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Mapping Cultures: A Spatial Anthropology

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Reclamations: lost highways, mapping and wayfinding

A short video on YouTube called *Google Maps*[1] provides an entertaining and gently subversive take on the much-hailed 'democratization' of mapping practices and the Faustian nature of the social contract that delivers these technologies, so to speak, to our door. At his apartment Jeff is surfing away on his laptop. His flatmate comes into the room and asks him if he knows where he can buy pictures frames. 'I don't know but I can Google Map it,' Jeff replies. The flatmate is new to the technology so a demonstration ensues. 'Double click … and you're at street view,' he is shown. 'There's our apartment! … Let's go in the courtyard,' suggests the flatmate excitedly. 'You can't, it's a picture from a moving car,' Jeff informs him (unreliably as it turns out). They click and the stairway to their apartment flashes onto the screen. 'That's weird …' They click some more. The Google Map image is now of the interior of their apartment. 'That's my jacket I just put on the couch!' They zoom in further. Several clicks later and they arrive at an overhead view of themselves hunched over the laptop. With their backs to the camera (if that is what it is), they stare at themselves staring at themselves. Cue moody suspense music. They very slowly turn around and look up. Now decoupled from virtual space we no longer see what they see. All of a sudden a red light bathes Jeff's face and there is an ominous droning sound. 'Look away, dude!,' his flatmate yells, quickly returning to the laptop: 'Zoom out, zoom out, zoom out …' The location on the screen eventually returns to "street view" once more. Stunned and speechless, Jeff sits back at the table. 'Well …,' his flatmate concludes, patting him appreciatively on the back, 'thanks.'

Tapping into fears about surveillance and the "Big Brother" state, *Google Maps* channels a deterritorialized gaze of panoptic power which

Jeff and his newly initiated Google buddy® unwittingly stumble upon. The ultimate geospatial navigation tool – a roving webcam which, at the click of a mouse, and in the instantaneity of the present moment, can penetrate at will the 'fourth wall' of intimate space – the map is at once both a democratized (yet not necessarily democratiz*ing*) portal to geographical knowledge *and* a totalizing mechanism of state and corporate hegemony. The map *user*, by extension, is an active, indeed *empowered* participant in a new and radically reconstituted social cartography *and* a passively complicit subject in the virtualization of everyday social space. For a moment the otherwise mystified hum of the industrial data farm or the drone of surveillance technologies intrudes into the more prosaic environs of the digital world.

In the final chapter of this collection of essays on mapping cultures, Denis Wood notes that 'as the map's functions multiply, the function that most justifies the pervasiveness of its presence in our lives seems ever more capable of receding into the background the better to perform its work unobserved'. In the same way that processes of urban 'cinematization' – the reduction of cityscapes to spectacle and image – nurture an urban anthropology of cognitive automatism that is conducive to consumer capitalism (Roberts 2012), the 'auto-navigation' functionality of digital locative media can instil a spatial awareness in which 'the map' and the mapping *practice* – the *doing* rather than the *application* of mapping – start to drift apart. As mapping recedes into the background the (m)app steps in to shoulder the burden, freeing up our time and space for more productive pursuits (such as shopping). Stories about cars hurtling off cliffs while their drivers, slavishly following the instructions of the in-car sat-nav, remain oblivious to their surroundings, have become the stuff of modern legend (and Google Maps are not exactly known for their unimpeachable accuracy either[2]). Inculcating what Margaret Morse (1990) diagnoses as an 'ontology of everyday distraction', the spatial mythologies underpinning these GPS-enabled 'mapping cultures' would be comical had they not, on a macro-geographical scale, more serious ramifications. The European Commission has estimated that 6–7 per cent of the GDP (gross domestic product) of Western nations – €800 billion in the European Union alone – is dependent on global navigation satellite systems (GNSS). GPS (global positioning system), the most widely used GNSS, is now a vital technological component of data networks, financial systems, shipping and air transport systems, agriculture, railways and emergency services (Royal Academy of Engineering 2011: 3). In a report published in March 2011 concerns were expressed about the vulnerability of GNSS to

threats of systems failure, atmospheric variations or deliberate interference: for example, the jamming of GPS signals or the broadcasting of false signals (known as spoofing). Warning of worst-case scenarios that could include the failure of GPS receivers across the world (ibid.: 16), the report's authors cite as one of the most pressing causes of concern the lack of adequate back-up resources – the foremost being the provision of up-to-date *maps* (remember them?), not to mention the requisite navigation skills that render them functional.

It is less the specificities of distinct mapping technologies that are of relevance here, or the insidious machinations of some shadowy geospatial technocracy, but rather the *agency* of maps and of mapping practices: the extent to which mapping represents 'an open and inclusive process of disclosure and enablement' (Corner 1999: 250). In the *Google Maps* video the Orwellian underbelly of geographic information systems (GIS) is gently tickled, but it is Jeff's flatmate's insouciant resumption of his business and his apparent lack of curiosity as to the dystopian interlude he has just witnessed that – for me at least – carries the most resonance. Unlike Jeff, who is shaken to his core, the flatmate is entirely accepting (or oblivious) of the *utopic* cartographies that have been unleashed. Inasmuch as it represents a disembodied gaze (akin, indeed, to an 'out of body' experience), the spatio-scopic subjectivity he temporarily inhabits has 'no-place' (*utopic* in the etymological sense), or, to put it another way, it is non-indexical.

