

Preface

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Since its massive expansion under Sultans Selim I (1512–20) and Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–66), the Ottoman Empire extended from the Algerian shores to Georgia in the Caucasus and from Hungary in the heart of Europe to Yemen on the shores of the Indian Ocean. Albeit in a long decline thereafter, the core of this multi-cultural conglomerate survived into the early twentieth century before it finally disintegrated during and right after the First World War. Throughout these five centuries, the Ottomans deeply influenced these heterogeneous countries, creating or enabling a rich and multi-faceted cartographic heritage within its realms and the gradually breaking away regions in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

For many Ottoman (era) cartography is synonymous with navigator and geographer Ahmed Muhyiddin Piri (1465–1553), better known as Piri Reis and the interactions between early modern Ottoman mapmakers and their European colleagues. The International Cartographic Association’s Commission on the History of Cartography, however, believes that the Empire’s later periods, especially the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, hitherto for many themes and regions has not received the warranted attention.

Therefore, the Commission in 2019 invited abstracts for its 8th International Symposium on “Mapping the Ottoman Realm: Travelers, Cartographers, and Archaeologists”, to be held on April 21–23, 2020 in Istanbul, under its old name Constantinople until 1922 the capital of the Ottoman Empire. As the conference title (see banner above) and the Call for Papers indicated, the symposium encouraged submissions not only on regional topographic mapping by locals and foreigners, but also and – at least to my knowledge – for the first time on the mapping of archaeological sites, landscapes, and excavations. Eventually, a total of 38 presentations passed a rigorous vetting. When presenters and delegates were eagerly looking forward to stimulating exchanges at the conference and technical visits, the sudden spread of Covid-19 forced to call off the symposium just five weeks before the opening reception. At the time of going to press it is planned to catch up on the postponed symposium by a workshop linked to the 30th International Cartographic Conference in Florence (Italy) in December 2021 - the pandemic permitting!

As it became evident that the staggered waves of the pandemic would not allow a timely rescheduling of the symposium, the decision was taken to maintain as much as possible the momentum and call upon the authors to develop their presentations into full papers. Eventually, eleven author (teams) submitted fully developed papers which are contained in this book. Although the scope of the papers by time and region stretches from sixteenth century Hungary to twenty-first century archaeology of Ottoman Jaffa, you will notice that in many papers some of the content links to the content in at least one other paper, convincingly making clear the interconnectedness of interdisciplinary cartographic research especially into nineteenth and twentieth centuries of Ottoman (era / regions) cartography.

Although the pandemic prevented the 8th International Symposium on the History of Cartography from personally congregating on the Bosphorus, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the German Archaeological Institute, Istanbul Department, and there our local organizing partner Prof. Dr. Andreas Schachner, archaeologist and head of the department’s library, for setting up what would have been a memorable conference.

Further, I want to thank the reviewers and the authors for going through the production process of the ICA Commission on the History of Cartography’s first venture into Open Access publication. We hope that you enjoy reading the papers, will find them useful in the pursuit of your own research, and – last but not least – consider joining yourself the Commission’s future workshops or conferences.

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