

ICA Commission on Digital Technologies in Cartographic Heritage (2011-2015)

<http://xeee.web.auth.gr/ICA-Heritage>

- One of the fundamental tasks of this Commission is the organization of the annual international series of “**Workshops on Digital Approaches to Cartographic Heritage**” (notice the slightly different title of the annual Workshops compared to the Commission's name).
- In the **first period** (as a Working Group, 2006-2007 and as a Commission, 2007-2011) six successful and enjoyable Workshops organized in Thessaloniki (2006), Athens (2007), Barcelona (2008), Venice (2009), Vienna (2010), and The Hague (2011), **all kindly invited by corresponding hosting institutions** (Museum of Byzantine Culture, Thessaloniki 2006; Hellenic National Research Foundation, Athens 2007; Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya, Barcelona 2008; Università IUAV di Venezia, Venice 2009; Technische Universität Wien, Vienna 2010; National Archives of the Netherlands, The Hague 2011). Thanks to these Workshops we managed to:
 - a) **Formulate and advance the concept of Cartographic Heritage and its embedding in the modern Digital Technologies mainstream. The Commission resulted as a multiplier in this context, a fact proved by numerous of other meetings and conferences which came out and are coming out all over the world in this direction, organized by a variety of initiators,**
 - b) **Expand the horizons and open new in research and implementation, as it is proved by relevant new activities in the academia (doctoral dissertations) and in other institutions (research centres, Libraries, Archives)**
 - c) **Inspire strong partnerships and joint ventures,**
 - d) **Contribute in the development of new products in the field of services and digitization industry. Inspired and encouraged by this Commission some important initiatives started in the private business sector, as it is the case of the creation of small-medium enterprises dealing in supporting and servicing the work of Map Libraries and Map Collections as well as the improvement in the digitization industry, which implement advances and innovation in building scanners taking into consideration issues discussed and suggested in the Commission's Workshops.**
 - e) **Encourage and promote the dialogue between the world of digital technologies and the worlds of history of cartography, map-librarianship, map-archives and map-collections.**
 - f) **Feed *e-Perimtron*, the international web journal on sciences and technologies affined to history of cartography and maps (www.e-perimtron.org), with papers presented in the Commission's Workshops, since 2006. This web journal became since then a well followed field of spreading the scientific and technology results produced in the frame of the Commission's work.**

The ICA Commission on Digital Technologies in Cartographic Heritage started its **second term** (2011-2015), after the 15th ICA General Assembly decision, Paris, July 2011.

- Two Vice-Chairs, Dr. *Alastair Pearson*, Portsmouth and Dr. *Carme Montaner*, Barcelona, kindly accepted to support our work in this second term. Both are working in the domain of Cartographic Heritage, the first in the field of geoinformation science and technology and the second in the field of Map Libraries. The ICA Executive Committee liaison is Dr. *Anne Ruas*, Paris.
- The Commission's web-site is refreshed and updated and the list of membership is recomposed, though always open for new members working in the Commission's fields of interest, as are displayed in the Terms of Reference (ToR). In the Introduction page of the web-site there is a bulletin-board with news and information related to items relevant to the Commission's ToR and other affine themes. You are invited to send the info you think of interest in order to keep the bulletin-board rich and updated (e-mail to the Chair).
- In this Commission's second term, two "groups" are introduced in its structure: The "Supporting Institutions" and the "Commission Desk" (see the web-site).



An *ad hoc* table discussion during the ICA Commission Chairs Meeting, Vienna, 24-25 November 2011 (Photo: H. Kremers)

- The **Supporting Institution (SI)** is mainly a single public institution (university, library, agency, etc.) with systematic interests relevant to the Commission's ToR, which was actively, systematically and continuously involved in our work, during the Commission's first period, either institutionally or with a number of people working there, which interacted positively with the Commission. These SIs are considered as "reference points" in the Commission's life. The list of SIs, from **Barcelona** (Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya, Ref.: *Carme Montaner*), **Venice** (Università IUAV di Venezia, Ref.: *Francesco Guerra*), **Edinburgh** (National Library of Scotland, Ref.: *Chris Fleet*), **Budapest** (Eötvös Rolánd University, Ref.: *László Zentai*), **Thessaloniki** (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Ref.: *Chrysoula Boutoura, Alexandra Kousoulakou*), is open for other interested to join institutions coming from all over the World which will commit, as a group, to participate actively in any positive way and to support this second term Commission's work until 2015.
- The list of SIs is also open to the **non-public sector**, dealing with R+D ventures associated to the Commission's Terms of Reference. We have successful examples in this category which followed systematically the Commission's activities in the first period. The Commission is open to discuss participation of these non-public firms, according to ICA's policies on the issue.
- The **Commission Desk (CD)** is the second innovation introduced in the Commission's structure. A group of colleagues and doctor candidates who are next to the Commission Chair and are volunteering to act as a local task-force (the s.c. LVG, see the web-site) in organizational and implementation issues related to the Commission's work. I am deeply thankful to this group for the assistance and enthusiasm offered.
- The initiative concerning the 3-D digitization in Cartographic Heritage is innovative not only in the work of the Commission, but in a wider environment. It should be mentioned at this point the experience gained with the organization of the Commission's first Tutorial held last July in Paris thanks to the Venice SI (the IUAV group) and our hosts in the BnF. The result was an excellent systematic laboratory-type presentation on 3D scanning of globes and deformed old maps, utilizing on-

site super modern instrumentation and computing-visualization facilities. This example demonstrated the importance of organizing Tutorials of this type and the Commission is open to discuss any relevant proposals and invitations.

- **The intent is to continue in this path, but specifying -in this Commission's second term- a major subject of the Workshop each time (in the way the Paris Tutorial was organized). Instead of leaving the workshop content totally free (which was necessary in the first period, in order to formulate the platform of interests in Cartographic Heritage), the idea now (or the wishful intend) is to specify a major field of interest, according to the Terms of Reference, and to focus on this, as the central theme of the annual Workshop (keeping at the same time the sessions open for eventual minors).**
- **As an example, the 2012 7th Workshop to be held in Barcelona (19-20 April), which is invited and hosted by our SI, the Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya, is oriented to the map-librarianship since our Barcelona hosts are coupling this ICA Workshop with the 18th LIBER Conference of its Map-Expert Group (GdC) which will be held in Barcelona too, just before (17-18 April). LIBER, is the Association of European Research Libraries, having in its structure an active Group of Map Librarians, who some of them are members of our Commission too.**

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Terms of Reference (2011-2015): • Theoretical deepening and broadening of the issue of Cartographic Heritage • Development of methodologies and standards applied on proper **two and three- dimensional digitization** of Cartographic heritage objects, materials and documents • Study and implementation of analytical tools applied on the comparative research concerning the **geometric and thematic content** of old maps • **Digital map libraries and map collections:** Archiving, matching, management, networking and accessibility in-situ and in the web • Modern information technologies and interactivity in attracting the general public to Cartographic Heritage: Implementations in **Museology and virtual map exhibitions** •