

Mapping and Citizenship. Cartography and international right: a professional deontology

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Abstract: The professional deontology linked to our cartographic professions includes, as a matter of priority, the strict respect for international right, the common good of humanity. The opening of cartographic production practices published without a documented editorial framework to uninitiated audiences leads to the significant loss of our common landmarks. The maps regularly published by mass media and low-profile publishers are sold outside of any ethical rules related to our disciplines of geodetic measurement, modes of representation of space, territories and law. Each map is supposed to be designed according to the rules of contractual graphical charters that any cartographer is required to respect from a scale to another. Representations, especially about borders and demarcation lines delimiting the identity of suspended territories call our full attention. So that the map is no longer a vulgar tool of disinformation, propaganda, outside international law, outlawed.

This presentation aims to widely invite to consider professional observations inside a world ignoring its own rules supposed to be internationally respected in cartography, collectively thought by the United Nations <https://www.un.org>, to lead into a long-term worldwide security, protecting the common law in respect of the citizenship of individuals.

Keywords: Deontology, Ethic, International law, Base map, Citizenship

1. Introduction

More than an inspiration, a code of fair practices in cartographic publishing recalling rules and definitions, learned at school, written in 1993

Geographic Map: a coded image of geographic reality, representing a selection of objects or features, reflecting the creative effort of its author through the choices made, and intended for use where spatial relationships are of essential relevance (International Cartographic Association, 1992). "Geographic" is understood broadly and covers any thematic field dealing with localized or "geo-referenced" objects.

Cartographic Productions: geographic maps, plans, sketches, and plastic works related to geography or topography (cf/ law 92.597 of July 1, 1992, regarding the intellectual property code, art. L 2).

Database: a collection of works or materials arranged, stored, and accessible by digital means, metadata, including digitized elements necessary for the functioning of the database, such as thesaurus and indexing and consultation systems for the database (cf/ proposal for a directive of the Council of the European Communities concerning the legal protection of databases, art. 1, June 1992).

Digital Cartographic Production: file or database, metadata.

Derived Cartographic Production: cartographic product created by generalization, with or without scale change, based on existing cartographic productions; cartographic

generalization is the adaptation of qualitative and quantitative data by reducing the number of details and/or simplifying the shapes of outlines to establish a cartographic realization meeting specific conditions (cf/ "derived map" and "cartographic generalization," cf/ Cartography Glossary, French Cartography Committee).

Copy: the result of reproduction; generally, the copy is intended for the same type of use as the initial cartographic product; sometimes, its use is merely illustrative or pictorial.

Printed Copy: a copy of an original document obtained by scanning or drawing, edited and printed for free distribution or sale. Visualization

Visual Copy: (representation) scanned digital image of an original map, obtained by scanned reproduction and constituting a servile copy with a modification of colors, intended for applications of visualizing a map background on a screen.

Vectorized Copy: files or databases of objects more or less structured according to vector cartographic models, obtained by selective digitization of an original map, intended for computer applications of calculation, modeling, visualization, or printed map publishing.

Copy of Digital Cartographic Productions: copy of cartographic files or databases, ranging from simple copying to geometric transformation by algorithms.

Cartographic Author: designer and creator of a cartographic production; most often, the precise characteristics of the creation are defined by the publisher,

who may entrust the formatting to one of its employees or a third party remunerated for this task by contract.

Cartographic Publisher: a legal or natural person to whom the author of a cartographic production, or their successors, has transferred the right to manufacture or have manufactured multiple copies of their production, responsible for ensuring its publication and distribution (cf/ law 597, art. L 132.1).

1.1 Creation, reproduction, adaptation

Creation: original realization of the author's conception; in cartography, it is notably appreciated by the choice of objects represented and their representation (symbols, colors, contractual graphic charter), as well as the general layout or page setup of the adapted projection system, scale, and presentation embellishments.

