Exploratory Essays on Twentieth-Century Cartography Completed

The symposium “The History of Cartography in the Twentieth Century” was held in Los Angeles, 17-18 March 2002, as part of the preprogram for the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers. Five board members (Chris Board, Joel Morrison, Ferjan Ormeling, Fraser Taylor, and Waldo Tobler) joined the authors of eleven essays and other attendees for a full day and a half of polished presentations and engaging discussions. David Woodward served as chair for the first day of eight talks, and Mark Monmonier took over for the second day, which included the three remaining essays, a summary discussion, and an informative visit to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). Before leaving for the JPL, the group gave Teresita Reed, Outreach and Office Administrator, a standing ovation for her superb work organizing the conference.

Each author incorporated feedback from the symposium into a penultimate draft, submitted in mid-April. Everyone met the deadline, and manuscripts were sent to six board members and an additional thirty referees who had agreed to evaluate the essays within four weeks. Mark Monmonier orchestrated the peer review, summarized responses, and transmitted them to the authors. Each author received feedback from three to five readers, and was given a month to address the comments and submit a final draft. Coeditors Monmonier and Woodward accepted ten manuscripts, which they edited jointly during June and July. The essays and accompanying illustrations were delivered to the

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American Congress on Surveying and Mapping publications office, as promised, by 31 July, for publication in the July 2002 special issue of Cartography and Geographic Information Science (CaGIS).

Subscribers to CaGIS can expect to receive the special issue in October. Friends of the History of Cartography Project who are not subscribers can receive a copy by contacting the Madison Project office in mid-October.

Volume 3 News

It has been rewarding to see this book coming together, and we’re anxious to send it to the University of Chicago Press at the end of the year for peer review. There are some wonderful stories about the scholarly contributions in this large and complex volume.

Plans for the Renaissance volume have always included large sections on the national traditions of Western Europe. The contributions on Italy, Portugal, Spain, the German Lands, the Low Countries, France, the British Isles, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, and Russia form what we have always considered a foundation for the volume. It would seem that gathering the literature and writing a narrative about the role of each of these countries in Renaissance mapping would be fairly straightforward, but even for a tradition as well-documented as the Dutch, this was no easy task. We were fortunate to have recruited the very best in the field early in our preparations for the volume; Cornelis Koeman and Günter Schilder graciously accepted the invitation and wrote the section. But research on mapping in the Low Countries continued with many new publications every year. When we had finally finished publishing Volumes 1 and 2 (Books 1 through 3) of the History and turned our full attention back to Volume 3, it was clear that a good deal of new research would need to be incorporated. We were fortunate to have the support of the original authors and the additional assistance of three scholars in the Netherlands, Marco van Egmond and Peter van der Krogt, who helped revise and update the original contribution, and Kees Zandvliet, who added material on the Dutch West and East India companies. Without the cooperation of these five well-known and highly-respected cartographic scholars, a first-rate essay on Renaissance mapping in the Low Countries would not have been possible. The result will provide a baseline for any researcher interested in Dutch cartography during this period.

Volume 3 also includes a large section that we refer to as “interpretive essays.” These are designed to draw together some of the cross-national themes that can not be adequately addressed in the chapters on national traditions. The themes include maps and Renaissance culture (cosmographical mapping, celestial mapping, the reception of Ptolemy, and maps in the context of textual studies, literature, religious world views, and understanding of other societies); technical skills and Renaissance mapping (mathematics, surveying, techniques of measurement, navigational practices, cartographic signs, and engraving and printing); maps and Renaissance governance (maps in terms of the state, urban space, rural land management, warfare, and exploration); and the production and consumption of maps (in business, education, and centers of mapping). Several of the authors recruited for these essays are scholars in fields such as intellectual and diplomatic history, art history, the history of science, and literature, who have an interest in cartography but have not made it the central theme of their research and writing. We are delighted to incorporate the breadth of their background into the volume.