Google Maps calls to mind the opening scenes of David Lynch's neo-noirish thriller *Lost Highway* (1997). In the film, Fred Madison and his wife Renée discover a mysterious videotape that has been left on the doorstep of their house in an unmarked envelope. The video consists of brief footage of the exterior of their house. No explanation or context is provided. The following day they receive another tape. This time the footage extends to a view filmed from inside their house, ending with a shot of the couple asleep in their bed. A third tape reveals, to Fred's horror, grainy footage of himself, covered in blood, with his wife's dismembered corpse. 'I like to remember things my own way,' Fred cryptically lets slip elsewhere in the film. Without wishing to get embroiled in *Lost Highway*'s labyrinthine plot line (to 'navigate' the film itself demands a form of mapping – see Chapters 3 and 4), the film is ostensibly a study of ontological insecurity and madness ('I'm deranged,' sings David Bowie over the opening credits). The 'lost highway' of the title is in effect a fugue flight from reality, Fred's real self snapping at the heels of a schizoid persona (Pete) whom he wills into being. More pointedly, as with *Google Maps*, the disembodying of the

gaze from a spatio-temporal locus of being (the positionality of the self in relation to the world being navigated) creates a disjuncture between the embodied subject and the topographies of self that are mapped by the cartographic imaginary. The map *imposes* its reality on the subject; agency is exercised by dint of refusal or negation (Jeff's rapid retreat from the all-seeing vortex of Google Earth; Fred's denial of the reality he is presented with on videotape and from which he is ultimately forced to flee). Fred's journey down his particular lost highway may be extreme, but this too may be considered a form of mapping insofar as it cultivates alternative narrative pathways and psycho-topographies (and psycho-pathologies) of knowledge: mapping as wayfinding – as situated and embodied practices of *mobility*.

In their book *Empire*, the Marxist theorists Hardt and Negri argue that, in an era of multinational capitalism, capital and political sovereignty have become increasingly deterritorialized within virtual, imperialistic regimes and networks of global power: 'In … [the] smooth space of Empire,' they contend, 'there is no *place* of power – it is both everywhere and nowhere. Empire is an *ou-topia*, or really a *non-place*' (2000: 190, emphasis in original). If we extend this to the cartographic imaginary which the example of *Google Maps* has served to playfully illustrate, it is precisely those practices and cultures of *counter-mapping* which contest or seek to modify hegemonic spatial formations (such as those endemic to – to paraphrase Jameson (1991) – the virtual and spectacular logic of late capitalism) that are of particular import. As a product of a multiplicity of social and spatial practices, it is less what the map *is* that is the burning question (although I accept that to pose the question is part way to assert or challenge what it *could be*) than considerations as to what it *does* in any given context or milieu, and, by extension, how different *cultures* of mapping negotiate, produce, consume, perform and make sense of what we might tentatively refer to as 'cartographic knowledge'. Approached from the other direction it is of course no less a consideration as to the different ways culture and cultures are themselves mapped, and it is this twofold understanding of *mapping cultures* that forms the basis of the discussions that unfold throughout this book.

As the foregoing discussion has intimated, at a practical as well as a cultural level a growing convergence between *visual* culture, mapping and cartography has blurred the epistemological boundaries that police understandings of what we might consider to be a 'map' as distinct from, say, an 'image'. A colleague of mine who had submitted for publication a journal article on the subject of GIS and film historiography

remarked that the reviewer, picking up on a particular point made in the article, opined that it was not 'spatial analysis' that was being advanced but rather 'visual analysis'. This begs the response, 'Perhaps, but then it depends on what you *mean* by "spatial analysis" (or, for that matter, "visual analysis").'

In his article 'How to Read a Map', the anthropologist Alfred Gell, commenting on 'mental map' theories of spatial cognition, notes that '[a] multiplicity of partial views [images] does not add up to a map, which is a perspectiveless, synoptic whole encompassing all locations and all routes between those locations' (1985: 278). Exploring the concordance between a 'filed image' of a landscape (i.e., a 'cognitive' map gleaned from prior experience of *navigating* said landscape, whether on an artefactual map or in actual geographical space) and perceptions of the landscape *in practice* (partial views from a single or series of points in space and time), Gell attempts a synthesis based on the indexical or non-indexical properties of specific locational media. He asserts that maps and topographic images are logically distinct and that *both* are essential tools of navigation (ibid.: 282). Maps, Gell argues, are 'compendia of non-token-indexical spatial beliefs. Images are perceptually based beliefs about what is where in relation to a percipient subject, i.e. token-indexical spatial beliefs' (ibid.: 280).

Picking up these arguments, Tim Ingold points out that, in trying to disentangle the indexicality of the culture from the non-indexicality of the map (or, to put it another way, to acknowledge the cultural specificities of local or traditional spatial knowledge while at the same time ascribing a scientific and 'value-free' cartographic schema) we hit upon a paradox:

> [A]ctual maps are made to appear indexical with regard to cultural tradition only by a rendering of culture as non-indexical with regard to locality. The placing of maps within their cultural context is paralleled by the *dis*placing of culture from its context in the lifeworld. (2000: 226)

]t[For Ingold, the resolution of this paradox lies in the contention that what maps index is *movement*: 'the vision they embody is not local but *regional*' (ibid., emphasis in original). Yet this regional vision, he argues, has given way to the totalizing vision of modern cartography which has scaled up, inexorably, to the level of the global ('as though it issued from a point of view above and beyond the world.') I'll return to Ingold's instructive reflections on mapping and movement later. For the

moment I want to ruminate further on the place and aesthetics of the *visual* in cultures of mapping in order to consider some of the ways that the indexical *image* – situated and perspectival framings of topography and place – can function as or indeed *be* a map, as well as taking stock of what it in fact *does* as a map.

Consider the case of Sohei Nishino's *Diorama Map London* (2010). The question of whether, in conventional cartographic terms, it *is* in fact a map seems to crucially miss the point. As an image – or rather a collage assembled from some 4,000 images – the map (for that is indeed what it is) is the result of an intense period of urban gleaning in which, over the course of a month, Nishino walked the length and breadth of the city taking thousands of photographic images of its landscapes, streets and buildings from a wide array of different angles. He then painstakingly cut and re-assembled the images in his studio before reshooting the completed collage to produce the final image (or map) in photographic form. One of nine Diorama Map projects conducted in cities across the world, the London map resembles an aerial view of the city, albeit one assembled from images that represent a mosaic of perspectival mappings culled from the grounded terrain of what de Certeau, after Merleau-Ponty, terms 'anthropological space' (1984: 117). On the Michael Hoppen Gallery website the Diorama Maps are described as 'lacking the precision of google maps … but stamped with the mark of a wanderer of the city … Sohei says of his images: "Through the eyes of an outsider it will be the embodiment of how I remember the city, and a diary of the streets I walk."'[3]

