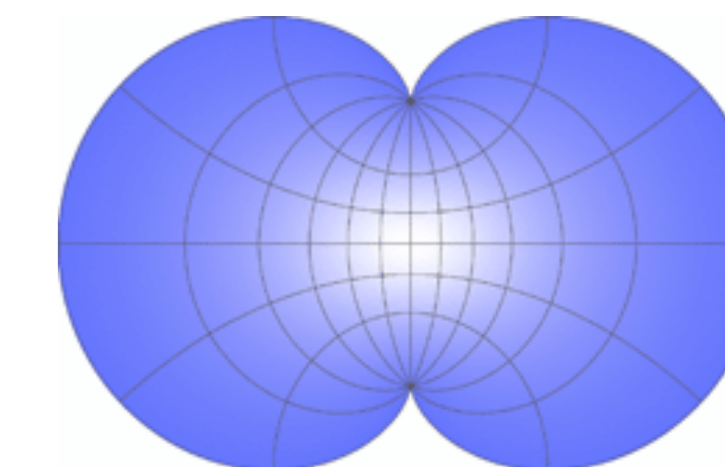




Commission on Map Projections



Introduction

Map projections are more practically available now than they ever have been. They play, or ought to play, an important role in the daily work of cartographers everywhere in order to improve the maps they produce. Hence the cartographer ought to be knowledgeable about map projections and ought to have practical access to the best tools for and information about map projections.

The ICA Commission on Map Projections was established in August 2003 at the 21st International Cartographic Conference in Durban, South Africa, following an official approval of its proposed terms of reference by the 13th General Assembly of the ICA. The goals of the commission are:

- To establish a repository of map projection knowledge
- To promote map projections to all relevant audiences
- To provide a platform promoting research and a common language in the field of map projection
- To encourage collaboration on map projection issues between researchers and across disciplines

In the past two terms (2003-2007, 2007-2011) commission activities have been coordinated by Daan Strebe, Maphematics LLC (chair, 2003-2011), Frank Canters, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (co-chair, 2003-2011), Fritz Kessler, Frostburg State University (secretary, 2003-2007) and Lynn Usery, US Geological Survey (secretary, 2007-2011). Currently, the Commission on Map Projections has 63 corresponding members of which only few have been actively involved in commission activities in the 8 years of the commission's existence. Many corresponding members have an interest in map projections, yet mostly from a user perspective. Only a small minority of the members of the commission is involved in map projection research.

Activities in 2007-2011

Digitization of the Bibliography of Map Projections

In 1988 the U.S. Geological Survey published the first edition of the Bibliography of Map Projections, compiled by John P. Snyder and Harry Steward. With a total of almost 3,000 entries the bibliography is by far the most comprehensive in its subject area, including references in 28 languages: 50% are in English, 28% are in German, Russian and French, and 22% are in other languages, the majority in Polish, Hungarian, Italian and Spanish. Also, the work has significant historical value. Fifty one references were published before 1800, one a classic work by Ptolemy, circa 150 AD. The bibliography is an invaluable source of information for those pursuing research in the field of map projections. Cartographers and map projection enthusiasts interested in the rich history of the subject or in more recent accomplishments of map projection science (over 2,000 of the entries have been published since 1960) find the bibliography a useful reference for exploring the vast body of literature covering the field of map projections..

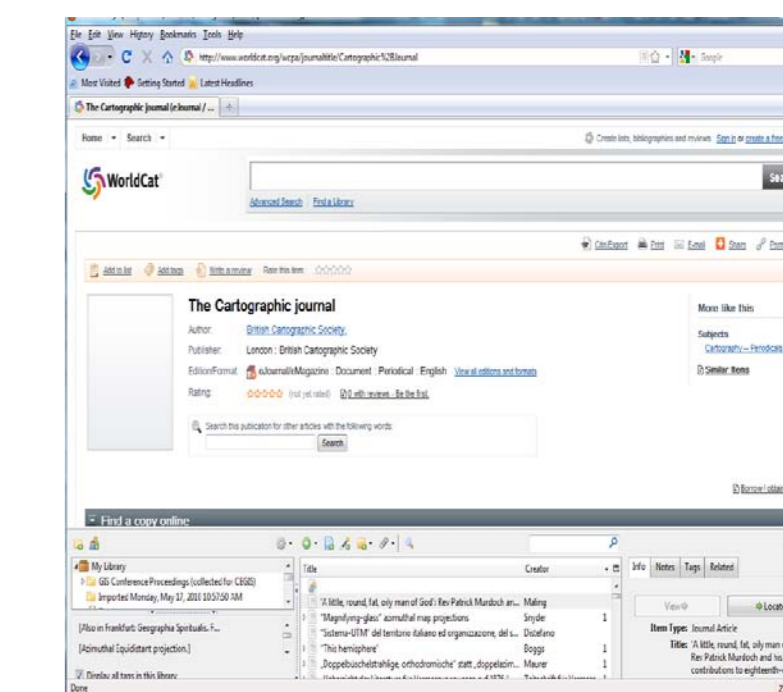
Based on revisions by John P. Snyder two updated on-line versions of the bibliography were installed at Ohio State University in 1994 and 1996, yet without an on-line search or update capability. In 1997 the U.S. Geological Survey published the 2nd edition of the bibliography with 446 new entries added to the 2,551 of the first edition.

From the start of its activities in 2003 the commission put forward as one of its goals to develop an on-line, searchable version of the bibliography that can be updated and expanded with new entries by authorized users. The digitization of the bibliography was initiated by the Center for Excellence in Geospatial Information Sciences (CEGIS) of the US Geological Survey as a contribution to the ICA Commission on Map Projections in May of 2009 and reached a stage of completion one year later when made available on-line.

The creation of the bibliography into a database with a keyword search function will benefit researchers by enabling them to effectively obtain entire lists of works on single related topics or by individual authors. In addition to the nearly 3,000 items in Snyder's publication, additional references that add to the body of literature on map projection continue to be added. Non-duplicate references from Snyder's book *Flattening the Earth: Two Thousand Years of Map Projections* (1993) are among them.

The aim is to continue adding new references to the bibliography as submitted by the cartographic community. The ICA Commission on Map Projections chairman will have total administrative management access and will provide authorized access to appropriate individuals for updating the database (read/write abilities). The bibliography is accessible and searchable as read-only to all having URL access information and is available in WikIndX and Zotero at:

<http://cegis.usgs.gov/bibliographies.html>



Workshops and meetings

Alternating with the 2-yearly ICA International Cartographic Conferences, the Commission on Map Projections organized a workshop at Autocarto 2008 (Shepherdstown, West-Virginia) and one at Autocarto 2010 (Orlando, Florida), each attracting around 10 participants.

The commission organized business meetings at ICC 2007 in Moscow and at ICC 2009 in Santiago de Chile. The commission will also host a business meeting at ICC 2011 in Paris.