Several of the interpretive contributions have debunked long-held myths in the history of cartography. Patrick Gautier dalché’s essay, for example, articulately disposes of the myth that Ptolemy’s Geography had a simple and immediate effect on the way maps were compiled in the fifteenth century. He shows instead that various European cities absorbed the Geography both in different ways and at different times, and concludes that the notion of geographical coordinates based on longitude and latitude took much longer to be adopted than most general histories of cartography might suggest. A nother example of revisionist thinking is Felipe Fernández Armesto’s essay on maps and exploration, in which he questions the long held belief that maps were essential and invaluable tools of the early navigator and explorer. Both scholars provide meticulous references to support their arguments.
The History of Cartography offers a comprehensive and reliable reference work for all cultures and periods that scholars, teachers, students, librarians, and the general public can turn to for precise information as well as methodological insights. In the first three volumes, material was addressed in long chapters written by relatively few scholars. Over the past few years, our newsletters have chronicled the editorial meetings and discussions leading up to the decision to structure Volumes 4, 5, and 6 quite differently. These later volumes in the series will be structured as large, multi-level, interpretive encyclopedias that contain the high-quality text and illustrations, tables, appendixes, diagrams, newly drawn reference maps, and full indexes that were hallmarks of all previous volumes.

Volume 4, Cartography in the European Enlightenment, will contain over 800 entries arranged alphabetically by keyword and extensively cross-referenced. Short- and medium-length entries (500-5,000 words) will provide incisive descriptions and assessments of technological developments, processes, and concepts. Longer entries (5,000-10,000 words) will allow insightful coverage of broader topics such as the role of mapping in public works projects, the use of maps for analyzing natural and human phenomena, the role of maps in warfare, maps as political and economic propaganda, and maps in education and in the arts.

Strong Cartographic History: Presence at the Renaissance Society of America Meeting

An unprecedented number of sessions (4) devoted to the history of cartography were presented at the Renaissance Society of America’s annual meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona, 11-13 April 2002. Authors from the History of Cartography Project were prominently in evidence as Volume 3, Cartography in the European Renaissance, is in its final stages of prepress manuscript preparation.

Francesca Fiorani and Mark Rosen gave papers on Italian mural map cycles. Fiorani is writing a chapter on Italian mural maps for Volume 3; Rosen is researching maps in the Guardaroba in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence.

In a session entitled “Illustrating Space and Place in the Renaissance,” Denis Cosgrove drew parallels between Ptolemy’s Geography and Vitruvius’s Four Books on Architecture. Daniel Brownstein argued that the representation of place dominated fifteenth-century geography over the Ptolemaic abstract systems for representing space. David Woodward likewise showed that Ptolemy’s projections were slow to excite interest in the fifteenth century, and that the need for such maps did not arise immediately after the translation of the Geography around 1407. The Geography was a necessary but not sufficient condition for the increase in the number and quality of maps in the sixteenth century.

Noam Flinker, University of Haifa, and Zur Shalev, Princeton University, offered papers in a session called “Maps and Religion.” Flinker presented a paper on the maps in Thomas Fuller’s Psephag-sight of Palestine (1650), while Shalev broadened the role of Geography-sacra to show how maps took an active part in the religiously charged scholarly culture of early modern Europe.

Catherine Delano-Smith, Shankar Raman, and Alison Sandman contributed papers to a session titled “Using Maps in the Renaissance.” Delano-Smith examined some of the aspects of map literacy related to learning, education, and training, and the shift from closed to more open map-user circles. Raman examined the relationship between narration and description in seventeenth-century Dutch painting, focusing on the use of maps by Jan Vermeer and Pieter de Hooch. Sandman concluded the session by focusing on Andrés García de Céspedes, whose books illustrate the deep controversies over the use of charts and the reliability of pilots’ reports at the end of the sixteenth century.

