

# Texts

In January 1919, the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya (Hiking Club of Catalonia - CEC) held one of the first exhibitions of antique and new maps put on in Catalonia. The showing was organized on occasion of a campaign climbing for an Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia. One of the proposals of that Statute was the enactment of a territorial division by *comarques* (counties), bringing maps to the centre of the political stage: a solid cartographic basis was needed to delimit the new administrative divisions. The CEC contributed to the campaign with this exhibit, which brought together 217 maps of Catalonia and neighbouring territories.

The maps were displayed from January 24 to February 15, 1919 in its headquarters on Carrer Paradís in Barcelona. With the exposition still open, the pro-autonomy campaign that had launched it came to a sudden halt for political reasons. Despite the abrupt change in the political landscape, it still stands as one of the first exhibits of antique maps ever held in this country, a landmark in the history of Catalan cartography. To celebrate the centennial, a selection of 64 maps is now presented, over half of which formed part of the 1919 display.

The CEC map library was born in 1876 with the founding of the “Associació Catalanista d’Excursions Científiques” (Catalanist Association of Scientific Excursions) which became the Centre Excursionista de Catalunya in 1891. In 1908, the Centre launched its Geology and Physical Geography Division, which worked to develop the map library and turn it one of the most prominent collections of Catalonia. It was this division, chaired by geologist Marià Faura i Sans, that organized the 1919 show. The CEC administered its map library until 2015, when the Centre deposited all its document collections with the Government of Catalonia. The nearly 10,000 maps of the map library are now kept at the Institut Cartogràfic i Geològic de Catalunya (Institute of Cartography and Geology of Catalonia – ICGC).

## Areas

This commemorative exhibition replicates the six thematic areas that made up the original showing. This division had more to do with the maps available than with any specific narrative. The CEC’s original intent was to represent its rich and varied—and in those years mostly unknown—map collection. Mixing old and new maps, or including maps from outside Catalonia, went beyond the need to compile information to draft a new territorial division, to become a comprehensive exhibition of maps of Catalonia and its neighbouring territories, and a showcase for the CEC’s map library.

The exhibition consists of the following areas:

### 1. General maps

The first area featured general printed maps of Catalonia from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. It was one of the first exhibits of antique maps of Catalonia, held in the early days of map collecting. It featured a rare edition of Josep Aparici’s 1720 map, and a few productions from prominent European map publishers.

## **2. Partial maps**

This section features a heterogeneous range of maps that contained, first, territorial (especially provincial) divisions, but also others of the borders with France, and even a map of Andorra. Second, there were maps that depicted partial areas of Catalan territory defined by a diverse array of criteria. Content ranged from a map sheet of the Cerdanya border from Cassini's celebrated 18th century map of France—the first standard detailed map of a European state—to a sheet dating from 1897 that depicted engineer García Faria's project of a sewer system for the city of Barcelona.

## **3. Tourist maps**

Tourism was already a favourite hobby of CEC members. So it is no surprise that tourism maps had their own area in the exhibition. By the early 20th century, the tourism industry was in full swing. Proof of this is the abundant cartography it generated, especially in European countries like France, Great Britain and Germany. Some of the CEC members were well-travelled, and collected numerous tourism maps for the centre's collection. This section contains the locally-produced excursion maps like those included in the guides of Artur Osona and Juli Soler Santaló.

## **4. Scientific maps**

Thematic scientific maps, especially having to do with natural and environmental subject matter, had evolved significantly in the second half of the 19th century. Scientific progress, along with the dawn of new publishing technologies such as chromolithography, which made it possible to print maps in colour, expedited the publication of thematic maps. That one of the exhibition organizers was the geologist Marià Faura i Sans, then-director of the Servei de Geologia de la Mancomunitat de Catalunya (Geological Service of the Associated Municipalities of Catalonia) led to many published, but also still-unreleased, geological maps being put on display.

## **5. Panoramas**

The exhibition also included cartographic works carried out by CEC members themselves, such as the 360-degree panoramic circles sketched from mountain peaks, known by their French name, "tours d'horizon". These drawings were quite popular at the time, and many were published in the CEC's news bulletin.

## **6. Relief maps**

Six relief maps formed part of the 1919 expo. Relief was widely used in education at that time, thanks in part to the new teaching trends that had come about in Catalonia as of the late-19th century. Cast in plaster, most have not survived to the present. Despite their fragility, two plaster works by Father Rafael Baradat have been recovered for the exhibition.

## **Geoinformation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Cartography has changed profoundly over the past 100 years. Digital technologies have transformed the way we look at and portray our environment. Today, the level of spatial and temporal variability of the territory is high, and the interaction between humans and our surrounding ecosystems are seen in an ever-brighter spotlight. The ICGC is a knowledge provider that works with state-of-the-art technological resources. Through

research and knowledge transfer, it generates geoinformation products and services adapted to the needs and requirements of 21st century society. In this final exhibition area, visitors can experience a small sampling of 21st century geoinformation.