

*The History of Cartography*, vol. 6: *Cartography in the Twentieth Century*. Edited by Mark Monmonier. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015. Pp. xxxiii + 1906 in two books. £350.00.

A major triumph by any and all standards, *The History of Cartography* project stands as the leading achievement of cartographic scholarship in recent decades. Hitherto, the period covered in volumes 1, 2.1-3 (each a volume), and 3 (which is in two books), has reached to 1700. With this volume, one of the three slots apparently left, the last chronological period that the project is intended to encompass is covered. That leaves the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for two volumes. Volume 6 provides a million words and 1153 pertinent illustrations beautifully reproduced. It is fascinating to dip into, and is truly instructive to read through; although, despite division into two books, it is somewhat cumbersome due to the bulk, length and the wish and need to cross-reference, a need well catered for by helpful 'See also' references.

Clearly a work on this scale can attract many reviews covering different approaches, notably distinct thematic subjects in terms of mapping, as well as particular technical issues. As this review is for a journal on European Studies, I will focus on coverage especially relevant for that field. It is, however, pertinent at this stage to make several general points. First, as the helpful editorial introduction by Mark Monmonier acknowledges, there has been a difficult process of choice, and, as a result, there is always room for criticism of both commission and omission. That accepted, this reviewer feels it appropriate to note several points. Several important topics receive insufficient attention. In particular, given their significance for introducing and shaping carto-literacy, the coverage of school atlases is far too brief. That of the Holocaust is inadequate. It was not just a central episode in twentieth-century history that involved the movement as well as the slaughter of large numbers, but also a key aspect of the German plans for a recasting of racial geography and one that drew on a clear attempt to rethink the spaces of Eastern Europe. The treatment of Africa and of African topics is also far too brief, as is that of South-East Asia.

Of course, space in this volume was pressing, but, nevertheless, there was room to sacrifice several of the individual biographical entries. Moreover, at times, the coverage in the volume of *The History of Cartography* project, and of related groups, itself moves from being interesting and valuable as a historiographical tool, to an unnecessary degree of self-absorption that possibly could have been handled in a separate publication. Less, for example, on the contents and publication of the Nebenzhal lectures in Chicago, and far more on what mapping meant for the large number of states that became independent in the 1960s and 1970s, a process that was seen in Europe in the 1910s, 1940s and 1990s.

There are also issues of chronology. The editor addresses this question and points out that a certain relaxation of chronological bounds was permitted. Nevertheless, he asserts the significance of the twentieth century as a unit (which is a problematic as well as conventional view), while also explaining that presentation ensures that the twenty-first century hitherto cannot be covered. This is unhelpful. To take war, there is an entry on Gulf War One but not Two, or, for that matter, one on the use of maps in the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. It would not be presentism to move to include the more recent, indeed current, situation.

In contrast, there *is* a degree of presentism in the extent to which fashionable opinions are advanced without due balance, as indeed in all too much work on cartography. For example, from the editorial introduction:

The twentieth century witnessed the increased salience of the longstanding relationship between cartography and warfare. Along with the greater efficacy of precisely targeted cruise missiles and the trickle-down of military technology into civilian applications, this development brought impulsive aggression, the diversion of funds from beneficial public investment, and a reduced reliance on diplomacy. (p. xxvi)

The assertion scarcely explains why the great powers have not fought each other since 1953, nor in Europe since 1945, while China has not gone to war since it attacked Vietnam in 1978, a decision in which cartography did not play a role. There are other passages in the volume, alas, that reduce its value as a reflective work of scholarship to match the extraordinary quality of the vast majority of the detailed entries. That is a problem with a major strand in writing on cartography, and indeed geography.

For the detailed errors, however, accuracy is very high indeed, although Figure 332 is not, as captioned, 'The Germans in Central Europe', but, rather, as the German key makes clear, the Anglo-Soviet geopolitical rivalry in Asia. Moreover, that map comes from an essay, 'Geopolitics and Cartography' that is relatively weak on the situation in the second half of the twentieth century. This essay does not capture recent interest in the rebirth of geopolitics, but the length of time that the volume has taken to bring to fruition may mean that it was written a while ago. This has been a frequent problem with the project as a whole, and one that is less than helpful in a dynamic field.

