scharfe's Institute. This important analysis of Ortelius's sources for his *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* was published in 1991.

Around 1988, the idea of an *Imago Germaniae* project was born, a study he was to pursue at the Documentation Centre for German Regional Studies at the University of Trier from 1992 to 1997. This resulted in the publication of the *Corpus der älteren Germania-Karten* [Collection of early maps of Germania] in 2001. When the Trier Institute was closed in favour of the Leibniz Institute for Regional Studies in Leipzig, Peter Meurer reluctantly left the town and



University of Trier and moved back to his parents' home in Heinsberg.

Another professional opportunity arose in 1998 at the Gerhard-Mercator University of Duisburg. A research project on Christian Sgrooten, jointly elaborated with Utrecht University, prompted this move. However, when this university was merged with that of Essen in 2002, Peter Meurer once more lost a promising research possibility. Nevertheless, and in spite of a lack of perspectives and regular employment, he concluded the Sgrooten project as a scientific study on his own.

There followed a period of serious hardship for Peter Meurer. Three new propositions for research projects had been rejected, and in 2004 he suffered a heart attack, necessitating a bypass operation. For a while he turned to working with antiquarians and collectors to earn his living. Finally, a job creation programme of the German Research Foundation (DFG) permitted him to regain access to the scientific community. Between September 2008 and July 2011, he was responsible for a project on the *Werkausgabe Caspar Vopelius* [The complete works of Caspar Vopelius] which he concluded successfully. It was not, however, published as such, due to financial constraints.

These many setbacks, aggravated by deteriorating health, led Peter Meurer to abandon scientific work and in 2014 he decided to go into early retirement. In 2016 he finally returned to his long-standing favourite theme of maps of the Catholic German Order, and in particular to those produced by the missionaries of Steyl. Since purchasing original atlases had become cheaper than obtaining scans, he became a collector himself, assembling an almost complete set of these atlases. The resulting study was published in *Cartographica Helvetica* Vol. 58/2019, his ultimate contribution to a Journal he had served for thirty years.

Peter Meurer's untimely death is an immense loss to all those intimately involved in the history of cartography. One cannot but admire his impressive capacity for work and his enormous creative output. Obligated to subsist under the most trying of circumstances, he persevered in following his scientific vocation, delivering major contributions to the History of Cartography that range from Ptolemy to 20<sup>th</sup>-century missionary maps. His books on the Cologne Atlases, on Ortelius, the Corpus of early *Germania* maps, and on Sgrooten are masterpieces that have become indispensable works of reference. It is these that will keep alive our memories of a great scholar and map historian.

His complete bibliography with 200 entries will be published in *Cartographica Helvetica* Vol. 61/2020.

Wulf Bodenstein  
wulfo@outlook.com

### Note from the Editor

Peter Meurer joined the BIMCC in June, 1999. We are grateful to him for having contributed the following articles:

- in the context of the 6<sup>th</sup> International BIMCC Conference *Formatting Europe – Mapping a Continent: Europa Regina. 16<sup>th</sup> century maps of Europe in the form of a queen*, in: *Belgeo* 2008/3–4, pp. 359–368
- with Pierre Dumolin, *Two unrecorded Lafreri-type maps of Hainaut and Southern France*, in: *Maps in History* No 47, September 2013, pp. 14–18
- *The Map of the 1542 Franco-Habsburg War by Enea Vico*, in: *Maps in History* No 53, September 2015, pp. 16–19
- *The Cologne publisher Gerhard Altzenbach and Liège or: A Chapter from the Complexity of Cartobibliography*, in: *Maps in History* No 55, May 2016, pp. 20–26.