How, then, does *Diorama Map London* work as a map? Firstly, it is *iconographic*, that is, it features famous landmarks (the London Eye, the 'Gherkin', the British Museum, and so on) that help furnish on overall 'image of the city' in the terms elaborated by Kevin Lynch in his seminal work on cognitive mapping (1960). Secondly, it is *ethnographic* in that it frames a cartographic understanding of the city that is cultivated through embedded social and spatial practices rather than, for example, as a product of aerial surveys or from virtual navigations and web-based image gathering conducted via Google Earth or Virtual Earth. Thirdly, the map is *performative* insofar as it recodifies the city with the 'embodied semiotics' (Game 1991) and 'spacings' of play, affect and everyday creativity (Crouch 2010). Fourthly, the Diorama Map is *psychogeographic* to the extent that it invites the viewer to explore the (re)imaginative potential of the city as a malleable or plastic space of urban bricolage; a dynamic assemblage composed of contrapuntal spatial rhythms and counter-mappings that take the form of oblique and potentially

subversive confrontations with everyday landscapes. Fifthly, despite its static form, the map is, in essence, a map of *mobility*, the residual arte-fact of myriad perambulations throughout the metropolis – the city, in other words, as a product of *wayfinding*, of situated spatial knowledge. Lastly, for Nishino the map also performs a *mnemonic* function. As Fred (or is it Pete?) intones in *Lost Highway*: 'I like to remember things my own way.' The image becomes a memory map or portal through which the artist can re-establish connection with a cartography of time and place in which the city is revisited as an *event* or a succession of site-specific moments.

But it doesn't end there. Considered in its wider social and cultural context the map could conceivably function in a number of other ways too. For the gallery or potential purchaser of the art object (or map col-lector – see Perkins 2008: 155–6) the map might represent the accrual or acquisition of *cultural capital*, a symbolic marker of individual or institu-tional habitus or of conspicuous consumption ('I absolutely *must* show you my new Nishino'). For city authorities it might perform a *totemic* role, the image deployed in tourism and place-marketing discourses as an expression of a city's cultural vibrancy and identity, or as a symbolic icon for mass consumption, reproduced on postcards, posters, mugs, T-shirts, or any one of countless other tourist commodities piled high in gift shops, museums and galleries. The curator of an exhibition on map art or of a museum display of images of London (in a local library or the Museum of London, for instance) would be required to assess how and in what ways *Diorama Map London* addresses the overall theme(s) of the exhibition as well as, accordingly, where it should hang. What function, in other words, might it perform *curatorially*? Or, indeed, *pedagogically*, if used, for example, in schools or colleges to inspire students to think about ways, through fieldwork, to engage creatively with their local landscapes and communities. Alternatively, the map might also be of value to some of London's marginalized communities whose local landmarks and spaces are afforded a level of recognition that they are routinely denied in 'official' representations of the city (with the exception of those that round on the crime-ridden character of specific localities or which spotlight the geographic stigmata of areas labelled, for example, 'ASBO hotspots'[4]). Seeing one's local area 'on the map' – an acknowledgement of its rightful *place* in the wider image of the city – could bolster community spirit or give political voice to groups contesting the local impacts of development and 'regeneration' schemes; deprivation, unemployment and economic decline; or proc-esses of urban gentrification.

On this latter point, in opposition to (or as modifications of) official cartographies of place and locality (i.e., those expressive of state or corporate power-elites), the development of community or indigenous mapping initiatives are nowhere better illustrated than in the work of Common Ground, whose influential Parish Maps, first established in the 1980s, has laid the groundwork for a democratized model of vernacular cultural mapping. Organically rooted (or routed) in face-to-face environments and site-specific aesthetic practices (Coles 2001), Parish Maps, unlike web-based cultures of mapping, enact a material and tangible culture of place, landscape and dwelling. As the co-founder of Common Ground, Sue Clifford points out that 'it is about taking the place in your own hands' (1996: 4). Despite its long pedigree, Parish Maps have to date attracted little in the way of scholarly interest (with the notable exception of Crouch and Matless 1996; Wood 2010: 143–55[5]). What is particularly notable (and exemplary) about these and related forms of 'self-initiated local action' (Wood 2010: 143) is a concerted desire to reclaim the map – and the practice of mapping – from the cartographers.

In order to get a sense of the culture and values underpinning the Parish Maps project it is worth citing at length from Clifford's foundational article 'Places, People and Parish Maps':

> Western cartography purports to be factual, conveying a true two dimensional picture of our four/five dimensional world. But, any lover of maps will tell you of the peculiarities and richnesses of charts of different Western cultures, different conventions, endearing or infuriating mistakes, the challenges of updating, and of necessary inaccuracies of representation ... [I]ncreasingly maps are made from satellite recording, ground knowledge is regarded as less precise, less useful, more costly ... With each level of abstraction, we feel less able to argue what we know, and less sure in our valuing of the unquantifiable smallnesses which can make everyday life a delight and help nature and culture to interact benignly ... In making a Parish Map you can come together to hold the frame where you want it to be, you can throw light on the things which are important to you, and you may find courage to speak with passion about why all this matters. (1996: 5–7)[6]

As with Nishino's *Diorama Map London*, Parish Maps entail 'a loosening of cartographic definition' (Crouch and Matless 1996: 237) by drawing on and working with a wide range of media, including collage and

photography, as well as video, textiles, ceramics, paint, drawing and sculpture. While the paean to community values and localism might at times paint a picture of a *Gemeinschaft* view of place-as-dwelling (not helped, let's face it, by the 'parish' appellation), there is little doubt that the appeal of Parish Maps lies in their poetic and 'gently political' (Crouch 2010) engagement with everyday social and cultural landscapes and a unique capacity to tap into and nourish a strong and locally resonant 'sense of place' (Leslie 2006). Denis Wood draws similar conclusions:

> It's hard to say, of course, what with the deafening din of Google Maps and dashboard-mounted GPS units that – *gasp!* – talk to you, how many will really hear the call sent out by Indigenous mappers, by Parish Mappers, but it's perfectly clear that it's they who are pointing to the future, while the electronic wayfinding machinery is doing nothing more than automating the past. (2010: 154)