Those interested in European studies may well be frustrated at places in the volume, although, throughout, there is much of enormous value and interest, from the impressive entry on cartographic duplicity in East Germany to those on Alpine cartography and on the atlas of Finland, each important: the atlas was an important early national one. There are several pieces that could have been longer (for example, Administrative Cartography) or otherwise defined. For example, the entry on Academic Cartography in Europe does not adopt the helpful institutional focus of the equivalent American entry. Many European institutions, however, are ably covered in individual entries, for example the Institut Géographique National and the Instituto Geográfico Nacional. So also with key cartographic firms, such as the Swiss Kÿmmerly and Frey ArG. It would also have been interesting, nevertheless, to see an analysis of less distinguished institutions and companies. Much of the European coverage is offered within valuable larger composite entries, for example Marine Charting. The role of military considerations is very ably covered with appropriate detail, not least from several different national perspectives. In this, as in other cases, it is impressive to note the valuable coverage of Russian/Soviet material, as well as the reproduction of pertinent maps.

Where possibly there is room for more discussion is on the cultural and intellectual role of maps. Adele Haft is good on Literature and Cartography, as is the somewhat overlapping piece by Sébastien Caquard on Narrative and Cartography, a piece that valuably includes fictional coverage. However, there is room for much more on cultural and intellectual dimensions, while the entry on Cinema and Cartography is too

brief. The globe as a target, for example in many of the James Bond films, is one of many topics of interest.

More generally, there are important questions to be asked about continuities between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and, as significantly, discontinuities within the latter. So also about the need to consider whether a final chronological volume, possibly more speculative in tone and reverting to the longer interpretative essays of earlier volumes, is appropriate. In the meanwhile, this major achievement deserves wide recognition and attention. Like the project as a whole, these books are to be enjoyed as well as read; savoured as well as studied.

**Jeremy Black**

## **French Studies**

*Genius in France: An Idea and its Uses.* By Ann Jefferson. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015. Pp. xii + 273. £27.95; \$39.50.

It is difficult to know whether the blurb's phrase 'burgeoning field of genius studies' is designed to bring a wry and weary smile to the lips or a whoop of excited anticipation, but Ann Jefferson's intricately argued and absorbing investigation might convince us that a genius studies based on this French model needs to look no further. Jefferson's subject is, as her title makes clear, less the meanings of the term ('overdetermined but under-specified') and more its uses, more what ambitions different periods and writers may have had for the term, more what social and artistic transgressions it might justify and how flexibly it could adapt its meanings to changing preoccupations and perspectives (poetics, medicine, gender, psychoanalysis). This book deftly manages the balance between the descriptive and the analytical, the documentary and the interpretative, such that the distinctive selection of materials conspicuously reinvigorates the subject, and that revealing and unsuspected narratives emerge. This study begins in the eighteenth century, with its conceptual preoccupations (mimesis, invention, sensibility, taste) and concern with their interactions and hierarchies and right dosages; here, genius is comfortably the apogee or epitome of those qualities felt to be publicly paramount, if, that is, one excepts figures such as Diderot, in whose hands genius enters a private world of shifting and even contradictory values. Part Two takes us into the nineteenth century, from focalizing, collective uses (the genius of French/German, the genius of Christianity) and back into the murkier waters of the individual, misunderstood and out of joint with his audience, but still able to envisage genius as a worthy aspiration, recovering its collective role and leading the people out of its benightedness. The account of genius in the literature of nineteenth-century medicine (Part Three) traces a path from its treatment as a neuropathological condition, operating in the shadow of insanity, in the work of Louis-Francois Lélut and Jacques-Joseph Moreau de Tours, to its being a normalized if heightened exercise of the physiology, subject only to those afflictions that a healthy regime might minimize. The medical consultant thus becomes not only the indispensable scientific counterweight to the genius's mental aberrations, but also his ally and most apt critical companion. Part Four examines the degree to which the feminine is able to stake