

graticule intervals – a simple improvement which enhances the referencing process. The plate titles are in a lighter font than before, reflecting the fresh new look of the whole product.

The index runs to 223 pages, including a comprehensive glossary of geographical terms. Alternative versions and former names are also included, all cross-referenced and complete with geographical coordinates and atlas page references. It occupies a good portion of the atlas and is the largest index to be found in a single-volume atlas – a reference book in itself.

With commercial restraints being what they are today the danger that quality may be sacrificed in favour of cost-cutting is omnipresent. There are far too many examples in the market place where maps get published with little or no regard to the accuracy, currency, and usability of the product. I am pleased to say that there is little evidence of this here. In fact, I would suggest that the editorial and research processes demonstrate a commitment to continual improvement of the product as well as thorough revision of its content.

The way we use a reference atlas varies from day to day: we go to the index to look up places to find their location, we study a region to get an overview, we compare one region with another or we simply explore the world from our armchair. Whatever our requirement it is essential that such a reference contains the answers – it must reflect changes as they occur in our physical and political worlds. The Times Comprehensive Atlas does that exceedingly well – and with style. It sets the standard to which others aspire in the world of atlas publishing.

The print quality is excellent. Forest Stewardship Council paper has been used for the first time in this edition, adding to the book's 'green' credentials. The atlas also feels luxurious. The whole experience of owning a Times Comprehensive Atlas is pleasurable; from removing it from its box for the first time to the hours spent poring over the maps. Jon Snow was right when he said 'The Times Atlas is a total adventure'.² The recommended retail price is £150 although it can be bought for much less if you order online. Add it to your wish list for Christmas. You won't be disappointed. From the middle of the year, a luxury version will be available for the first time as a handcrafted, personalised, and leather bound edition – at a cost of £1500 to £3000. Now that is just the icing on the cake.

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ELSE/WHERE: MAPPING NEW CARTOGRAPHIES OF NETWORKS AND TERRITORIES, edited by Janet Abrams and Peter Hall, University of Minnesota Design Institute, Minnesota, 2006, 320pp., ISBN: 0-9729696-2-4, \$49.95 (pbk)

This book triggered my interest immediately because it includes, among others, several of my favourite figures: the London Underground map, Amsterdam RealTime scenes, Internet topologies, and a 9/11 terrorist network. *Else/Where: Mapping* contains a good collection of essays on mapping – 'gathering and arraying data in visual form' (p. 12). Characterised by else/where, the kind of mapping covered in this book is significantly different from what we conventionally see. The maps produced from the mapping activities are no longer on paper, but on computer screens; no longer geometrically correct, but topologically retained; no longer static maps, but dynamic; and no longer by cartographers, but by designers. Indeed, the contributors are from elsewhere. None of them is a trained cartographer; they are designers, architects, critics, artists, and writers. The book is also uniquely designed. For instance, the contents are not presented in a list but organised as a pattern of thumbnail images and there is no uniform size and style employed for the text, with the effect that some fonts appear rather odd and difficult to read. The quality and style of the essays vary greatly from one chapter to another, although the book is full of illustrative pictures, photographs, images, and maps.

Mapping networks is a central theme of this book. In fact, the first three sections (Mapping Networks, Mapping Conversations, and Mapping Territories) are all about mapping the underlying networks of both tangible and intangible worlds. Mapping Conversations is about mapping social networks using social software and Mapping Territories explores a legibility network in human minds while perceiving a city. Networks are ubiquitous nowadays, ranging from the Internet, World Wide Web, social networks, cities, protein-protein interactions, and many other phenomena. They can all be mapped into

a visual form to make 'the complex accessible, the hidden visible' or, more generally, 'the unmappable mappable' (p. 12). The power of maps and mapping can be used to understand the complex structure or legibility of large networked systems, which has special implications for the understanding of complex territories such as cities (although cities may be rendered by snapshots taken from an airplane, the geometrically retained representations do not lend to any structural perception. For instance, showing London Underground lines through a geometrically retained representation would resemble several intertwined strings without a clear interlinked relationship. In contrast, Harry Beck's design presents a prominent structure in terms of station linkage and line intersections and we can see how complexity is reduced through a visual approach (see <http://www.visualcomplexity.com/vc/> for more examples of network-related projects).

The world we are living in is not static but dynamic, as is reflected in the flow of people, material, information, and energy. This constitutes a second central theme of this fascinating book. Tracking the movement of human beings or artefacts is an easy exercise nowadays because of developments in positioning technology. Subsequently, mapping the resulting trajectories seems a logical extension for understanding these dynamics and our surroundings. The Amsterdam RealTime project provides a pioneer example of understanding this connection in mapping the daily movement of people in order to obtain a sense of everyday human spatial activity. The projected scenes reflect a clear pattern about the use of space in the city, which has far-reaching implications for city planning and design.

This book also testifies to the pervasiveness of mapping activity in the information age. The notion of maps and mapping – or the map metaphor – is enjoying revived interest in various other disciplines. Contradictorily, cartography has become no favoured discipline with the advent of geographic information science or systems. That several cartographic departments have closed or been forced to merge with other departments may signal a cartographic renaissance – the notion of maps and mapping has been penetrating into various other disciplines, as shown in Abrams and Hall's excellent book, and into our everyday lives through Google Maps, Google Earth, and location-based services. As a commentary on new developments in mapping, their book provides an excellent source of inspiration for cartographers and GIS researchers in the information age.

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IRISH HISTORIC TOWNS ATLAS, No. 17: BELFAST, PART II, 1840 TO 1900 by Stephen A. Royle, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2007, comprising one coloured map (914 mm × 812 mm), two pages of coloured maps (1215 mm × 812 mm), seven pages of coloured maps and plates, five pages of black-and-white maps and plates, and 90 pages of text, all housed in a folder (410 mm × 305 mm), ISBN 978-1-904890-26-3, €35 (pbk)

IRISH HISTORIC TOWNS ATLAS, No.18, ARMAGH, by Catherine McCullough and W. H. Crawford, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2007, comprising 13 pages of coloured maps and plates; six pages of black-and-white maps and plates, and 28 pages of text, all housed in a folder (410 mm × 305 mm), ISBN 978-1-904890-18-8, €30 (pbk)

In the seventeenth and eighteenth fascicles of the Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Stephen Royle, Catherine McCullough and W. H. Crawford have presented rich, scholarly studies of the development of Belfast (1840–1900) and Armagh, respectively. These new works form part of the strong research and publication record of the Royal Irish Academy's Irish Historic Towns Atlas Project. The Project began in 1981 and has produced eighteen complete atlases for some of Ireland's oldest and most historic towns. Numerous towns are currently in preparation and others are under consideration, making this particular historic towns project one of the most vibrant and active in Europe. The atlases follow a similar structure across the project. Each is made up of three distinct parts: the text exploring the historical development of the town; topographical information derived from primary sources; and maps. These firm structures ensure that each atlas offers a meticulous study of the historical development of individual towns throughout Ireland.

Such careful analysis is evident in the seventeenth fascicle, *Belfast, part II, 1840 to 1900*, by the historical geographer Stephen Royle. This

² Ibid.