



ICA Commission on Digital Technologies in Cartographic Heritage



Terms of reference

In our rapidly evolving knowledge-, information- and communication-based society a number of issues in Cartographic Heritage should be revisited in terms of the new digital tools which are today available and in wide use. An interesting field for actions in this domain can be focused e.g. on the transformation into digital of old maps, atlases and globes with all the delicate questions related to such transformation; on the cartometric and thematic research on antique maps; on the digital tools helping and broadening the work of map curators, the development of virtual map libraries; on the digital archiving and retrieval of cartographic archives; on the digital communication channels for the users of antique maps in the context of a modern information society. All these, and some more easily derivable from the previous, find a productive embedding in this Commission on digital technologies applied to Cartographic Heritage, according to the terms of reference:

- Introduce and establish the concept of "cartographic heritage".
- Transformation into digital form of old maps, globes and other cartographic documents. Comparison of digitization methods and technologies and development of relevant standards.
- Applications of digital techniques to the cartographic study (analysis and interpretation) of old maps and their geometric and thematic content. Tests of various analytic processes and visualization.
- Development and management of digital map libraries accessible to the general public. Digital tools to assist map curators, to aid the networking of map libraries and to allow in-situ and remote virtual access to cartographic heritage.
- Digital support for the preservation and restoration of old maps, atlases and globes.
- The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and the web for the teaching and for the diffusion of the heritage of cartography and maps to the general public.

Workshops

The venue of the Workshops is decided after an invitation by a hosting institution. Six Workshops have taken place so far:

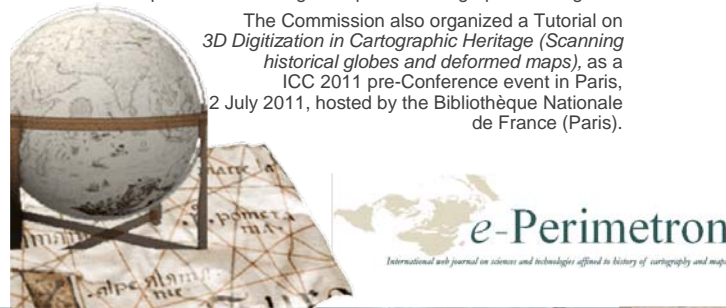
- 2011: Nationaal Archief (The Hague)
- 2010: Technische Universität Wien (Vienna)
- 2009: Università IUAV di Venezia (Venice)
- 2008: Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya (Barcelona)
- 2007: Hellenic National Research Foundation (Athens)
- 2006: Museum of Byzantine Culture (Thessaloniki)

The Workshops were attended by 318 participants in total (33 of them Commission members), from 33 countries, affiliated to more than 140 organizations.

The *Proceedings* of these six Workshops are published in one printed Volume and in five CDs; selected papers are also published in the International web journal *e-Perimetron* (a web journal on sciences and technologies affined to the history of cartography and maps).

Workshops' *topics of interest* include: the concept of cartographic heritage and its multidisciplinary, sustainability and dissemination; the techniques and procedures for the transformation of cartographic heritage objects into digital form; the relevance of information and communication technologies and of the Web; the relation of spatial data infrastructures and digital map libraries; the digital documentation, analysis and interpretation of historic maps; specific ongoing projects and international cooperation on the digital impact in cartographic heritage.

The Commission also organized a Tutorial on *3D Digitization in Cartographic Heritage (Scanning historical globes and deformed maps)*, as a ICC 2011 pre-Conference event in Paris, 2 July 2011, hosted by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris).



History

In July 2005, during the XXII International Cartographic Conference (A Coruña, Spain), the Executive Committee of the International Cartographic Association accepted the proposal for the establishment of a new Working Group (WG) on Digital Technologies in Cartographic Heritage.

The proposal for the creation of the WG was based on the recognition of the rapid deployment of digital information and communication technologies (ICT) into a manifold of issues related to the cartographic heritage in the large, interesting not only specialists but also the general public. In principle, the WG was planned to concentrate on any specific ICT topic which interacts potentially with issues related to the heritage of cartography and maps operating separately from the ICA Commission on History of Cartography and the ICA WG on History of Colonial Cartography which existed until 2007. The WG's ambition was to enrich the influence of ICA by attracting new audiences and potential operators in the field of Cartographic Heritage interested in the implementation of relevant digital technologies.

In August 2007, during the XXIII International Cartographic Conference in Moscow, Russia, the General Assembly of the International Cartographic Association promoted into Commission under the same name its WG on Digital Technologies in Cartographic Heritage.

Cooperation

This Commission cooperates closely with other ICA Commissions and Working Groups with affine interests and with any other organization, institution or group sharing relevant issues of research and activities.

Of principal concern is the attraction of young researchers who are interested in cartographic and map heritage and are indeed familiar with digital technologies.

The Commission also exploits the grounds for cooperation with map libraries, map curators and map collectors wishing to experiment and implement new digital technologies.

The cooperation with enterprises dealing with digital image capturing, processing and visualization technology is also highly requested.

