



A World of Innovation

Cartography in the Time of Gerhard Mercator

Edited by

Gerhard Holzer, Valerie Newby,
Petra Svatek and Georg Zotti

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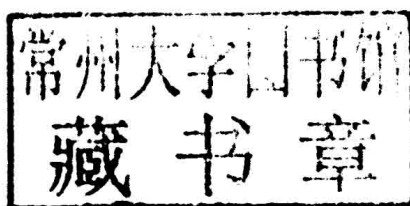
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INTRODUCTION

HANS D. KOK

IMCoS, the International Map Collectors' Society, was founded in 1981 in London. On occasion we present ourselves as the Society 'for people who love early maps' without any restrictions either on the maps you love or the place where you reside on this planet. Our membership consists of a great variety of people - male and female - and as it turns out, all possessing a good sense of history. Probably quite logically so, as early maps may be viewed as condensed history, be that in terms of geographical discoveries in times past or thematic issues of past and present. Not to mention celestial maps and those maritime in nature. The latter are often related to navigation and tie in with a great number of related subjects. As a Society our constitution calls for the study of maps, publishing results where applicable, and asks us to protect and conserve these maps for the cultural benefit of posterity. Sometimes we generate interesting research in the cartographical field, sometimes we are called on to keep private persons and institutions from destroying their map archives. On other occasions, our members hold talks and presentations on subjects related to our hobby and draw numbers of interested 'cartophiles' to attend these. The membership is composed of map collectors, academics and curators of map collections and of dealers in the field. It is this combination of interests which makes us strong and makes achieving the goals of the Society feasible. Personally, I promote the idea that map collecting is to be compared to a three-legged stool. Were there no academics studying maps, the collectors would not know what to buy; they would lack information as to which maps are outstanding, rare or rarissima and why they would be worth (a lot?) collecting. Without the dealers, collectors would have no place to buy and without collectors the dealers could not make money. Without collectors and dealers, our academics would work in a void, with nobody to appreciate the information they unearth. Each of these three categories serves to keep the essence of historical cartography upright and over the years – more or less – in balance. No category is superior to any other, and it is the sum total of these categories which makes the system work.

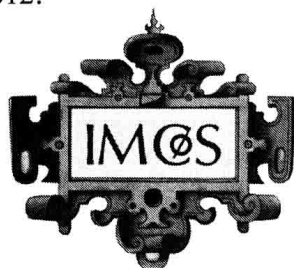
Since its inception, IMCoS has hosted over 30 International Symposia, organised on its behalf. The venues range from Sydney/Australia and Wellington/New Zealand in the south to Reykjavik/Iceland and Oslo/Norway in the north. Our 2013 Symposium was hosted by the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. In an east-west direction we have held our Symposia in Riga/Latvia, Cologne/Mainz, Amsterdam, London, Chicago, Denver, San Francisco, Tokyo and Singapore, whilst Seoul/Korea and Cape Town/South Africa are currently in preparation. Istanbul, Guatemala City, Madrid and Modena are more pearls on the same IMCoS string which has become too long now to report here on all our symposia. Countless members have viewed the extremely rare maps that institutions do not normally put on display or show to ordinary visitors, but which they gladly and proudly make available to real lovers of early maps when a Symposium comes their way. Many speakers of note and many young academics have presented their lectures on these occasions. A considerable number of these presentations were re-worked into articles and subsequently published in the quarterly *IMCoS Journal* for the benefit of the members who were unable to attend the symposia. For the first time, follow up of an International Symposium has resulted in a dedicated publication. The presentations of our excellent 2012 Symposium in Vienna/Austria are collected, edited and published by Gerhard Holzer, Valerie Newby, Petra Svatek and Georg Zotti.

As current chairman of IMCoS, it is both an honour, my prerogative and pleasure, to write the introduction to the book containing these presentations. The Vienna Symposium was organised by a Viennese team headed by Dr. Stefaan Missinne, a Belgian national living in Austria. In view of the fact that 2012 was pre-destined to become the Gerard Mercator year, the famous scientist and cartographer being born 500 years ago in Rupelmonde/Belgium, the emphasis on Mercator's achievements comes naturally in this case. Vienna is also the home to the only Globe Museum in the world and through the kind and knowledgeable assistance of Dr. Rudolf Schmidt (1924-2013), their globe collection is rivalled by none other. We gratefully acknowledge the efforts of Dr. Petra Svatek and the team, who have edited the presentations- no mean feat for sure- and trust that the resulting publication now in your hands, will not only reflect the proceedings of the 2012 IMCoS Vienna Symposium, but will also in retrospect serve as reference material for those interested in historical cartography, whether they be attendees of the Symposium, academics involved in these matters, or collectors and map dealers in general, who have an interest in the various subjects discussed. On behalf of IMCoS and its members, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the

organising team of the Symposium, its speakers and now to the editing team that has worked so hard. Financial support by “Cambridge Scholars Publishing” is gratefully acknowledged; the publication would otherwise have been impossible to produce.

As a map collector myself and chairman of our Society I would like to wish you all pleasant reading and if you have attended the Vienna Symposium in person, it will no doubt bring back memories of the happy days we spent together in Vienna in September 2012!