Reproduction: material fixation of a work by any process allowing direct or indirect communication, including printing, drawing, engraving, photography, molding, and any process of graphic and plastic arts, digital, cinematographic, or magnetic recording (cf/ law 92.597, art. L 122.3), or any known or future process.

Adaptation: partial or total reproduction of a work, including the transformation of some of its original characteristics; the adapted cartographic product may be supplemented with additional elements.

1.2 Rights, obligations, and consequences of disclosure

Cartographic productions must bear the mention of their author unless specific written provisions are agreed upon between the author and the publisher.

Any full or partial reproduction and any adaptation made without the consent of the author or their successors is unlawful (cf/ law 92.597, art. L 122.4).

Thus, cartographic products cannot be communicated for reproduction or representation without the express agreement of the author. The author of an adaptation enjoys the protection of the intellectual property code without prejudice to the rights of the author of the original work. They must guarantee, notably to the publisher of the adaptation, that they hold the rights to adapt the original work, whether to create a new cartographic product or to use the original cartographic product for its illustrative or pictorial value.

Cartographic products are communicated either by their author or by a distributor guaranteeing that they hold the authorization to use the products for this purpose. They thus ensure that no obstacle opposes this communication.

The publisher must request authorization to use and exploit any cartographic product on any medium and for each application domain.

In the case of simple copying or reproduction, the publisher must obtain the author's authorization for duplication and representation and, if the work is a compilation of documents, ensure all necessary authorizations are obtained. The authorization mention will be included on copies and reproductions.

In the case of adaptation, the publisher will indicate the sources used so that there is no confusion in the user's mind

between the original document and the modifications made.

In the case of similar publishing or updating, the publisher must, in addition to duplication authorization, obtain adaptation rights applicable to a specific adaptation.

Derived and new publishing will be subject to the same provisions, and the publisher will ensure the author's interests are safeguarded.

1.3 Quality of cartographic publishing

The publisher will respect the rules applicable to the profession of cartographic publishing.

Publisher will take care to respect the rights of publishers or authors whose productions they have used.

Publisher will implement appropriate means to ensure the cartographic product is lawful and reliable, i.e., compliant with legal provisions, free of errors, complete, and not outdated for the application domain considered at the time of its commercialization.

1.4 Training

The cartographic profession will carry out appropriate awareness actions among teachers and trainers so that initial or continuing education, whether academic or professional, includes presentations on legislation and regulations in cartographic publishing.

2. The illusion of mapping

Today, the media profusion of imprecise representations of all kinds of scribbles, commonly called “maps”, produced outside international law and without a rigorous anchoring of professional ethics, lull into complacency the collective ignorance that puts us all in great danger. An illusionary cartography is spreading, without anyone knowing exactly what A MAP is, in total disregard of the scientific and artistic requirements that a quality work requires. The Public is misled.

The art of plausible cheating that propose cartography has become radically implausible.

Each one takes and copies, most often at random and based on what is available, without knowing how to check the sources of documents in reference and with turnkey tools designed to avoid thinking.

Errors, whether conscious or not, are repeated at scales seen from a distance without discernment. The horrors of violations of the law are in evident abundance. It is no more than a show in which everyone wallows with the appearance of denouncing what they did not prevent by simply respecting the law.

Maintained confusions, especially by our public information services, retouching without complexes people's sovereignty on their national territorial data, are spread in a general indifference. It's inconceivable how map plots are reinvented as fashion or moods come and go. When map plots are knowingly false, they serve only misinformation, ignorance and mass crimes.

