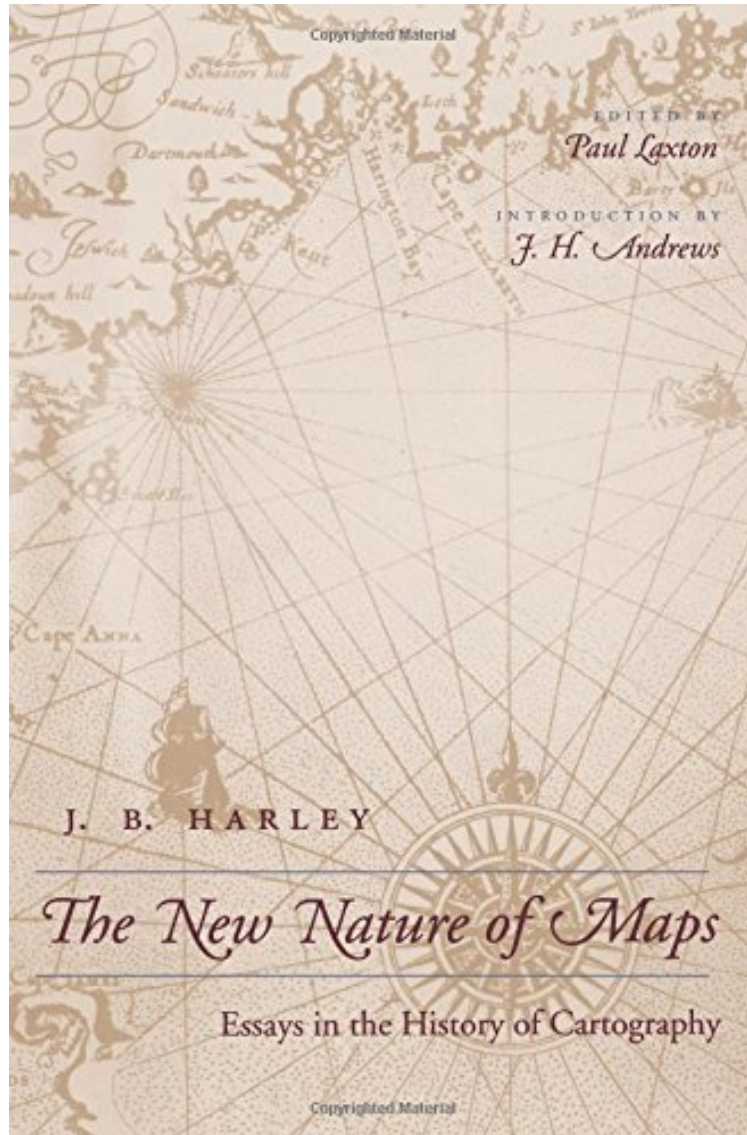


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The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography

J. B. Harley

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#970194 in Books J B Harley 2002-09-05 2002-09-05 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x .75 x 6.00l, 1.09 #File Name: 0801870909352 pages The New Nature of Maps Essays in the History of Cartography | File size: 39.Mb

J. B. Harley : The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An inspiration for critical cartography By sailorman Brian Harley can be considered a figurehead in the debate on more human and humane approaches to cartography. This was something