September 2013, Lisse/The Netherlands
Hans D. Kok, IMCoS Chairman.



500 YEARS OF MERCATOR

GERHARD HOLZER, VALERIE NEWBY,
PETRA SVATEK AND GEORG ZOTTI

In 2012 scholars from different academic disciplines commemorated the 500th birthday of Gerhard Mercator (1512-1594), the most important cartographer and globe maker of the 16th century. Gerhard Mercator was born on the 5th of March 1512 in Rupelmonde in Flanders which was part of the Habsburg Empire. Mercator is remembered amongst others for his publication “Atlas sive Cosmographicae Meditationes de Fabrica Mundi et Fabricati Figura” (1595) and for his specific cylindrical map projection (1569) which is still in use on maritime maps today.

On this occasion, the “International Map Collectors Society” together with the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Austrian-Belgian Society, organized an international conference which was held in the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna from 9th to 12th of September 2012. The talks were given by internationally renowned map historians, historians and geographers on the collective topic “Gerhard Mercator and cartography in the Habsburg Empire during the 16th century”. The organizing committee had put together a program with lectures in the mornings and visits to different map and globe collections in the afternoons. Included were the Woldan Collection of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the Globe Museum and the “State Hall” of the Austrian National Library with the special exhibition “Cartographic rarities of the Austrian National Library from the first half of the 16th century”, the Department of Geography of Vienna University (research group “Cartography and Geoinformation”), the Austrian State Archives, the “Wien Museum”, the Schallaburg castle and the Benedictine Monastery of Melk.

Over the last few decades many studies have addressed Mercator’s life and cartographic output. But nevertheless many gaps in the research into his globes, maps and interrelationship with other cartographers still need to be filled. The aim of the Viennese IMCoS Conference was to present the latest research on Mercator with a view to his sources, his relationship with other scientific disciplines and cartographers of his time, as well as

his role in the wider world of Renaissance cartography and Humanism. Among other things, new research results were presented on his scientific library, on an astrological disk on the base of his celestial globe and on the source of the star positions of this globe. Also on the similarities and differences between the different versions of his world map (1596), his cosmographical ideology, and on his relationship with other cartographers of the Habsburg Empire including Wolfgang Lazius whose maps became an important source for him.

Besides cartography and geography Mercator also had an excellent knowledge of many other scientific disciplines like mathematics, history, theology, philosophy and astronomy. Therefore he was a truly universal scholar. These interdisciplinary research topics are also the subject of the articles of this book which is structured into the following parts:

1. Cartography in the Habsburg Empire during the time of Mercator
2. Gerhard Mercator: his “Atlas” and the cosmography of his time
3. Gerhard Mercator: acquaintances and sources
4. Globes and celestial maps in Mercator’s time

In the first part named “Cartography in the Habsburg Empire during the time of Mercator” five articles address the most important maps and cartographers of the Austrian and Hungarian part of the Habsburg Empire during the 16th century. Some maps of these cartographers became an important source for Mercator’s own maps of areas which today comprise Austria, Hungary and Slovenia. During the 16th century a major contribution came from members of the “Second Viennese School of Mathematics and Astronomy” (Georg Tannstetter, Johannes Cuspinian), Wolfgang Lazius, who produced the first Atlas of the Austrian provinces (“*Typi chorographici provinciarum Austriae*”, 1561), and Johannes Sambucus, the author of many maps of Hungary. In addition to these rare maps, attention was increasingly paid to the production of urban maps. For example, the first apex of the urban mapping in Vienna began immediately after the first Turkish siege of the city in 1529, when new fortifications were built and surveying of the city became increasingly important. For this reason, a series of maps of Vienna was produced during the 1530s and 1540s.

The articles of the second part about “Gerhard Mercator: his “Atlas” and the cosmography of his time” give us an overview of Mercator’s “Atlas” of 1595, his cosmographical ideas and the cosmography of his time. It was Mercator who conceived and justified the prominent role of cosmography as a leading science in the 16th century.

The third part deals with the question of Mercator's sources and acquaintances. Mercator's relationship with the famous Antwerp cartographer Abraham Ortelius, the scientific books of his library and the "Atlas Bruxellensis" as an important source, are described in three articles.

The content of the fourth part talks about the "Globes and celestial maps in Mercator's time". The main focus of the two articles is on Mercator's terrestrial (1541) and celestial (1551) globes and on other globes and celestial maps of his time.

As editors of this book we would like to thank Mag. Jan Mokre and his team from the Austrian National Library, Dr. Robert Rill, Dr. Sándor Békési, Ass.-Prof. Dr. Andreas Riedl and Dr. Gottfried Glaßner for all their professional help and guidance, Dr. Rudolf Schmidt (1924-2013) and H.E. Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium in Austria Frank Recker for unforgettable receptions, and the IMCoS committee for their support in publishing this book. Many thanks also to Dr. Stefaan Missinne (IMCoS Austria), Brigitte Beidinger, Rüdiger Schultz and Dr. Helmut Suppan, who helped, together with the editors, to organize this conference, and Francis Herbert Hon. FRGS for his great help in correcting some articles of non-English speaking authors.

We hope this book will stand as a lasting memory of this memorable symposium.

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