Reading the document:
Middle age and Renaissance geography*

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What is geography?
Simple question/difficult answer...

- If we think about the contemporary time....
- by Merriam-Webster: “...a science that deals with the description, distribution, and interaction of the diverse physical, biological, and cultural features of the earth’s surface...”;
- usually... physical [earth] science
- a little social... [social geography]... a little humanities... [historical geography since the Middle ages]
- but, if we think about the past ???

Understanding of past geographies

- What is the content of „past geographies“ - historic place names, historic maps, cultural and administrative regions, paleodemography..... etc...etc...
- More arts and humanities than physical sciences
- As deeper in the past.... to less close to physical and more close to arts and humanities
Why geography?

- The presentation is based on the Lithuanian geographic experience.
- The cases - from Dubingiai micro-region (near Vilnius) as part of research project „The origins of Lithuanian state based on the research data in Dubingiai microregion„.
- One from used methods – connecting the data from historic sources and GIS, using of GIS analysis for historic data....
- Simple task, but unexpected results.....

Why the borders of administrative units from XVII-XVIII c. are crossed?

....impulse for further investigations in field of interoperability between historic geography and digital technologies....
Groups of problems of past geographies in contemporary time

- technical and semantic problems
  [close connected with digitization of heritage];

- perceptual and mentalic problems
  [close connected with understanding of the main principles of past geographies]
Theoretic scope (preferred - bolded):

- Two points of view: geographical (earth sciences) and historical (humanities).
- Two directions of investigations: historical geography and using of geo-data for heritage information systems.
- Two managerial directions: information management and knowledge management.
- Two understandings of geo-names: geo-name as tool and geo-name as the kind of heritage.

The main problems

- Historical changes in administrative division and state borders
  - where is the Kingdom of Leon?
  - Dubingiai as land (terra), district, private duchy....
- Changes in place-names?
  - do You know Colonium?
- Place-names were written in various languages and in various scripts
  - Greece or Ελλάδα?
  - Dubingiai – Dubinki – Дубинки – Dubinik.....
- Place names that are closely connected with national historical narratives
  - Wroclaw or Breslau?
  - collision with state name of Macedonia - FYRM
- Many the same and already extinct place-names
  - where is Richmond?
  - where is the lake Ilgis (“the Long”) – 5 lakes in Dubingiai MR
- Small, local historical geo-names
  - where is Pivoriūnai?
- Place names as personal names
  - Victoria
  - “curia Gerdemanthas” in Dubingiai MR
- Localization of some (lost) historical place-names is impossible (about 12 % in Dubingiai MR)
- Chronological coexistence of different administrative units
  - secular and religious, catholic, Jews and protestant in Dubingiai MR
What can be technical background? [theoretic]

1. Object (point, line or polygon) oriented approach (no preferred geo-names).
2. Preferred geo-names name oriented approach

Historic place names service: between Geo-data enrichment services and Vocabulary services

What can be technical background? [system]

United geo-services:

- Geo-location enrichment tools (as machine) + Historic place name thesaurus (as brain).
- Intellectual geo-parsing, geo-coding and etc...
- Semi automatic, self-learned system
- Tool for enrichment of cloud computing possibilities in field of aggregation of [local] history resources.
- The some kind of knowledge system (help for making decisions about geo-data, including historical).
- Specific understanding of historical place name - historical place name as kind of cultural heritage.
- Separated historical geo-object's metadata set
Possible solutions

- Object oriented approach (CIDOC-CRM/ISO 21127) + GIS
  - Object as point, line or polygon
  - Place name as kind of intangible cultural heritage
- The scientific investigations are needed.....

- Examples:
  - Lithuanian thesaurus of historical places, personal names, group names and periods (BAVIC), [http://www.epaveldas.lt/tezauro-paieska](http://www.epaveldas.lt/tezauro-paieska)
  - LoCloud Historic place names microservice for Europeana (under construction), [http://www.locloud.eu/](http://www.locloud.eu/)

Also

1. Great Britain Historical Geographical Information System, [http://www.port.ac.uk/research/gbhgis/](http://www.port.ac.uk/research/gbhgis/)
2. The OldMapsOnline Portal, [http://project.oldmapsonline.org/about](http://project.oldmapsonline.org/about)
3. Pelagios project, [http://pelagios-project.blogspot.no/](http://pelagios-project.blogspot.no/)
but..... let's go deeper.... please....

Perceptual and mentalic problems
Firewalls in the way of understanding of historic geographic data

- Our modern geographical knowledge :-) 
- Geographical stereotypes

About stereotypes...e.g., did You mean, how was understand the form of the Earth at medieval time?

round vs flat?
The correct answer is...... round, because...:

- Observation of ships in the sea
- Eratostenes experiment, III c. BC
- Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy, 1308-1321
- Christopher Columbus, 1492
- The same opinion: Origenus, Ambrosius, Albertus Magnus, Thomas d'Aquino, Roger Bacon and etc.... and etc...
- The idea of „flat Earth“ was imported from Cosmas Indicopleustes's „Christian Topography“ (VI c. AD), but this text was known in Europe in 1706 only...
- They [medieval people] was the dummies.... [very positivistic approach...]