In addition, two other papers of cartographic interest were presented at the meeting: Helena K. Szepe of the University of South Florida explored how the Americas were described in Benedetto Bordone’s Isolario (1528) and Suzanne Boorsch of the Yale University Art Gallery offered persuasive arguments for attributing the engraving of the thirty-one maps in the Berlinghieri edition of Ptolemy’s Geography (1482) to Francesco Rosselli.

The participants were unanimous in their enthusiasm for these well-attended sessions and the meeting emerged as a very worthwhile sounding board for issues surrounding Volume 3.

Map Society Tours History of Cartography Project

The Project recently enjoyed a visit from the Map Society of Wisconsin as part of their June 2002 field trip to the UW-Madison campus. Arriving on a warm Saturday afternoon, a dozen map enthusiasts visited the Robinson Map Library and Wisconsin Historical Society map collections and then found their way to our Science Hall office. Tom Hotter organized the field trip to provide an opportunity for map society members to learn more about the History of Cartography Project and how it operates.

Project Assistant Dana Freiburger gave a brief talk about the Project’s current activities, including exciting work on Volume 3 as well as the recent initiatives related to Volumes 4 and 6. One highlight for our visitors was the opportunity to examine a few illustrations that will appear in Volume 3 (over 1,000 illustrations are planned for that volume) and to ask questions about how illustrations are handled by our publisher. It was a very successful visit, and we appreciated the opportunity to show a “behind the scenes” view of our work.

In June, we were pleased to welcome Beth Freundlich back from family leave to her position as project administrator. She is rejoining our staff with a half-time appointment and will share many responsibilities with Paul Tierney, who has superbly handled all financial duties during her absence. We extended many parting thanks to Teresita Reed, who served as our excellent outreach, conference, and office coordinator this past year.

Project Assistants (PAs), who do a tremendous amount of reference checking on the essays and who have a profound impact on the accuracy and completeness of what appears in the History of Cartography series, are graduate students from several departments on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. This year, all five of our one-third time PAs completed their masters degrees (Kim Coulter, Brian Covey, Dana Freiburger, Brenda Parker, and Ben Sheesley). Our congratulations go to them! Unfortunately, that means several will be leaving the project this year to pursue their doctoral research or move on to new jobs. We have hired a graduate student in geography, Jeff Bernard, to start in September and will be searching for another PA this fall.

**NEH Proposal Submitted for Volume 4**

Series editor David Woodward and volume editors Graham Burnett, Matthew Edney, and Mary Pedley collaborated this year on a request for funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities in support of Volume 4. The grant proposal was submitted at the end of June for funding beginning July 2003. Matthew Edney will coordinate the selection of topics and scheduling at the University of Southern Maine, Portland. David Woodward will be responsible for the overall management of Volume 4 and its place in the series.

**NSF Requests Resubmission of Volume 6 Proposal**

In January 2002, we submitted a grant proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF) for Volume 6, Cartography in the Twentieth Century. It solicited five years of support to complete the final volume in the series—a 1,500 page, million-word, scholarly, multi-level encyclopedia with approximately 800 illustrations. The proposal was to build on the current NSF supported exploratory essays initiative in the history of twentieth-century cartography, the papers for which will be published this fall in Cartography and Geographic Information Science.

Reviewers for the NSF Geography and Regional Science program commented on the “thorough, precise, and realistic” work schedule and the “very well-qualified investigators.” Furthermore, they believed that “the impact of this project will be considerable.” The review panel expressed concern, however, that a large editing project such as Volume 6 did not fit their criteria of supporting individual scientific research, and they rejected the proposal.

The NSF Science and Technology Studies panel, however, supports some editorial projects and ranked our proposal as “Category I—Must Fund.” They did have concerns over the size of the budget, and they strongly encouraged us to resubmit our proposal at a decreased cost to NSF. The Science and Technology Studies program officer also remarked that book publications can be approved, but that text from NSF supported research should be made accessible on the Internet. Both panels felt that their limited budgets at NSF could no longer fund administrative costs, which they believe should be borne by the host institution, publisher, private partners, or other sources of support.