Stressing the importance of practice and performativity in everyday productions of place and space, David Crouch reinforces the point that '[l]ay geographies and lay popular cultures emerge in practical ontologies' (2010: 62; see also Crouch 2003). In terms of engaging geographically with local community-based cartographies, the *level* of engagement and interest that is suggested by the Parish Maps example is also attested by the welter of online, often DIY or open-source mapping resources that, in their different ways, tap into local spatial knowledge. The remarkable 'Geograph Britain and Ireland' project, for example, 'aims to collect geographically representative photographs and information for every square kilometre of Great Britain and Ireland' (www.geograph.org.uk). Another resource which provides a clear indicator of a seemingly insatiable hunger for local geographical knowledge is the UK government's online crime map (www.police.uk), designed to 'put power in the hands of the people'. Within hours of its launch in February 2011 the website crashed as the number of hits surged to 18 million an hour with people up and down the country clambering to enter their postcodes to find out where and what type of crime was taking place in their neighbourhoods.[7] In the wake of the riots that erupted in London and other cities in England in August 2011 – the organization of which is thought to have been facilitated by the use of social media websites such as Twitter and Facebook – the compilers of the crime map would certainly have had their work cut out. When the police claimed that online cartographies of crime in the UK would put 'power in the hands of the people', this is probably not what they had in mind.

But while evidence points towards widespread popular engage-
ment in local mapping cultures, there are also cases where increased
spatial knowledge is not welcome or even actively resisted. When in
2010 a local newspaper in Liverpool published a Google Map showing
the route taken by the killers of the toddler James Bulger when they
abducted him in February 1993, reactions posted to the newspaper's
website struck a decidedly negative tone. One read: 'Let the poor lad rest
in peace, nobody wants a map, pity the scum who took his life have to
keep reappearing.' Indeed, my attempts to map the route on video in
June 2010 – a single uninterrupted take as I walked the length of the
abduction route – elicited a hostile reaction from one local resident in
the Walton area who made it abundantly clear that I was not welcome
(for a fuller discussion of this see Roberts 2012).

Reclaiming the map – and the *cultures* of mapping – with examples
such as Parish Maps are illustrative of a shift away from (or a more active
contestation of) the *idea* of the map as a disciplinary apparatus of, vari-
ously, the state, the global military-industrial complex, multinational
corporations, scientists and technocrats, or any other dominant power-
elite we might wish to hold to account, towards more open and agential
forms of engaged mapping *practice*. Yet if the pendulum shift in the
agency of mapping has started to swing in more 'democratized' direc-
tions (with the caveat that this term warrants a good deal more critical
unpacking than it is typically afforded in discussions of emergent map-
ping cultures) then it should also be noted that 'counter-cultures' of
mapping – or rather mapping cultures that deviate in some way from
the Cartesian model of cartographic rationality – are not exactly new or,
indeed, necessarily that 'emergent'. Avant-gardists such as the Dadaists
and Surrealists, for example, or the experiments in psycho-geography
formulated in post-war Paris by the Situationists, exponents of land
art such as Richard Long, the work of many conceptual artists, locative
media art projects such as 'Tactical Sound Garden' or 'You Are Not Here'
(McGarrigle 2010), the many art works (Simon Patterson's *The Great
Bear* being but one) inspired by Harry Beck's iconic map of the London
Underground (itself a radical design in its day),[8] not to the mention the
practices and traditions of indigenous mapping cultures, both Western
and non-Western, pre-modern and modern – all in their different ways
are testament to the downright refusal of maps and mapping practices
to conform to the strictures of cartographic convention. Nor, it should
be said, do these putative conventions of cartographic orthodoxy them-
selves constitute a monolithic 'culture' in terms of what it is 'counter-
mapping cultures' are necessarily counter*ing*.

The manifold cultures of mapping are, then, wide ranging and socially, historically and epistemologically contingent. By corollary, *maps*, their visual, textual or artefactual products, have their origins in distinct yet often overlapping cultures of knowledge production. As I go on to discuss in the next section, by drawing critical attention to the processual and multidisciplinary frameworks of mapping practice and theory (and the spatial ontologies of which they are constitutive) it is possible to set out a *spatial anthropology* of mapping cultures and to re-evaluate the place of maps and mapping in cultural studies and theory more generally.

Reorientations: interdisciplinary excursions and blind fields

Tom Conley has suggested that '[t]he field of cultural studies is riddled with the idea of "mapping"' (2009: 131). This is undoubtedly true. Yet while the trope of 'mapping' has remained a prominent fixture in the lexicon of recent cultural criticism and debate, what is exactly meant by the term has at times become rather less clear. A search on Google Scholar for the social sciences, arts and humanities reveals over 41,000 academic texts with the word 'mapping' in the title. Clearly there's a whole lot of 'mapping' going on. Although this has its problems and frustrations (and I'll touch on some of these shortly), at the same time the semantic ambiguity that has arguably dogged theoretical discourses in recent years presents us with challenges that can enliven and enrich, rather than inhibit, critical understandings of the cultures of mapping. The writer Iain Sinclair (see Chapter 5) suggests that while intellectually it seemed to be much in fashion in the 2000s, 'mapping' has now become more re-energized as a term. He attributes this to a much broader mix of influences and disciplinary perspectives: '[people] are drawing on forms of memory, language, mapping, anthropology, and wanting to dissolve the boundaries that have held these to a rigid scholarly discipline'.

If, as I suggested earlier, there has been a growing recognition of the need to reclaim the map – and the practice of mapping – from the cartographers, then a case can also be made for the need to reclaim the *analysis* of maps and mapping practices from cartographic theory. This is by no means to suggest that cartography, as a discipline, has wilfully monopolized the subject area or that scholars from other academic backgrounds somehow have not 'pitched in' (clearly they have, as the present collection of essays amply demonstrates). It is merely to draw

attention to the fact that there is so much more to say about mapping than is often said in cartographic circles.