(Fig. 1, 2, 3, 4)

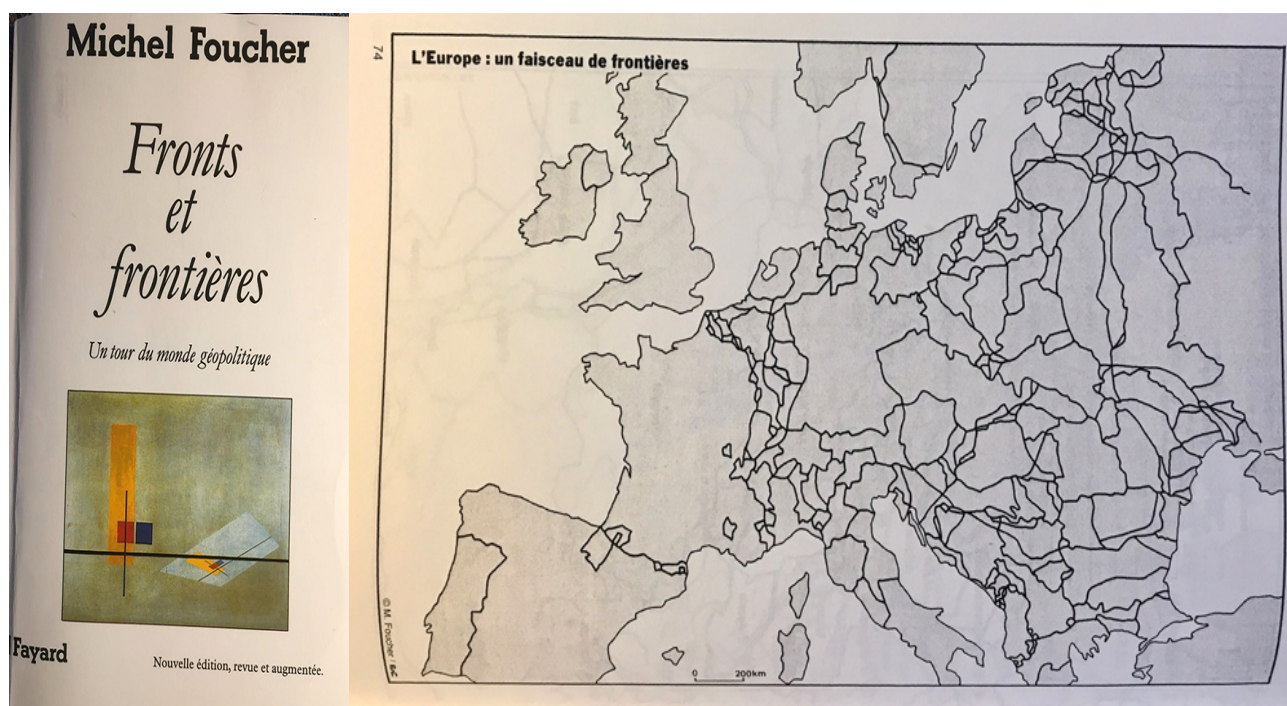


Figure 1. Fronts et frontières, Foucher M., Fayard 2005, p. 74



Figure 2. Media ARTE.TV - 28' (24.03.2025):
Where is Armenia in this image ?