Our success in grant writing to date has perhaps masked the difficulty of maintaining the Madison office entirely on “soft” research money. Continuity in personnel is critical to running the Project. Managing editor Jude Leimer has worked full-time for the Project since 1982 on a year-to-year basis and has been supported exclusively by external funding. The loss of her cumulative experience would be devastating for the Project. Indeed, it would be difficult to see how the Project could continue to handle the myriad inquiries and transactions of hundreds of authors and manuscripts without a managing editor of Jude’s caliber.

In addition, of course, we want to hold the interest of Mark Monmonier as an editor for Volume 6, for—as is well known to many of our readers—his prolific schedule in writing monographs does not allow much flexibility for other projects unless supported by grants. Funds in the Syracuse University portion of the NSF proposal would have provided Monmonier with the assistance of a full-time managing editor, so that he could complete Volume 6 over the next five years while meeting his teaching commitments.

Our goal is to resubmit the proposal with a plan to raise gifts for matching the NSF funds from corporations, foundations, or individuals interested in seeing the final volume of the Project come to fruition. As we continue to plan for future funding of the Project, suggestions, ideas, names of contacts, and possible strategies would be much appreciated.

If no support is forthcoming for Volume 6, we will have to end the Project with the history of nineteenth-century cartography. This would not be a new idea. When the History of Cartography Project was conceived in
1977, the original concept was for four volumes to cover the subject to 1900, the usual cutoff date for cartobibliographers and map historians. This plan was sharply criticized by one of our editorial advisers, Walter W. Ristow, then chief of the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress, who pointed out that the story would stop before the most prolific cartographic century. The history of twentieth-century cartography was added to the plans, and then-editors Brian Harley and David Woodward invited Mark Monmonier to be a coeditor for Volume 6, with the enthusiastic support of the University of Chicago Press. We would obviously like to bring our History of Cartography to the present day, as the twentieth century is full of fascinating and important developments that deserve full treatment.

David Woodward Retires in August to Focus on Project

For more than two decades, David Woodward has balanced the many academic and administrative demands of the History of Cartography Project with a strong devotion to excellent teaching and advising, university service, special cartographic projects, and outreach to the public. Brenda Parker, History of Cartography reference editor, recently spoke with him about his decision to retire from teaching.

You are preparing for your upcoming retirement from teaching and university responsibilities. What inspired this decision?

My half-time research appointment at the UW Institute for Research for the Humanities came to an end in June. If I continued to teach, I would need to offer more courses in modern cartography and map design. Although I enjoy that, it doesn’t really fit into the History of Cartography Project, which is my first love. So, the retirement is really to focus on the Project. The retirement will also allow me the flexibility of doing other kinds of teaching, such as lectures and workshops. I really enjoy teaching small groups in different settings.

What have been some of the highlights of your teaching career?

My history of cartography course has introduced many students—both undergraduate and graduate—into historical maps, something they otherwise wouldn’t think about. I think the [cartographic] design course has also been interesting, especially the student map projects. I have truly learned a lot from those. I think those students really get a feeling that there is an aesthetic to this means of expression that is very important. I think the students go out into the GIS or professional world with something different.

How would you describe the legacy you are leaving here at the University of Wisconsin?

I think that trying to keep aesthetics in mapping is a very important thing and that the history of the subject—map history—has some real opportunities to deepen the field and to provide context for other fields such as art history, history of science, and anthropology. One major contribution that the Project has made is that it has expanded the definition of the map beyond most people’s horizon.

Speaking of legacies, you have just received two important awards, one being the Hilldale Award from the University of Wisconsin.

Yes, and it was really nice to get that because it recognized contributions in three main areas of university work: teaching, research, and outreach. I have tried to balance those three things, so it was a great honor. One of the things an award does is validate you. It enables you, when you are trying to get support for the things that you love, to show that your work is valued.

You also received the Murchison Award from the Royal Geographical Society.