At the risk of over-simplification we could, perhaps, 'map' the complementary disciplinary trajectories represented by, on the one hand, the 'cultural turn' in the spatial disciplines of geography and cartography (Vaiou and Mantouvalou 1999), and, on the other, the so-called 'spatial turn' in the social and cultural disciplines. While neither of these *reorientations* is entirely satisfactory in terms of representing a clear epistemological shift in direction (and I'll come on to the spatial turn shortly), what they do hint at is a discursive zone of convergence in which ideas of 'maps' and 'mapping' are increasingly called upon to act as rhetorical devices to address sociocultural concerns that are in some way deemed to be 'spatial' (or vice versa). Cartographic metaphors have as a result come to displace more literal understandings of what might constitute 'mapping' in the postmodern socio-spatial imaginary.

From 'within' cartography theoretical work developed in the 1980s by scholars such as Brian Harley and Denis Wood marked the beginnings of a shift in thinking towards critical acknowledgement of the socially constructed and power-laden nature of maps: the *new* nature of maps, to cite the title of a posthumous collection of Harley's essays (2001). In his seminal essay 'Maps, Knowledge and Power' (1988), Harley makes explicit the need for engagement with other disciplinary perspectives and a recognition of the deeply historicized, political and *cultural* contexts within which practices of cartography are framed. In so doing he challenged positivistic assertions of an abstract and ahistorical cartography founded on Enlightenment principles of reason and scientific neutrality:

> While theoretical insights may be derived, for example, from literary criticism, art history, and sociology, we still have to grapple with maps as unique systems of signs, whose codes may be at once iconic, linguistic, numerical, and temporal, and as a spatial form of knowledge … Through both their content and their modes of representation, the making and using of maps has been pervaded by ideology. (Harley 2001: 78–9)

In 'Can There Be a Cartographic Ethics?', Harley argues that, to the extent that it labours under the delusion of scientific objectivity, cartography (and by implication cartographers) cannot make (or rather sustain) ethical claims on behalf of the map (e.g., 'this is a good map, or a *just* map'). 'Cartography,' he observes, 'seems to be uncritical of its own

practices and both their intentional and unintentional consequences' (2001 [1991]: 198). Claiming to in some way *represent* the world, cartography remains critically unreflexive of the sociopolitical implications of maps and mapping practices in terms of what they do *in* the world.

For Wood, the fallacy of cartographic representation conceals the essentially propositional character of maps: they are 'arguments about existence' (2010: 34), and as such bear the imprint of the social, cultural and political processes of which they are a part. The propositional logic of maps is therefore premised on the claim of ontological authority, but it also informs creative processes of ontological genesis insofar as the map can be said to *perform* the territory: it brings it into being (ibid.: 51). Playfully deconstructing this propositional logic, in Dodge et al.'s *Rethinking Maps* collection (2009), Krygier and Wood illustrate (quite literally, in a comic-book format) the semiology and mythology (in Barthesian terms) of maps as communication devices. With a nod to René Magritte's painting *The Treachery of Images*, which shows a pipe with the words 'this is not a pipe' spelled out underneath, the article, called 'Ce n'est pas le monde' features a map of the world with a voice bubble emanating from a location somewhere off the coast of Africa saying 'this is not the world'. A more politically contentious proposition is illustrated with the example of two maps, both of which claim to represent 'North India'. In the first map Kashmir is part of India, while in the second it is within the borders of Pakistan. The territory proposed in the first map is significantly larger than that proposed in the second (2009: 202; see also Wood's chapter in this volume).

The influence of these and other writers whose work falls within the disciplinary rubric of 'critical cartography' has been far-reaching, extending beyond the fields of geography and cartography to inform debates in the social sciences and humanities more generally as scholars from across disciplinary backgrounds engage with ideas and practices of mapping.

In *Rethinking Maps* – which, like Denis Cosgrove's *Mappings* (1999) before it, is a timely collection of essays exploring the shifting meanings and practices of mapping – Dodge and his colleagues note that there has been growing recognition of the relational and processual nature of maps, map-making and map use. Mapping, they suggest, can be (re)conceptualized 'as a suite of cultural practices involving action and affects. This kind of approach reflects a philosophical shift towards performance and mobility and away from essence and material stability' (2009: 17). While this 'practice turn' (if that is what it is) represents a welcome acknowledgement of the socially and culturally embedded

nature of mapping, it needs to be stated that this *reorientation* is under-stood as such only from the indexical position of the (critical) cartogra-pher. To the anthropologist or ethnographer, that 'maps are produced and used through multiple sets of practices' (ibid.: 16) would seem self-evident and not especially noteworthy. Indeed, by contrast, grappling with questions more pertinent to the geographer and cartographer, the *reorientations* of the anthropologist would be more likely to take the form of, inter alia, a spatial or cartographic 'turn'.

In 1986 Wood and Fels argued that '[t]he anthropology of cartogra-phy is an urgent project' (1986: 72). Yet despite this call for a more con-certed critical reorientation towards cultures and practices of mapping and map use, the argument, made in the *Cartographic Journal* in 2008, that research into map use has 'underplayed the significance of wider contextual concerns associated with the cultures in which mapping operates' and that adopting a 'cultural approach can allow us to answer different questions about mapping' (Perkins 2008: 150), suggests that Wood and Fels's injunction has largely gone unheeded. As Wood, writ-ing in 2011, confirms (this volume), the anthropology of cartography is *still* an urgent project.

If, as recent trends in critical cartography seemingly indicate, there is a growing recognition of the value of perspectives drawn from social science and cultural studies disciplines, then how might we negotiate the theoretical reorientations *towards* geography and cartography? The uptake of interest in maps and mapping by scholars in film and literary studies, art and visual culture, anthropology, cultural studies, market-ing, museum studies, architecture, and popular music studies (all of which are disciplines represented in this book) can perhaps be attrib-uted to the impacts of a more pervasive (and much-trumpeted) 'spatial turn' (Jameson 1991: 154; Soja 1999: 261) that has left its mark on the social sciences and humanities.