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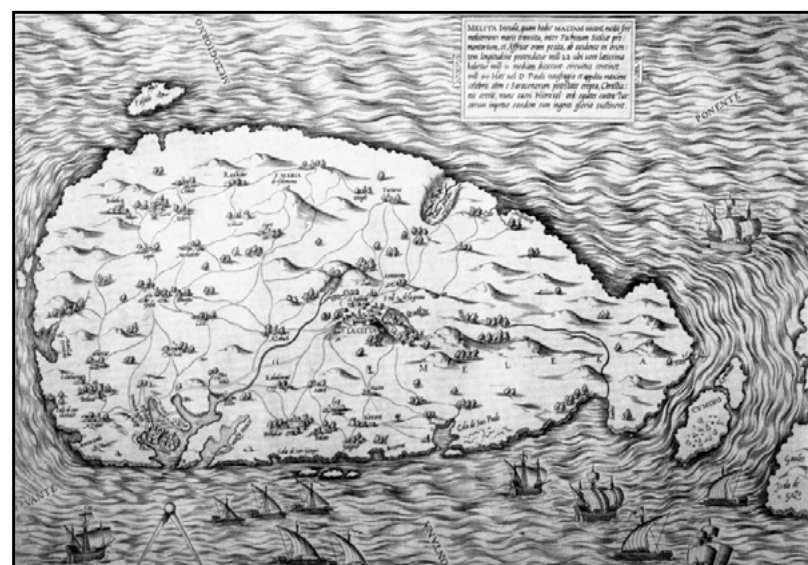
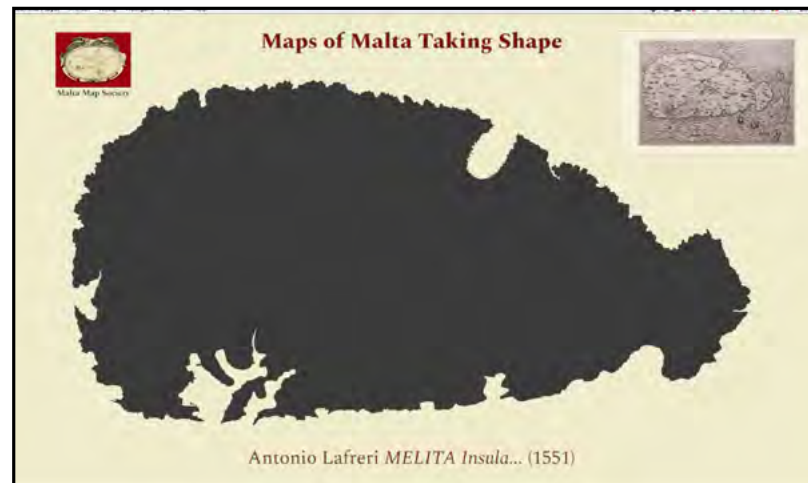


# Maps of Malta taking shape

A spectacular video-clip has been produced by the Malta Map Society to show how the early representations of the Maltese archipelago changed and morphed over the ages. The earliest maps were rather rudimentary almost bearing no relation to the real shape of the island of Malta. Early maps of Malta were round-shaped notwithstanding the publication in 1551 of the near-perfect fish-shaped map of Malta by Antonio Lafreri. The Grand and Marsamxetto harbours were usually drawn proportionately larger to give them the importance that they deserved. This clip can be seen on our website: <https://www.bimcc.org/history-of-cartography/maps-of-malta-taking-shape>.

The idea of preparing a video-clip titled *Maps of Malta taking shape* came after the publication in 2016 of the 'The Pre-Siege Maps of Malta: Second Century AD-1564' authored by Albert Ganado and Joseph Schirò.

The Malta Map Society, on its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019, has been awarded patronage by H.E. the President of Malta; it would like to thank the Farsons Foundation for its sponsorship, Joseph Schirò for the concept, and Sam Hayman for its production. Amusement and education were the rationale behind the production of this video-clip.



Melita Insula or Malta - map by Antonio Lafreri - 1551  
(see BIMCC n° 33 p5)

## 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).

Interested ? Contact : [treasurer@bimcc.org](mailto:treasurer@bimcc.org)

# 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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