Yes, the Murchison award is the oldest award from the Royal Geographical Society. It goes back to 1882. The winner of the Murchison award is asked to respond on behalf of the other awardees of which there were around a dozen, so that was a nice opportunity to say something about the field. The Murchison award was also important because it is a major recognition of the history of cartography as a field of research.

In your years in working in the history of cartography field, what have you seen change?

The history of cartography as a subject doesn’t have a clear disciplinary home. This is disturbing. On one level, universities are trying to encourage interdisciplinary fields, and map history is, in fact, a perfect archetype for interdisciplinary work. On the other hand, it’s difficult to know where it exactly fits. Does it fit in geography, history, history of science, history of art? I think that most people on the street would say the field belongs in geography. One of the things that Brian Harley [founding coeditor of the History of Cartography, with David Woodward] did was to reach out to colleagues in historical geography and political geography and to help them realize that a map is a complex document; it has an agenda and a character all its own.

What is the drawback of a lack of a home discipline for the history of cartography?

A lack of graduate students—graduate students who you can train in a particular school of thought and who then feel like they can get a job when they are done. There have been more jobs in this field than people realize, in the antiquarian and library science...
What are the future directions for the work in this field. who have then gone on to publish a foundation for a growing field of way, the Project has served as the Renaissance Society of America's annual meeting in Chicago and recent increasing numbers of scholarly conferences, including the History of Cartography Project.

How do you think people are using the scholarship that has come out of the History of Cartography?

Scholars, teachers, and even the general public have turned to it for both bibliographic information and methodological insight; it has become the standard reference in the field and many books cite it extensively. Also, the History has been featured at increasing numbers of scholarly conferences in various fields, the 1998 Asian Studies meeting in Chicago and recent Renaissance Society of America's annual meetings, for example. In this way, the Project has served as the foundation for a growing field of study and a springboard for scholars who have then gone on to publish work in this field.

What are the future directions for the History of Cartography?

Obviously electronic versions of the books will happen. Our philosophy has been to get the content right, and how the content is delivered is another issue. There are real obstacles to electronic versions, especially related to the images and copyright. But it would be enormously valuable to have the project in electronic form, if one could make it possible without jeopardizing the quality and economics of the Project.

What milestones for the History of Cartography Project are you looking forward to?

I'm really looking forward to the appearance of Volume 3 [the Renaissance]. Also, it would be nice to finish all six volumes. The way I look at it, the Project has an energy of its own, like a river wending its way to the sea. Boulders may be put in its path, but eventually it cuts a channel around them. One way or another it's going to bubble on until it gets there. Even if it is dammed up, it is still going to generate electricity. There is an energy to this project that is demonstrated by the support that individuals, corporations, and foundations have given to it year after year. Short of a complete change in social climate, in which the water in the river might evaporate, I feel confident that this history of cartography will eventually be completed at the standard of quality it deserves.

Are there other things you want to share about the Project?

Well, one thing I would like to say is that the quality of the staffing of the Project has just been amazing to me. Jude, of course, has been here for 20 years and is the linchpin of the Project. The project assistants and administrative staff that we've been able to attract have all been excellent. We have this community of people who have worked for the Project, and we're still in touch with most of them. The personnel has been really terrific, and I think they have learned a lot about making books in the process.

Editors' News

Talks in which David Woodward promoted the History of Cartography Project included "The Taste for Map Projections in the Renaissance" at the 4th International Laboratory for the History of Science in Florence and Vinci, Italy, in May 2001. In October, while attending the North American Cartographic Information Society in Portland, Oregon, he gave a talk on the Project to the Western Association of Map Libraries Annual Meeting. On his return, he gave a supplementary Kenneth Nebenzahl, Jr., Lecture, "The Role of Immigrants in the Italian Map Trade," at the Newberry Library, Chicago, addressed the International Map Collectors Society in Milwaukee, and welcomed participants in a post-meeting field trip to Madison.