Reflecting on the theoretical privileging of time over space in dis-courses of modernity, Foucault suggests that '[s]pace was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic … If one started to talk in terms of space that meant one was hostile to time' (1980: 70). Whether or not this marked a moment when a critical re-envisioning of the *spatial* began to gather momentum, as some have suggested (Soja 1989: 11; 2009: 18), Foucault's oft-cited remarks nevertheless provide a useful benchmark, underscoring an epistemological shift that, for Soja at least, marks the incipient rise of a 'critical spatial imagination' (2009: 21) for which 'the map' has become the defining trope.

A brief survey of recent publications and scholarly activity focused around discussions of the spatial turn reveals the extent to which this has developed into something of a dominant paradigm. Edited collections such as *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Warf and Arias 2009), *The Spatial Turn: Paradigms of Space in the Cultural and Social Sciences* (Döring and Thielmann 2008) and *Geographies of Communication: The Spatial Turn in Media Studies* (Falkheimer and Jansson 2006) vie with a host of articles which critically 'map' the spatial turn in, for example, social science history (Knowles 2000), social theory (Pickles 1999), contemporary social movements (Cobarrubias and Pickles 2009), the history of science (Finnegan 2008), art history (Highmore 1998), film studies (Roberts 2005, 2012; Koeck and Roberts 2010), literature (Kerrigan 1998; Cooper 2008), Jewish studies (Fonrobert 2009), even *geography* (Withers 2009); as well as a number of conferences and symposia, including the 'Spatial Turn in History' symposium at the German Historical Institute in 2004 and 'Cosmopolitan Cities: from Cultural Turn to Spatial Turn', a panel at the Association of Social Anthropologists conference at the University of Keele in 2006. There is also a dedicated 'spatial turn' website (www.spatialturn.de).

In addition to the examples outlined above, it is also worth remarking on the widespread tendency to attach the navigational descriptor 'turn' to almost any field of academic specialization: 'computational turn', 'cultural turn', 'historical turn', 'critical turn' (a recent development in, for example, tourism studies which, rather disingenuously, ignores the fact that there have always been critical perspectives that scholars have brought to bear on the subject), 'ethnographic turn', 'performance turn', 'mobility turn', 'pictorial turn', and so on: all are examples of recent 'turns' which are shaping academic discourse. It lies beyond the remit of this introduction to speculate as to the reasons for this 'turn turn', but needless to say, with all this turning going on it is hardly surprising if on occasion some degree of critical disorientation sets in.

Turning back to the spatial turn for a moment, Cosgrove attributes it to 'post-structuralist agnosticism' born of the recognition that position and context – the discursive *locatedness* of epistemic enunciation – are, as Warf and Arias note, 'implicated in all constructions of knowledge' (2009: 1). Soja, in turn, remarks that the spatial turn has been closely bound up with debates in critical cultural studies and postcolonial theory (2009: 25). Stressing the importance of fostering spatial justice, Soja goes on to suggest that this 'may in the end be the best way to promote and expand the Spatial Turn today and in the future' (ibid.: 32).

Although Soja and others have, quite rightly, acknowledged the hugely influential role played by Henri Lefebvre in steering theory and critique in more spatial directions, as a major luminary in the canon of critical spatial theory Lefebvre's work has arguably been slow to make inroads into many areas of cultural studies and theory and, as such, has not had as full an impact as it undoubtedly warrants. While there is not the scope to discuss this in any depth here,[9] what I wish to briefly explore in relation to interdisciplinary frameworks of theory and debate surrounding the critical spatial turn is Lefebvre's concept of 'blind fields', which he outlines in his book *The Urban Revolution*, published in 1970, four years before the publication of his groundbreaking work *The Production of Space* (1991 [1974]).

By way of introduction to this concept, on an anecdotal level, coming from a background in social anthropology, one of the things that struck me as interesting while working as a postdoctoral researcher in the School of Architecture at the University of Liverpool was the extent to which there appeared to be little, if any intellectual dialogue between the architects and academic colleagues in other spatial disciplines, namely civic design and geography, both only a few minutes' walk across campus. The publication in 2011 of *The Sociology of Architecture* by Paul Jones, a lecturer in the School of Sociology and Social Policy at Liverpool, rendered even more transparent the apparent disciplinary gulf – the *blind fields* – between departments by 'seeking to illuminate the broader social production of architecture ... and the underlying power relations inherent in the cultural strategies employed by states and other political [and, I would add, disciplinary] regimes' (2011: 5–6).

For Lefebvre, blind fields are critically bound up with the problem of the urban:

> Blindness consists in the fact that we cannot see the shape of the urban, the vectors and tensions inherent in this field, its logic and dialectical movement ... There are 'blind fields' whenever language fails us, whenever there is a surfeit or redundancy in a metalanguage ... The blinding is the luminous source (knowledge or ideology) that projects a beam of light, that illuminates *elsewhere*. (2003: 40, 31, emphasis in original)

At an institutional level the (empty) rhetoric of interdisciplinarity echoes with stultifying regularity through the corridors of the academy, yet rarely is it embraced more radically as a self-reflexive 'denaturalization

of knowledge', in which an awareness of 'the intellectual and institutional constraints' and *blind spots* of knowledge production is cultivated and positively reinforced (Moran 2002: 187). Blind fields, then, reside in the gaps between disciplines and institutionalized fields of knowledge (Shields n.d.[10]). By corollary, in terms of *spatiality* the project of critical interdisciplinarity becomes a process of *mapping* the blind fields: 'an interrogation of spatial ideologies' (Smith 2003: xiii) that takes the form of a dialectical counterpoint to dominant spatialities of knowledge. In this sense 'mapping' may be understood as a *spatial praxis*. Suffice to say it is not sufficient to merely attribute this to a wider 'spatial turn' (geography as an explanatory factor) but rather to problematize and contest the abstract *rhetoric of space* that has increasingly come to define what might actually be meant by 'the spatial turn'.