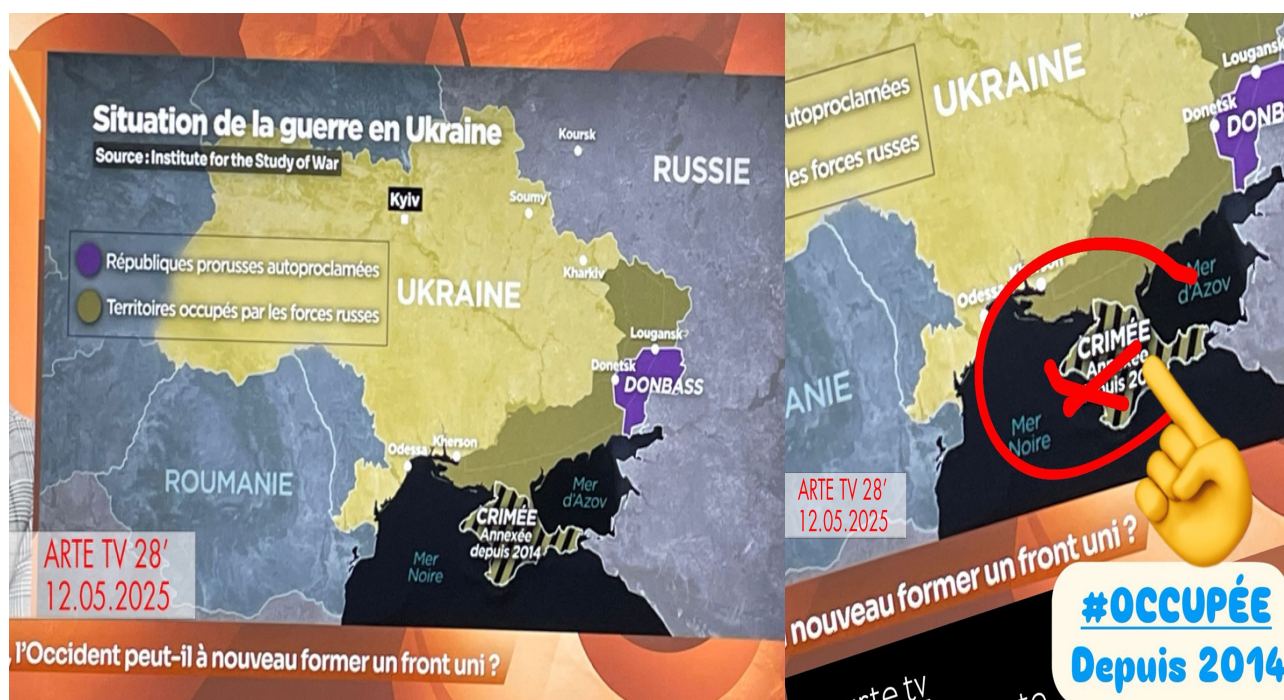


Figure 3. Media ARTE.TV - 28' (31.10.2024): Crimea is Ukrainian, occupied inside its sovereign borders since 2014.



Figure 4. Le Monde – promotional video, April 2025
Crimea is Ukrainian, occupied inside its sovereign borders.

Video abstract: “ *The map is therefore a profoundly editorial object. When you design a card, you ask yourself a lot of aesthetic questions. A MAP IS ALMOST A SLOGAN. So we stick to things that have to be both direct and, at the same time, emotional.* ” [...]

“ *Are facts important? Yes, but the subjectivity of the actors is just as important. And we know how to do that. It's French know-how, I'd say.* ” [...]

Le Monde, cheffe redaction (April 2025)

<https://www.linkedin.com/posts/delphine-papin-b062b584-après-dix-années-à-la-chefferie-du-service-ugcPost-7322157375396749312-n7mK>



Figure 5. Ukrainian sovereign border, J.D-Salachas cartographer

2.1 Occupied territory is not annexed territory

Would being a cartographer be therefore no more than a fashionable ambition used to plunder and kill uninhibited? Prevention is a choice that maps are able to well-inform in respect of international laws (fig. 5), with the required accuracy, and on a large scale to be useful.

2.2 A map is not a subjective slogan

“ *The map, an instantaneous, multi-dimensional image, is derived from a double-entry table of figures and data. The geographer sees the world, the cartographer draws it; he*

or she is the best judge of graphic correspondences, as close to reality as possible. ”

Extract from the June 2009 interview with Jacques Bertin, Director of Studies at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* and Director of the Cartography Laboratory, father of “Graphic Semiology” known as “*la Graphique*”; author of “*La Sémiologie graphique - les diagrammes - les réseaux - les cartes*”.

3. In 2006, Henri Dorion recalled how representing borders is a challenge for cartography

“ The reciprocal effects on the border, on the people who live on or suffer from it, and on international relations, are complex and pose an interesting challenge to cartography wishing to capture the delicate border dialectic. ”

(Café-carto, Paris Oct.24, 2006)

“ Ever since the emergence of McLuhan's global village, we've been dreaming of the advent of a borderless world, but we have to admit that the innumerable designations of so-called borderless organizations can obscure the reality of an asymmetrical world, whose inequalities are often maintained by political borders. And yet, the protective role of these demarcation lines cannot be denied. Whether cultural, socio-economic or military, references to the protective role of borders remind us that they are often a vital condition for the survival of communities. ” [...]