In January, he gave a plenary address at the Institute of British Geographers Annual Meeting, Belfast, at which he stressed that we must extend the definition of cartography beyond a technical ability to define position. He expressed a hope that the History of Cartography Project will help to provide abundant evidence that the map is a cultural artifact with a rich history that can help us understand the world views of others and ourselves. Woodward attended the two-day symposium on the history of twentieth-century cartography, organized by the Project at the Association of American Geographers (AAG) meeting in Los Angeles, and served as a discussant at an AAG session on popular cartography. He organized four sessions at the Renaissance Society of America annual meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona, and presented "The Taste for Map Projections in the Renaissance.


Aside from his work for Volume 6 and the Exploratory Essays Initiative, Mark Monmonier has been busy teaching, writing, and lecturing. He has completed six book chapters (in various stages of publishing), an article on aerial mapping at the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (out this fall), and Spying with Maps: Surveillance Technologies and the Future of Privacy (also out this fall, from the
University of Chicago Press). His article, “Thematic Maps in Geography,” appeared in late 2001 in the International Encyclopedia for the Social & Behavioral Sciences. The July-August issue of Mercator’s World included Monmonier’s twelfth consecutive column “All over the Map,” and he is making steady progress on a history of the Mercator projection (broadly defined), under contract at Chicago. He gave public lectures on gerrymandering at Ohio State University in November (as Distinguished Lecturer in the Arthur H. Robinson Colloquium Series) and at Indiana University (for the Bulen Symposium on American Politics) in December, on mapping in newspapers in March (at the National Computer-Assisted Reporting [CAR] Conference), on “Cartographies of Surveillance” in May (as keynote address at the annual meeting of the Canadian Cartographic Association), and on cartographic misrepresentation and propaganda in July (at the Santa Fe Art Institute). In May the CCA bestowed its Award of Distinction “for exceptional scholarly contribution to the field of cartography” to Monmonier. In April he completed a year as president of the local chapter of Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Society, and in May he moved to a new office in the Maxwell complex at Syracuse University.

D. Graham Burnett (Volume 4) is an Assistant Professor in the History Department at Princeton University, where he is a member of the Program in History of Science. His primary research examines the role of the geographical sciences in European colonialism, but he has also published on themes in early modern history of science.

He spent much of this year developing a new survey lecture course on the history of science and technology in a global context. Emphasizing geographical knowledge from the fifteenth to the twentieth century, the course aimed to give students a sense of the complex and evolving relationship between science and European world power. In addition, Burnett presented several lectures and papers, including new work on Matthew Fontaine Maury at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. He was invited to contribute an essay on the map making of Johann Baptist Homann and his heirs. In April, he gave the keynote lecture at the symposium “The Making of European Cartography,” held at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence; and, in May, he gave the keynote lecture at the symposium “On the Map: Cartography, Geography, and Politics” at Stanford University’s Center for International Security and Cooperation.

Mary Pedley (Volume 4) delivered the fourteenth annual Kenneth Nebenzahl, Jr., Lectures in the History of Cartography at the Newberry Library in Chicago, 11-13 October 2001. Entitled “A Taste for Maps: Commerce and Cartography in Early Modern Europe,” Pedley’s three lectures were followed by responses from David Woodward, Markus Heinz, and Peter van der Krogt on Italian, German, and Dutch cartography, respectively. The manuscript of the lectures has been submitted to the University of Chicago Press for review. Heinz invited Pedley to contribute an essay on the map trade to his catalog that will accompany an exhibit at the Stadtarchiv, Nuremberg, in the fall of 2002. The exhibit will celebrate the 300th anniversary of the foundation of the mapmaking firm of Johann Baptist Homann and his heirs. In April, Pedley traveled to Monte Verità in Ascona, Switzerland, to participate in an international colloquium on European engraving and cultural exchanges in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The five-day seminar brought together print historians, curators of ephemera collections, and one historian of cartography to discuss the effect of the graphic image on intellectual and social change in Europe.
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