To the extent that these interdisciplinary navigations are predicated on the negation of transcendent cartographies of knowledge, the spatial praxis of mapping, as elaborated here, is ontologically grounded in movement and mobility. Accordingly, it is to Ingold's 'wayfinding' (2000: 219–42) or 'wayfaring' (2007: 72–103) that our interdisciplinary excursions lead us once more. Drawing a distinction between mapping (wayfinding/wayfaring) and cartography (map-*making*), for Ingold, knowledge is 'cultivated by moving along paths that lead around, towards or away from places'; it is 'ambulatory … we know *as* we go, not *before* we go' (2000: 229, 230, emphasis in original). 'Neither placeless nor place-bound but place-*making*' (Ingold 2007: 101, emphasis in original), wayfaring, like writing, is a fundamentally creative act. Viewed in this way, the world of everyday praxis is constituted and reconstituted by the *mappings* conferred upon it by movements and itineraries, not by cartographic representations (*maps*) by which it is otherwise bound in time and space, and *from* which geographical knowledges are otherwise framed. As Ingold points out, 'all wayfinding is mapping, though not all mapping is wayfinding' (2000: 232). Unlike maps, cultures of mapping mobilize, temporalize and above all *humanize* space.

Recultivations: mapping place, practice, performance

The essays in *Mapping Cultures* are loosely grouped in three main sections: (1) Place, Text, Topography; (2) Performance, Memory, Location; (3) Practice, Apparatus, Cartographics. These are not intended as fixed thematic categories and there is a considerable degree of overlap across sections and across chapters. All in their different way touch on questions of place, practice and performance. The rationale for structuring

the volume in this way is to cluster together contributions which, firstly, engage with *textualities* of space, place and mapping and the cultural topographics of literary, cinematic and urban forms of spatial practice. Secondly, the volume draws together a selection of essays that address aspects of performance and cultural memory as mapped across four UK cities: Liverpool, Birmingham, Edinburgh and Salford in Greater Manchester. The third section includes contributions which variously explore the practical, instrumental and performative role of maps, whether as methodological tools in ethnographic and qualitative research, apparatuses for marketing and communication, or as site-specific agents for psycho-geographic or pedagogical forms of urban spatial engagement.

David Cooper's chapter continues some of the threads of discussion outlined above in relation to the metaphorization of space and mapping in postmodern cultural discourse. Arguing that 'Genuinely interdisciplinary geohumanities research needs to be predicated upon a self-reflexive engagement with geographical thinking and practices rather than an uncritically imprecise reliance on spatial vocabularies and discourses', Cooper goes on to explore the scope for a 'critical literary cartography', basing his analysis on the notebooks and maps of the Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Richard Misek explores the cinematic geographies of Rohmer's Paris as mapped across more than 20 films the director shot in the city between the 1950s and 2000s. He demonstrates the ways in which Rohmer's films can themselves together be regarded as constituents of a composite map of Paris, connecting hundreds of locations across the city. Misek's journey through the psycho-geography of Rohmer's Paris also maps the possibilities of cinematic cartography as a mode of urban spatio-temporal navigation. Picking up this theme, in Chapter 4 I outline a five-point typology by which to examine some of the recent contributions in the wider field of cinematic cartography. Presented as a 'field guide' to research on film, maps and mapping, the chapter explores the different ways film cultures and practices might be understood as geographical productions of knowledge. Chapter 5 takes the form of an interview with Iain Sinclair in which the writer, poet and film-maker is invited to reflect on the importance of maps and mapping in his work. With particular emphasis on the 'doing' of literary psycho-geography and deep topography, the discussion takes in the solitary mappings of walkers, *flâneurs* and wanderers ranging from Coleridge and Thomas de Quincey to David Rodinsky and Nick Papadimitriou, as well as examples of some of Sinclair's literary mappings in books such as *Lud Heat*, *Dark Lanthorns*,

Edge of the Orison, and *Ghost Milk: Calling Time on the Grand Project*. In the final chapter of Part I, Martin Dodge and Chris Perkins descend into the hidden hydraulic infrastructures of Victorian and Edwardian Manchester. They argue that maps, plans and diagrams of the hydraulic city are themselves hidden and open to multiple and shifting interpretations. As virtual witnesses to the unseen city, spatial representations of these underground networks provide insights into the changing political and cultural significance of water and the narratives and memories that are constructed by urban practices of hydraulic mapping.

In her discussion of Liverpool's popular musicscapes, Sara Cohen explores the role of maps and map-making practices as methodological and analytical tools of ethnographic research into music, culture and place. Avoiding fixed and narrow definitions of 'maps' and 'mapping', Cohen illustrates the different ways map-making informed the research process. The creation of digital GIS maps as part of an exhibition on Liverpool's popular music history and the elicitation of hand-drawn maps by musicians to explore memories and geographies of specific performance circuits provides insights into the ways musicians engage with material urban environments and how musicscapes characterize the city. Paul Long and Jez Collins chart similar terrain in their chapter, which draws on sites and cartographies of popular music heritage in Birmingham to explore issues around spatial historiography and collective memory. Basing their analysis on maps produced as part of initiatives linked to the development of the Birmingham Popular Music Archive – an online resource charting the history and heritage of popular music in the city – Long and Collins relate their discussion to wider debates on the role of popular music in discourses of tourism, heritage and post-industrial urban regeneration. Taking a more technological approach, Chris Speed's chapter demonstrates an altogether different way of navigating – and performing – a city's spaces of memory. 'Walking Through Time' is a GPS-enabled mobile application that enables 'smartphone' users to navigate their way through an urban landscape using historical maps. 'Mapping' the embodied spaces of disruption between past and present geographies, augmented reality and locative media technologies, Speed argues, provides a means to track changes in the built environment of cities in new and innovative ways. Bringing Part II to a close, Lawrence Cassidy's chapter draws on the example of the District Six Museum in Cape Town, and the destruction of the local communities and landscapes that gave rise to it, to provoke comparisons with Salford 7 in Greater Manchester, an area that has also witnessed the large-scale demolition of neighbourhoods and

communities in the name of 'regeneration'. Examining the contested politics of place-making in District Six and Salford 7, Cassidy assesses the role of participatory mapping practices and memory workshops in the reconstruction and reclamation of urban memoryscapes.