“ Through their protective functions, borders can become an obstacle to the circulation of people, goods and values, while at the same time retaining their indisputable usefulness for managing territories in a way that takes account of national and regional characteristics, while benefiting from those of neighboring societies. Given these contradictory roles, should we conclude that borders are a necessary evil? Not at all, for at a time of globalization, the perverse effects of which we are beginning to fear, it is important to inscribe jurisdictional limits in geographical space, framing policies whose differences will guarantee the cultural authenticity and diversity that the majority of societies are not ready to abdicate. The integrity of cultures is therefore linked to the territorial integrity of states. ”

3.1 Henri Dorion's question was, at the time: “ Could Europe be the long-awaited testing ground for a world without borders ” Where do we stand almost 30 years later ?

Whatever our working methods, licensed or open source, which of us is still aware of the complexity of the collegial skills that must be implemented to achieve our best goals in mapping, to inform without risk of major errors on fixed deadlines, precise costs, heavy responsibilities? At least, we will leave behind us the trace of our efforts and the unfailing richness of our technical knowledge.

Our individual and collective responsibility is engaged. We are not so many to be able to explain it anymore.

It is indeed part of our professional ethics to have to say NO to these criminal falsifications that we do not have to practice, in the constant respect of the general interest which prevails over any activity called for by our competences.

So much is already lost ! How could we stop to bear witness? It seems that it's never too late to do well. What comes from the disunited United States today violently shakes our world, asleep on its lost laurels (Fig. 6).



Figure 6. Golfe Of Mexico, Blondel la Rougery Ed., 1937.

4. A map is much more than a drawn line as tool for decision-making

It is the affirmation of the common law that protects us. And who would say otherwise does not know our job 'cartographer'.

Nor are there any “modern” or “contemporary” maps that would compete with past productions. There is the history of peoples and sciences moving forward to the future.

Whatever the time, cartographers have always had to adapt their gestures to their constantly updated tools of science and production techniques, savings reflected in our collective commitment.

There are fair and accurate maps that fulfill their role of consistent information AND falsified or negligent documents that do not meet the objectives of our trades and rob our citizenship.

It is, however, the pleasure of well-done work that has aroused so many passions for mapping. Passions sometimes expressed in radical ignorance of rules and definitions we must recall.

4.1 The map is a guide for every step we take

The map cannot be a malicious tool that tells you that your steps walk you in a country that is not the country you think you are in.

In France, the eye of the State has been able to master its perspectives by mapping its territory on a large scale after 1945. Those, in particular, of our collective security, a subject that has been deeply misguided in recent years. It

