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NATIONAL PROGRESS REPORT OF RUSSIA 1992-1994

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The two years gone by after 8th Conference of the LIBER in Barcelona have been replete with diverse events.

These were concerned with the unification of the work of institutions possessing map stocks, like libraries, archives, museums, etc. Furthermore there was the revelation of important issues calling for common efforts for solutions.

The IFLA seminar "Preservation of maps and other spatial information" was a significant event for map curators and restorators. The seminar was held on the initiative of the IFLA Section of Geography and Map Libraries with the participation of the IFLA Section of Conservation in the Russian State Library from the 26th of September to the 2nd of October 1993. It was organized by the Russian State Library, the State Archives Office of Russia, the production mapping amalgamation "Cartography", some libraries, archives, and research institutes. Specialists from Russia, Latvia, Czech republic, Germany, France and other countries took part in the proceedings. The Seminar showed that the stockrooms of libraries and archives are insufficiently equipped to ensure proper conservation for long periods and scientific use of historically valuable documents. The lack of well equipped stockrooms, special outfit for copying large size and polychromatic materials, lack of space for creating 'insurance' stock and 'current' stock results in demands of users which cannot be met. Equipment for conserving and use of maps and other spatial information is required.

There is no system of training restorators in Russia. The state of the map material showed the necessity of drawing up a long term programme for preservation. Its goal should be the creation of 'current' stock on non-traditional information carriers. Furthermore a school for restorators, a system for interaction and coordination of work, information about scientific and methodological work in the field of ensuring the preservation and use of maps and other leaf documents was started. Information on the seminar was published in IFLA Journal (Vol. 20, 1994, 1 and 3) and Geomaps, Newsletter, N 35.

The Map Department of the Russian National Library in St.Petersburg is responsible for the compilation of a union catalogue of Russian maps, which was started in 1994. A working conference for participants took place in Moscow on the 24th of May 1994. Among those present were employees from the Russian National Library, the Russian State Library, the Russian State Archives of Ancient Acts, the Russian State Military Historical Archives, and the State Historical Museum. They approved a work programme for the initial stage. This stage includes the collecting of catalogue-cards of printed Russian maps of the 18th century, training archivists and museum workers in the Rules of the compilation of the bibliographic description of old prints (Moscow, 1989), and staging a seminar on 'Peculiarities of the description of old maps' on the basis of experiences in the Map Department of the Russian State Library. It is planned that the union catalogue will be created in an electronic form. Descriptions will be sent to the Map Department of the Russian National Library, which will process them.

The Embassy of Greece in Moscow, the Organisation for the Registration of Lands and Cartography of Greece (ATKA Cartography), the Russian State Library, the Roskartografiya arranged the exhibition 'Hellenism in maps' in July 1993 in the Russian State Library. It showed copies of maps from Herodotus to modern times. Constantin Georgacopoulos published the catalogues: Ancient Hellenic cartographers (1993) and Hellenic in Southern Russia: Hellenes and Russians. Traditional ties (1993).

The Hermitage in St.Petersburg held an exhibition in connection with the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America, which showed, amongst others, maps of the Russian National Library, and atlases by Ortelius, Mercator, Hondius and others. A catalogue was published (To the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America, 1993), which includes the chapter Maps and atlases by L.K. Kildyushevskaya.

The Map Department of the Russian National Library edited Toponymy of St.Petersburg in the 18th century according to city plans" (V.V. Kukushkina, N.K. Shablayeva, 1993). It includes names of city districts, suburbs, villages, streets, squares, lanes, quays, etc.

L.K. Kildyushevskaya in St.Petersburg published the article Peculiarities of the recataloguing of foreign maps of Russia of the 16th-17th centuries.

The Map Department of the Russian State Library did much work in connection with the compilation of the Catalogue of ecological maps of Russia and contiguous states. Based on this publication some articles were published and some lectures were given at scientific conferences on the ecological cartography in Irkutsk and Moscow.

The Rules of the description of old maps by A.S. Zakharova, which are necessary for the compilation of the union catalogue of Russian maps, are in press.

INSPEL (volume 27, 1993, 2) included some articles by N.Ye. Kotelnikova and L.N. Zinchuk of the Map Department of the Russian State Library.