In Part III, 'Practice, Apparatus, Cartographics', Gary Warnaby looks at the use of maps in the marketing of towns and cities. He suggests that cartography is used, on the one hand, at an *inter-urban* level to emphasize a town/city's location in relation to other places; and, on the other, at an *intra-urban* level to facilitate navigation around a particular locale. Warnaby argues that place marketers need to exploit advances in the democratization of mapping so as to more adequately represent and promote the experiential dynamics and diversity of urban places to actual and potential consumers. Hazel Andrews's chapter focuses on the spatial practice of anthropological fieldwork by examining map-making as a data collection method. Drawing on radical empiricist and phenomenological methods Andrews explores the ways in which map-making not only informed her understanding of the spatial geography of the fieldwork setting – the Mallorcan tourist resorts of Magaluf and Palmanova – but also enabled her to situate herself, as a researcher, in the field. She argues that, in the post-fieldwork stage, the conversion of rough field sketches into more clearly defined maps helped inform the process of data interpretation and critical reflexion. Efrat Ben-Ze'ev also explores map-making methods from an anthropological perspective. Using mental or cognitive mapping methods to explore how Israeli students, both Jewish and Arab-Palestinian, perceive and represent their geographical surroundings, Ben-Ze'ev asked 190 students to each draw a map of 'the country' and of the Middle East. Her findings revealed a general lack of spatial awareness and a disjuncture between people and their surroundings. Results varied from student to student, but the picture of the country that emerged is likened to a puzzle with many missing pieces, made up of geographical 'bubbles' and 'black holes'. The artist Simonetta Moro describes examples of her art work and practice in which she uses mapping to explore alternative ways to experience and explore urban environments. Introducing the Peripatetic Box – a portable device that contains a series of questions and 'triggers' for the user to create his or her guide through the city – Moro illustrates the ways in which mapping functions as a psycho-geographic tool. In addition, her 'Personal Mapping in New York' project explores the use of mapping as a pedagogical form of urban engagement, while the Panoramic Project proposes a notion of mapping as narrative record of time and place. In the final chapter, parts of which I have cited in previous sections of this

essay, Denis Wood argues the case for an anthropology of cartography, noting that 'we still have little idea what the gazillion maps are used for'. Exploring the mythic, propositional and performative function of maps, he suggests that what the map in fact *does* seems less clear and more diffuse than ever. While the power of the map has us all performing the 'grand map ritual of the state', Wood holds out for the possibility of undoing this hegemony and of '*reclaiming the map as something truly human*'.

Postscript: how I learnt to stop worrying and love the map

Google Mobile[11] is the last in 'The Googling' series of films that began with *Google Maps*. A group of friends are leaving a cinema where they have been watching the action film *Iron Man*. One of them asks, 'Do you know where you can get ice cream around here?' 'I can Google Map Mobile it?' suggests another. Cut to a close-up of the mobile phone screen as they search for a nearby ice cream parlour. 'There you go: "Hollywood Gelato."' The phone user then shows the others how to follow directions to the destination on the map. 'That's where we are … That's Gelato. Follow that line – Boomtown!' A moment later something odd starts to happen. The location marker for Gelato begins to move down the line on the map towards their current location. 'How can an ice cream shop get closer?' Cue moody suspense music. The shop is now just round the corner. '… Run! RUN!,' one of the friends shouts. They run. A chase ensues although we do not see their stalker. After a while they stop and check the whereabouts of the 'shop'. The marker indicates it is only feet away. They look up. Standing before them is a life-size materialization of the yellow Google Street View Man. 'What do you want from us?' they cautiously demand. No response. Street View Man is now standing face to face with one of the group in what seems like a showdown. The oversized stickman slowly reaches for something from behind his back. Is it a weapon? When he raises his arm it becomes clear that what he is fact offering the Google Map Mobile user is an ice cream. After all that, he just wanted to be friends, to do them a good turn (although in the final frames of the film the ice cream is delivered to the man's face).

Perhaps cartophobic anxieties concerning the coercive or disciplinary power of maps have been similarly misplaced. In an age when the democratization of cartography has transformed the way maps are produced and consumed, it is not so much the instrumental performativity of *maps* that is the issue but rather the extent to which cultures of

mapping can enhance the democratization and cultures of our everyday lives and social spaces.

Notes

1. The video was made by the Los Angeles-based comedy film group The Vacationeers. See www.youtube.com/thevacationeers#p/a/8C9E6213AEFC9E0B/0/fPgV6-gnQaE (accessed 9 January 2012).
2. Drawing an analogy between desktop mapping tools such as Google Maps and the fast-food industry, Dodge and Perkins note that '"Mc-Maps", made with easy-to-use technology, are also cheap to produce, and seductive at first glance, but can also leave a nasty taste in the mouth. Often, too, they lack lasting impact, have supplanted better alternatives, and are low quality' (2008: 1273).
3. www.michaelhoppengallery.com/artist,show,3,161,238,1491,0,0,0,0,michael_hoppen_gallery.html (accessed 9 January 2012). See also www.soheinishino.com/en/works/index.html#dioramamap (accessed 9 January 2012).
4. Introduced by Tony Blair's government in 1998, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) are civil orders designed to prevent antisocial behaviour including theft, intimidation, drunkenness and violence. The orders often include restrictions on entering a geographical area or shop but can include bans on specific acts, such as swearing in public. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1883277.stm (accessed 9 January 2012).
5. See also the collection of short essays compiled in Common Ground's own publication on Parish Maps (Clifford and King 1996), which includes contributions from David Crouch and Barbara Bender.
6. Clifford's article can also be accessed via Common Ground's website: www.england-in-particular.info/cg/parishmaps/m-index.html (accessed 9 January 2012).
7. See www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/feb/01/online-crime-maps-power-hands-people (accessed 10s January 2012).
8. For a selection of alternative London Tube maps see: http://acrosstheuniverse.forummotion.com/t700-alternative-london-tube-maps (accessed 10 January 2012).
9. For a selection of recent cultural studies texts that have drawn productively on Lefebvre's work, see Dimendberg (2004), Highmore (2005), Moran (2005), Wells (2007) and Roberts (2012).
10. A revised version of the paper appears in *Soziale Welt 16: Die Wirklichkeit der Städte* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesselschaft, 2005).
11. See www.youtube.com/thevacationeers#p/c/8C9E6213AEFC9E0B/4/wwaWFS7rU-g (accessed 11 January 2011).

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