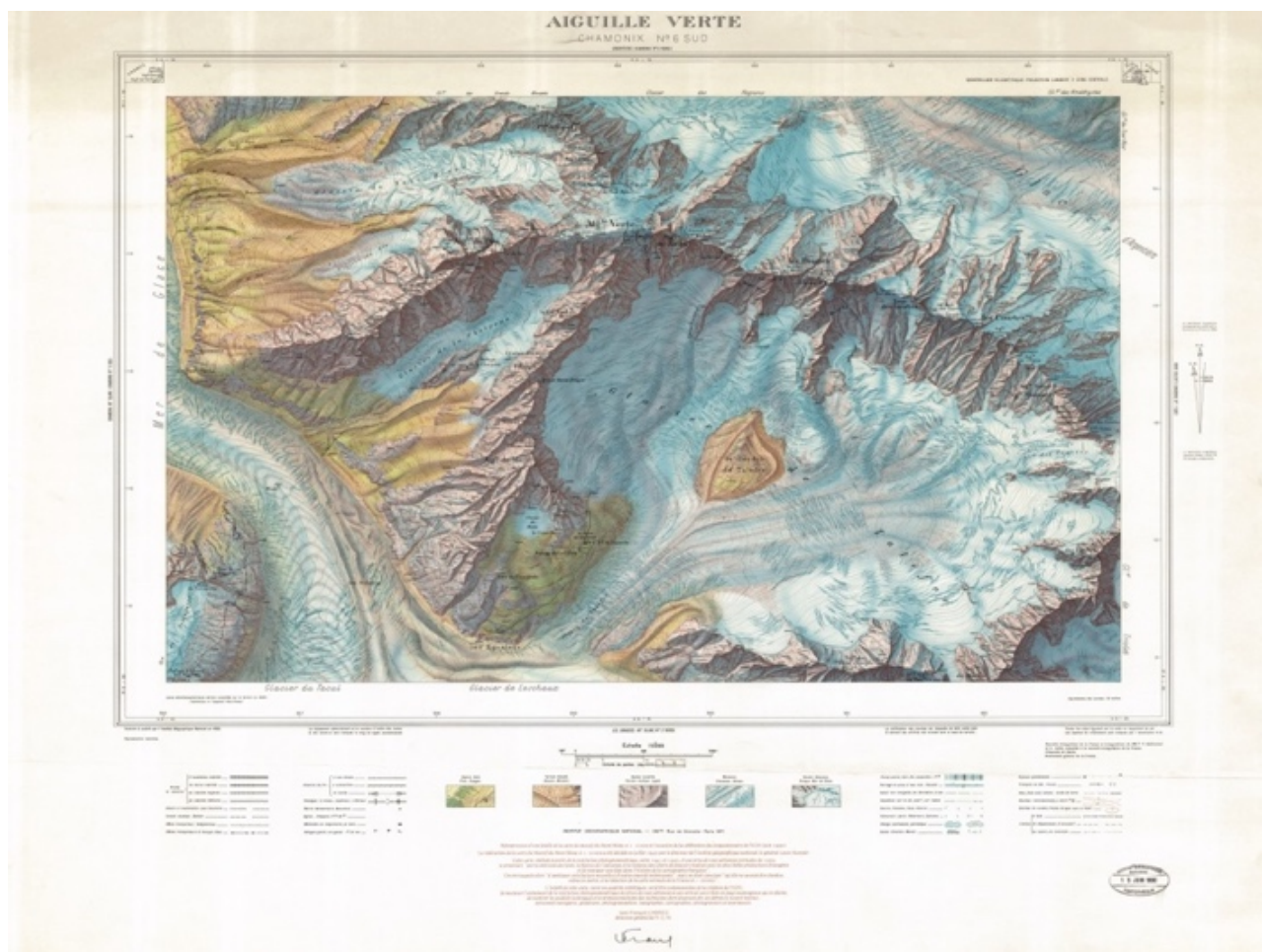


Figure 7. Coverage of the territory (France after 1945)
Mapping the Mount Blanc at 1:10 000, IGN 1959

is a shame at a time when the performance of our tools would allow us to obtain perfect legibility of reality and knowledge in their exact precision.

In September 2010, to celebrate the 70 years of the National Geographic Institute, in France, Claude VUILLECOT, Professor in at the National School of Geographic Sciences, wrote this text recalling our shared history. The National Geographic Institute's Corps of State Cartographers owes its existence to the National Council of Resistance.

Claude Vuillecot taught cartography at the ENSG from 1976 to 1985.

“The National Geographic Institute was abruptly created on July 1, 1940, to succeed the Military Geographic Department (SGA), itself created in 1887, after one of the most severe military defeats in France's history.

The main aim was to escape the control of the occupying German authorities, who were about to intervene.

This is how the SGA was abruptly ‘civilized’, on the very day the decree abolishing it was published, by transferring all its personnel and equipment to the IGN.

The ENSG was created a few months later, by decree on April 08, 1941, to train the various civilian technical personnel (engineers, senior technicians and technicians) destined for the IGN.

Geodesy, Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing, Topography and Cartography, the basic disciplines of the geographical sciences, are taught at the ENSG in the various cycles of initial training.

