Cartography and Cartosemiotics: Conception Vision*

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The lection presentation includes four sub-themes:
1. Definitions and Structural Models
2. New Cartosemiotics
3. Cartosemiotic Method of Research
4. Prehistoric Maps and Cartosemiotics

Cartography of the 21st century will be other one than cartography of the 20th century. But which tendencies will dominate in cartography at the end of the first decade of the 21st century? Which cartography does the modern society need? Who is a cartographer today? What is cartosemiotics and who is a cartosemiotic? Who is a cartosemioticist today? These and some other questions were discussed in part 1 of the lection presentation.

Within framework of cartography the cartosemiotics is a new discipline studying features of cartosemiotic models (from the standpoint of modelling, communication and cognition) with the goal of acquisition of new spatial knowledge or revitalization of forgotten spatial information. Cartosemiotic models are cartographic, map-like, and cartographic-textual products in electronic form and non electronic one (e.g. traditional print form) of the human knowledge about earth (and its parts), planets and cosmos-referred features and relations.

What is a new cartosemiotics? A new cartosemiotics is a "child" of European cartosemiotics of the nineties of the 20th century. It is no accident that cartosemiotics plays a relatively important part in the modern theoretical cartography. The new cartosemiotics with its various manifestations is an important component of theoretical cartography, not only in Europe, but also in other areas of the world. Its does not have ideological barrier and priorities more. New cartosemiotics can be regarded as a revitalized cartosemiotics with cartographic and non-cartographic traditions, with new research fields and conceptional movement in the 90's.

New cartosemiotics is characterized not only new research tasks, but also its institutionalizing, and also by considerable research activity in its theoretical and applied subfields. Its novations, particularly for the applied cartosemiotics lead to a redefinition of the subject of the cartosemiotics.

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Part 3 deals with cartosemiotic method of research. It is a way to study and understand map language and language of map-like models (products) with their cultural-historical, social and communication aspects. Cartosemiotic method of research is also a way for acquisition of new spatial knowledge and/or revitalization of forgotten spatial information with diverse cartosemiotic models.

Cartosemiotic method of research is a method of using diverse electronic and non electronic cartosemiotic models (maps, map-like images and cartographic-textual products) for acquisition a new spatial knowledge or revitalisation of forgotten spatial information. The cartosemiotic models using is wider and variety as a map using. Cartosemiotics has a sufficient potential for
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forming a new discipline for acquisition of spatial knowledge with help of diverse (analog and digital) cartosemiotic models of reality and/or fiction. This discipline have not to have a priority for cartographers or other geoscientists; it will be a parity discipline for all, with cartographic and non-cartographic traditions and experiences.

The last part of presentation deals with prehistoric maps, the cartosemiotic roots of cartography. It included two subthemems: prehistoric maps as archaeological monuments (the oldest prehistoric map - Pavlov map and selected prehistoric maps of the Ukraine) and semiotic peculiarities of prehistoric maps, and list of selected museums with prehistoric maps.

Towards the end of the eighties of the 20th century, prehistoric and early historic maps have become object of increased interest of cartosemioticists within the framework of map language developments. Today many of these maps about 100 maps are known.

Not only scientific research but also the cartosemiotic education and training have to play a large part in further development of cartography. Today cartography and cartosemiotics focus their research and education interests, and other activities in interaction. It testifies that cartographic thought is not technological “one-way street”.

Cartosemiotics must not have a priority for cartographers or other geoscientists; it has to be a parity discipline for all, with cartographic and non-cartographic traditions and experiences. With its synergy potential a new cartosemiotics has good conditions for the development of modern methods of acquisition of the spatial information and knowledge.

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