Theoretic considerations for understanding of Medieval and Renaissance geography

- Meanings of terms by Medieval and Renaissance senses.
- Medieval binarity: city vs forest (sea)/culture vs nature.
- Person oriented geography vs landscape oriented geography
- Geography as reality (mappa, topographic map), idea (imago) and/or program.
- Topographic vs symbolic-iconographic scientific interpretation
Meanings of terms by Medieval and Renaissance senses

What is administrative unit [region]?
Natural, topographically integral, units: territorial clusters and microregions

- Communicative paradigm:
  - territorial cluster as socionatural niche (radius about 3-5 km.)
  - microregion - the space of close communication (radius about 10-12 km., composed from the few territorial clusters)

Artificial religious administrative units – parish [topographically integral]

Dubingiai parish
XVII-XIX a.
Artificial civil administrative unit – district

- In XXI century – the topographically integral polygon.
- In XIV century – the set of one owner's manors, villages, castles and another settlements.
- Topographically integrals civil administrative units - from renaissance.
- In returning to the initial question “Why the borders of Dubingai MR administrative units from XVII-XVIII c. are crossed?” – the administrative units was the clusters and can not be “bordered” by “united polygon” way,... but must be investigated by “cluster polygon” way...

Medieval binarity: city vs forest (sea)/culture vs nature
What is land [terra]?

- "......partem de terra Dubinghen ac Asdubinghen"... (Herman von Wartherge Chronicle, XIV c.)
- terra = or # administrative region?
  - Hermann von Wartherge was from Germany - "terra" is Latin equivalent for German “land”.
  - Foundations of Lithuanian churches from XIV-XVIII cc - “...donatio terrae Lukiany... (1468 m.); “...quator homines cum terra Lelkuski...”
  - terra = only cultivated land (not forest): surrounding of the some village, as “cultivated island” in the “wild forest”.
  - cf. “cultivation” and “culture”.

The Argirdiškės “island” in the Baranava forest, Dubingiai MR, 1804.
- the cultivated grassland in green
- the arable areas in pink
Medieval map as “orbis terrarum” - the mapping of „active“ (cultivated) points [only]

cf. the “islands” at Second Life

cf. the metro maps
Monsters [wild, dangerous space, between „active points“]

Critically endangered species in the Renaissance maps

What is border?

- usually „anyone“ land
- - the resource is not land „a priori“, but inhabited (cultivated) land
- - the aim of medieval war (usually) was „conquering of resources“, but not occupation of territory; vassals as resources, but not as territory....

- linear understanding of border - from late medieval and Renaissance
- - the oldest permanent border in the Europe: Estonian-Russian border (XIV c).

- mountains and forests as borders in the Olaus Magnus “Carta Marina”.
Person oriented geography vs landscape oriented geography
Medieval land – personalized, land as cultural category

The forests (in the Netherlands – the sea) was transformed to land (terra) by cultivation [cf. cultivation-culture]

Land:
- cultivated by my own hands;
- cultivated by hands of „my peasants“
- cultivated by „my vassal”

a little Marxist point of view... a man was created by work [a land was created and is saved by work]

cf. “tarnybos” (services) as economic unit in Lithuania XIII-XVI cc
-cf. acquisition of land by acquisition of people
-cf. „repeatable” historic place names in the medieval sources

The Renaissance paradox: Renaissance as „man oriented“ culture displace the man from the conception of land and fortify the topographic (landscape oriented) conception of land...

Geography as

idea (imago)
program,
and/or
reality (mappa, topographic map)
Medieval map as imago/mappa mundi [map of imagination]

Way of Lithuania in to maps are similar to way to Christianity

- Petrus Visconti, 1311 m. – Letoini pagani.
- Angelino Dulcertus, 1339 m. – Lintefunia.
- Fra Maurus, 1459 m.– “Litvama” and “P. Lituana” (Vilnius?).
- Marcus Beneventanus 1507 m. - Vilno-Bilde.
Where is the Jerusalem?

- by the „List of Russian cities” (end of XIV c.) - in Lithuania :-) 

- List as program - duke of Moscow – the duke of „orbis terrarum”

cf. ortodoxes vs catholics: south orientation of Lithuanian churches – Jerusalem in to south from Lithuania...

- 1613 m. Nicolaus Christoforus Radziwill's map: Dubingiai is very important city..... because... Very important for Radziwill's family  
- Dubingiai lake depicted as river? What mean (program) of this?
„inventing of reality“ in the maps:

- The Age of Discovery (Portulanus)
- close connections with the Renaissance Dutch and Flemish landscape’s painting.

- for east-north Europe actually in XVIII-XIX cc, by economic and war purposes
  - estate’s (land) maps (Dubingiai estate map, 1854)
  - topographic maps (K.I. Oppermans topographic map of Russia and Prussia, 1799)

Topographic vs symbolic-iconographic interpretation – medieval and Renaissance map as „collection of symbols“ [why did mean?] and artwork [art history interpretations]
- Marcus Beneventanus, 1507 m. - Rifes mountains, Herciny forest... as cultural borders
- Waclaw Grodecki, 1562 - 1570 m. - Neris river and Vilnelė river are the same size in reality the width of Neris is about 30 m and Vilnelė – 5-6 m
- Vilnelė as etymological background for Vilnius name
- Vilnelė as defensive and industrial river

Thank you
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