In addition to its training courses, which were originally strongly influenced by military needs for topographic maps, the ENSG has extended its mission by training numerous foreign students, notably from French-speaking African countries that have gained independence, as well as military geographers (officers and non-commissioned officers) presented by their parent organization, and students through modules adapted to their university curricula.

To better understand the long tradition of which the IGN and ENSG are, in a way, the heirs, it is worth recalling that the production of the first topographic map covering the whole of France was decided by Louis XV, who commissioned Cassini de Thury to undertake the corresponding work. This map, known as the ‘Cassini Map’, was produced at a scale of 1 line per hundred’ toises’ (i.e. approximately 1:86 400) in copperplate engraving between 1756 and 1815.

Napoleon's next map, the 1:80 000 called 'Carte de l'État-Major', marked a major step forward, adopting new conventions, notably for the expression of relief using hatching, and considerably improving on Cassini's map. It was produced from 1818 to 1878.

Thus, for 122 years, Cassini maps and 'État-Major Maps' were produced using the same copperplate engraving process (also known as 'taille douce'), which demanded great finesse and dexterity (the map was engraved upside down), but only allowed a monochrome edition, with the engraved copperplate constituting the printing plate.

The completion of the 1:80 000 coverage corresponds roughly to the development of photography, which made it possible to do away with the need to draw on the printing support, by producing the outline on an intermediate support (first wired paper, then plastic) that could be reproduced using a photomechanical process.

This enabled cartographic drafting to be carried out on separate plates, which was essential for color printing.

In the 1950s, the IGN's basic mission was still to produce the 1:25 000 topographic map (still known today under the misleading name of 'État-Major Map', in reference to the 1:80 000 military map).

The 1:25 000 scale map (with over 2,000 sections covering the whole of mainland France) was still being drawn by hand in 1950, and therefore required special taste and skill.

In fact, the handling of specific tools such as the double or triple line-drawer, for drawing parallel curved lines (on winding roads, for example) required a natural aptitude that could be developed thanks to technology, but which could not be created ex nihilo. " [...]

" In the final analysis, we can say that the ideal cartographer was one who was able to combine geometric rigor with artistic flair. " [...]

" The production of large-scale maps has made it possible to publish smaller-scale maps - it should be remembered here that the smaller the scale, the larger the portion of space represented.

For example, on a 1:25 000 scale, the two lines of a road are 1 mm apart on the map, or 25 m apart in the field. On a scale of 1/1 000 000, the same millimetre on the map represents 1 km on the ground.

This notion of scale is essential: depending on the variation in scale, the reality of the representation of the terrain will be modified to be adapted "as closely as possible" to the body of information that needs to be presented in a coherent manner... Some details will be shifted, others simplified or schematized, and still others grouped together or deleted.

This delicate operation of reducing the image to its essential features so called 'Generalization'. "

5. Conclusion

From rigor to integrity, it's a heritage of memory for collective security that must retain its place and develop its

skills within our cartography professions, now powerfully enriched with sophisticated, accessible scientific tools.

A map is a symbolized mathematic image of a landscape reality. It represents selected features of characteristics, graphic charts resulting from the creative efforts of its authors in the execution of choices, designed for accurate uses, through spatial relationships of priority relevance. Cartographers are part of a team with multiple competences working together to give to their maps their meaning in a common visual language

5.1 What we work for should be a universal question

Border delimitation, Resolving Territorial Disputes, International Treaties and Agreements, Environmental protection, Natural Resource Management, Law of the Sea, Peoples' rights, Cartography is an essential tool in the application and interpretation of international law.

Even an Artificial Intelligence simply declares it " *Cartography makes possible to visualize and define territorial boundaries, zones of sovereignty and natural resources, which is crucial for peace, security and international cooperation.*"

5.2 Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements of any support to question, answer, relay, enrich, reflect, interact. Welcome to the responsible actors who are still working on the quality of a mapping worthy of the name, in respect of international law that concerns us all and protects us collectively, it is necessary to recall.

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