

Maps of Czech Lands in the Period 1518 - 1720 from the Map Collection of Charles University in Prague

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Abstract

This poster presents preliminary results of research on old maps of Czech Lands deposited at the Map Collection of Charles University in Prague. The extensive cartographic collection belongs among the most important collections in the Czech Republic. The goal of the research was to document the development of cartography during the period 1518 (Claudianus's map) to 1720 (Müller's map). More than 50 originals or facsimiles of different maps were found during inventory phase of the work. This poster concentrates on a description of most interesting maps discovered from the point of view of their content, map symbols and cartometric characteristics.

Introduction

Maps of Czech Lands, i.e. Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, created by individuals in the period of 1518 - 1720 are part of our history and represent important cultural heritage of immense value. They give evidence about the period in which they originated. Old maps reflect the society and culture, and they become important historical sources. These sources are used especially in social sciences, namely in history of cartography, historical cartography, historical geography and historiography.

This poster presents an overview of the most significant cartographic works from the given period deposited in the Map Collection of Charles University in Prague, which is one of the most important map collections in the Czech Republic.

Analysis and assessment of old maps

- ✓ During the 1st half of 2008 the map fund of the Charles University was researched thoroughly, with particular emphasis on map works of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia from the period 1518 - 1720.
- ✓ The works' dating details served to determine the author, year of publication and name of publisher.
- ✓ The information whether the work is an original, facsimile, copy or derivative was also important. In our selection Comenius's map of Moravia is a facsimile. Other maps are originals.
- ✓ However, some map elements were absent, like date or name of the author. For example, Mercator's copy of Criginger's map of Bohemia is not dated. In some cases the maps were made without a map frame or a scale.
- ✓ The basic elements of map content are: settlements, paths and roads, granges, castles, monasteries, baths, vineyards, waters and various natural-history curiosities.
- ✓ Political and territorial self-governing divisions of depicted areas are represented by various types of boundary lines and surfaces of different colours.
- ✓ Another assessed element of map content is the relief, the legend and decoration in the area of title, scale or legend. And also a cartouche, i.e. decorative or ornamental framing of the map's title.



Bohemian Lion on Aretin's map of Bohemia from 1623



Complement placed in the corners of map sheets of Müller's map of Moravia

Preview of selected maps

Chorographia insignis regni Bohemiae, autore Ioanne Crigingero



Author: Johann Criginger
Year of publication: 1684
Author of engravings: copies by Gerhard de Jode
Approx. scale: 1 : 683 500

Johann Criginger (1521 - 1571) created a map of Bohemia oriented to north. The map is historically the second map image of Bohemia. The precious copy by Gerhard de Jode is less known.

The map's title is "Chorographia insignis regni Bohemiae, autore Ioanne Crigingero". Its content does not depart from the original Criginger's map. However, it does not contain the original depiction of four rulers of the Czech Crown countries in the map's corners. It contains a very good representation of Czech mountains and waters. There are altogether 292 settlements in the map represented by four symbols. The map contains a detailed network of water streams and mountain ranges represented by hummocks and groups of trees.

Surroundings of the Prague City on Criginger's map of Bohemia, copies by Gerhard de Jode

Regni Bohemiae nova et exacta descriptio – Aretin's map of Bohemia

Author: Petr Aretin of Ehrenfeld
Year of publication: 1623 (second publication - first published in 1619)
Author of engravings: Paulus Bayard sculptis Prague
Frame size: 766mm x 574mm
Approx. scale: 1 : 504 000

The map titled Regni Bohemiae nova et exacta descriptio was created by Petr Aretin of Ehrenfeld (1570-1640) as the historically third map image of Bohemia. The map was first published in 1619. In our collection we found the second and third publication of the map. The second revised and supplemented publication is dated 1632 and was used as a military map during the Thirty Years War.

The third publication in 1665 was done by the copperplate engraver Daniel Vusin (1626 - 1691). In the Map Collection of Charles University in Prague another, undated and changed publication was found. This copy was done by his son, the copperplate engraver and bookseller Kašpar Vusin (1664 - 1747, Prague).