very unusual or even daring in the 1980s. The book gathers a selection of some of his most important writings on the history of cartography, the reading between the lines of maps, and the ethics of map making. (Well, I would have included several others, too... a selection always leaves out some stuff.) The articles are dense and packed with theoretical underpinnings that are not everyone's cup of tea, but Harley's merit was to provoke a shift in cartography to a pluralistic idea of mapping and map making - and this is priceless. Some of the pieces in this book look back to more than 20 years of controversies and may not necessarily reflect what is discussed in cartographic theory today, but, nevertheless, this collection is a "classic" for people interested in the "anatomy" and the "making-off" of cartography. 6 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Postmodern, but so what? By druI feel compelled to write this review because this book doesn't deserve one star. While it's true that some of Harley's deployment of Foucault (and Barthes) seems a little perfunctory at times-- perhaps Harley is indeed guilty of a little academic trendiness--in total, I found his arguments to be thought-provoking, and unlike the other reviewer, quite readable. The essay on cartographic ethics is still relevant, perhaps now more than ever as we become further and further immersed in a sea of digital maps with almost as little thought on the subject as ever. Ultimately, the take away message from this book for me was one of skeptical readership. Maps, like any other text, should be read and thought about critically and skeptically. In a similar vein, just because one doesn't agree with all the ideas and arguments presented doesn't mean that they can be dismissed outright. Harvey was one of the most important cartographic historians of the last 50 years, and I think that he should be cut some slack for his willingness to go out on a limb, coming as he does from a field where some still claim that maps are objective, "scientific" representations of reality. Even if Harvey's project doesn't completely work in it's entirety, sometimes just asking the questions is a valuable exercise. 16 of 92 people found the following review helpful. Don't bother By Jonathan Baum Marxist and post-modernistic verbiage from a cartographic historian who ought to have stuck to his area of expertise. This book is a mish-mash of politically correct essays on the evils of imperialism, racism, eurocentrism, etc. as expressed in maps. Harley was never one to let a trendy leftist ideology go unabsorbed and it shows in these tepid and unreadable essays. A fine example of what's wrong with contemporary academic thought.

In this collection of essays J. B. Harley (1932-1991) draws on ideas in art history, literature, philosophy, and the study of visual culture to subvert the traditional, "positivist" model of cartography, replacing it with one that is grounded in an iconological and semiotic theory of the nature of maps. He defines a map as a "social construction" and argues that maps are not simple representations of reality but exert profound influences upon the way space is conceptualized and organized. A central theme is the way in which power--whether military, political, religious, or economic--becomes inscribed on the land through cartography. In this new reading of maps and map making, Harley undertakes a surprising journey into the nature of the social and political unconscious.

"The father of critical cartography, and therefore the idea that a map should be understood as more than just a set of directions, was J. B. Harley... The New Nature of Maps... display[s] great erudition." (Nicholas Lemann New Yorker) "Harley was an iconoclast, subverting traditional approaches to map-making by drawing together art history, literature, philosophy and visual culture. It's a view that can now be savored in his collected essays, The New Nature of Maps." (Nick Saunders New Scientist) "With supreme tact, sympathetic insight into Harley's personality and his own deft scholarship, Laxton has produced... a book worthy of Harley." (Catherine Delano-Smith Nature) "Including Andrew's introduction... we have a debate within the volume, not only postmodernism and its critique, but also other examples of Harley's anti-positivist and anti-Eurocentric approach alongside a potent understanding of the processes and problems of map making." (Jeremy Black *Imago Mundi*) "The 'new nature' of maps reflects the sea change in the discipline of the history of cartography that has occurred, to a remarkable degree instigated by Brian Harley." (John Cloud *Technology and Culture*) From the Author "Cartographers manufacture power. They create a spatial panopticon. It is a power embedded in the map text. We can talk about the power of the map just as we already talk about the power of the word or about the book as a force for change. In this sense maps have politics. It is a power that intersects and is embedded in knowledge. It is universal." J. B. Harley About the Author J. B. Harley lectured in historical geography at the Universities of Liverpool and Exeter before moving to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His ideas on the meaning of maps have influenced not just geographers and map historians but also students of art history and literature. At Milwaukee he began, with David Woodward, the multivolume *History of Cartography*, the first volume of which was published in 1987. Paul Laxton lectured in the Department of Geography at the University of Liverpool for more than thirty years. He is now an independent scholar. J. H. Andrews is a retired professor of geography at Trinity College, Dublin and author of *A Paper Landscape: The Ordnance Survey in Nineteenth-Century Ireland and Shapes of Ireland*.