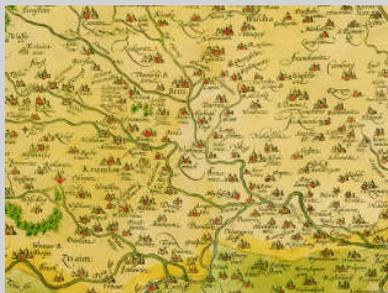
Surroundings of the Prague City on Aretin's map of Bohemia from 1623

Map of Moravia by Abraham Ortelius based on Pavel Fabricius

Author: Pavel Fabricius (1519 - 1589)
Author of copy: Abraham Ortelius
Year of publication of Ortelius' copy: 1573
Frame size: 469 x 345 mm
Approx. scale: 1 : 455 000

Fabricius's map from 1569 is the first autonomous map of Moravia. Moravian aristocrats later wrote their comments to the map which were used to publish a corrected map in 1572. Fabricius represented not only Moravia, but also a considerable part of North Austria.

Ortelius's copy from 1573 is printed on one copperplate in the format 469 x 345 mm. The map is scaled down and its graphic scale is 1 : 455 000.



Surroundings of the Brno City on Map of Moravia by A. Ortelius based on an original of map created by P. Fabricius from 1573



Surroundings of the Prague City on Vogt's map of Bohemia from 1712

Vogt's map of Bohemia

Author: Johann Georg Vogt
Year of publication: 1712
Frame size: 853mm x 656mm
Approx. scale: 1 : 396 800

Vogt's map is an important cartographic work dated in the first quarter of the 18th century. Its author is Johann Georg Vogt, the abbot of the Plassy Monastery. The format of the map is 853 x 656 mm. The scale along the central meridian is 1 : 396 800. The map is not created following a particular cartographic representation.

Vogt's map is the last private work of the early period of Czech cartography created by one cartographer. The original Vogt's map was used at the Department of Applied Geoinformatics and Cartography for the first cartometric analysis. This analysis found out that the value of the medium scale along the central meridian is approximately by 6% bigger than the currently stated value of 1 : 396 800.



Surroundings of the Brno City on Comenius's map of Moravia from 1627

Author: Jan Amos Komenský - Comenius (1592 - 1670)
Year of publication: 1627
Frame size: 544mm x 422mm
Approx. scale: 1 : 530 000
Printed from Abraham Goose's second printing plate
Approx. scale: 1 : 455 000

Comenius's map places among the most famous and most popular maps of Moravia. Comenius's method when processing the manual copy of the map was based on adapting Fabricius's map which he supplemented on the basis of his own travels, testimonies of his contemporaries, printed itineraries and written records of distances. When creating the map classical geodetic construction foundations were not used. Comenius's map of Moravia was published in 1624 from big Goose's plate in the Amsterdam workshop of N. J. Vischer-Piscator.

Tabula generalis Marchionatus Moraviae in sex circulos divisae – Müller's map of Moravia

Author: Jan Krystof Müller
Year of publication: 1716
Frame size: 484 x 581 mm
Approx. scale: 1 : 630 000
The map content was engraved by the engraver Jan Krystof Leidig from the city of Brno.

Müller's map which contains a Map of Moravia from 1716 belongs to works giving vivid evidence about the change in Moravian landscape at the beginning of the 18th century. Five decades before the first military mapping it represents in detail the landscape of the Moravian Lands with a lot of information concerning geography, economy, nomenclature and culture.

One of these publishers was Johann Baptista Homann from Nuremberg. His reprint of the Müller's copy is deposited in the Map Collection of the Charles University in Prague.



Surroundings of the Brno City on Müller's map of Moravia by J. B. Homann

Conclusion and Acknowledgments

This contribution's was to introduce the methodology and results of basic analyses of works selected from the Map Collection of the Charles University in Prague. However, not all necessary data was available and many questions still remain unanswered. Nevertheless, the result will serve as a first stage preceding other detailed analyses of map content and cartometric analyses of these works. Currently, a detailed cartometric analysis of Vogt's map is completed.

The Map Collection of the Charles University currently contains several other cartographic works from the period 1518 - 1720. Their content and cartometric analyses will follow.

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