

Preface

My twenty-year experience with the History of Cartography Project (the idea goes back to May 1977) has been rather like attempting to map a large mountainous, forested island without the benefit of a view from above. At the beginning Brian Harley and I, with a group of trusted advisers, landed on the hospitable beach of classical and medieval cartography. As the journey inland continued into Islamic, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and other Asian cartographies, it became obvious that we were in terra incognita. But as the routes wound upward, posing some difficult and momentous choices at various forks in the road, the layout of the surrounding landscape became progressively apparent. With the publication of this book, we may have climbed high enough that we will soon be able to see the whole island. But now there lurks a growing realization—both daunting and profoundly comforting—that when we reach the summit it will become abundantly clear that our “island” is firmly attached to a massive continent.

The redefinition and expansion of the canon of early maps was designed to bring into the history of cartography maps that had previously been ignored or relegated to the margins of the subject. In the original general outline sketched in the late 1970s, our intention was to include the “foundations” of world cartography, down to A.D. 1500 in both Western and non-Western societies, in a single “archaic” first volume. That first volume was to describe not only the maps of prehistoric, ancient, and medieval Europe and the Mediterranean and the pre-modern cartographies of the Islamic, South Asian, and East Asian realms, but also those of “primitive” peoples in different parts of the world. After deciding to devote two books of volume 2 to Islamic and Asian cartography, we were left with the question of how to treat the cartographies of the rest of the non-Western world.

Brian Harley’s interests were in almost every way remarkably complementary to my own, and our personal working relationship was extremely cordial. Despite often heated discussions, we almost never disagreed fundamentally about how a problem should be solved. But there was one point relevant to the plans for this volume on which I deferred to him only reluctantly. Harley was adamant that there should be no separate volume dealing

with the indigenous cartographies of the African, American, Arctic, Australian, and Pacific cultures. He believed they could be satisfactorily explained only in the context of European contact. In volume 3, covering the period of first European contact with the Americas, for example, there would be sections for North America, Mesoamerica, and South America, each subdivided into “purely” indigenous cartographies, the period of encounter, and “purely” colonial mapping. The same general plan was to hold for volumes 4 and 5, where indigenous cartography would be treated at the time of European contact—Australia and the Pacific in volume 4, Africa and the Arctic and Subarctic in volume 5, for example. Harley believed this was the only satisfactory way to bring out the contrasts and connections in the worldviews of natives and colonists.

At the time of Harley’s death in December 1991, just on the eve of the Columbian quincentenary, when such issues of contact were being hotly debated, this made a great deal of theoretical sense; and since much surviving indigenous cartography has been produced in the social context of communicating with Europeans, it still makes sense. The roots of my uneasiness lay in my desire to present each culture’s cartography on its own terms: it seemed appropriate to treat them separately. A practical matter intervened as well. We were having great difficulty finding authors to write sections on the three subdivisions that Harley had proposed for each region. The arrangement of these sections within several volumes was also cumbersome. Furthermore, since this project started, the interest of anthropologists and ethnographers in indigenous cartography had expanded enormously, and it seemed as if a separate summary treatment would provide a fundamental resource for this burgeoning attention.

With the advice of several scholars working on these subjects, therefore, I decided to form a separate book, the first serious global attempt to describe and explain traditional cartography in English. *Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose*, because it had been both Harley’s and my own first intent to keep all the indigenous material together, except that it was originally to be included in volume 1. The wisdom of the decision to create this book will no doubt be tested by time, but I should point out

that in the later volumes dealing with cartography in modern Europe the issues of colonial encounter will be fully addressed from the European side.

We have not been faced with the complex romanization or transliteration issues we encountered with the books dealing with Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean scripts, although we have used the United States Board on Geographic Names for transliteration of Russian. In recent years, however, usage of the names of indigenous groups has come under scrutiny. In particular, the editors of *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas* have recommended discontinuing the nineteenth-century convention of referring to collective members of indigenous groups in the singular. We have followed this policy for the chapters on the North American, Mesoamerican, Andean, and Arctic and Subarctic peoples but have followed the wishes of the authors of the other chapters where local variations of this policy warranted.

In thanking the many people who have contributed chapters to this book, I speak on behalf of the entire staff of the History of Cartography Project. Discussions frequently turned to our good fortune in attracting specialist authors and critics, and we owe them great gratitude for their patience over the past decade (often through extremely difficult personal circumstances) as the scope and focus of the book changed dramatically.

It is first my pleasure to acknowledge an enormous debt to G. Malcolm Lewis, my coeditor for this book. In March 1978 Lewis was asked to write a chapter on Amerindian cartography for volume 1, and in 1979 he was appointed a section adviser in that volume for what we then called “preliterate” cartography. He has since been a wonderfully supportive colleague through many vicissitudes, and when we decided to make indigenous cartography a separate book he was the obvious person to invite as coeditor.

That we were able to grapple at all with the problems involved in this work and later felt able to comment on some important interpretive issues in our Introduction and Concluding Remarks is largely due to the scholarship of the specialist authors from several disciplines, including archaeology, ethnology, historical and cultural geography, cultural anthropology, sociology, and art history. In the fullest sense, this is their volume. We wish to acknowledge the good grace with which they have accepted editorial intervention at various stages in the work as the subject grew beneath our feet. It is indeed a privilege to name them here: Phillip Lionel Barton, Thomas J. Bassett, Ben Finney, William Gustav Gartner, G. Malcolm Lewis, Tim Maggs, Barbara E. Mundy, Elena Okladnikova, Boris Polevoy, Eric Kline Silverman, Peter Sutton, and Neil L. Whitehead. Only they know the extent of expansion, rewriting, and recasting that resulted from edi-

torial efforts and the demands of the University of Chicago Press’s two anonymous readers. I hope they can now share our pride in the final result.

Several scholars have advised us, either at the early stages of the book’s planning or as the manuscripts were completed in draft. These include James M. Blaut, Barry Brailsford, Hal Conklin, William Davenport, Carolyn Dean, James Delahanty, Catherine Delano Smith, William Denevan, Greg Dening, Henry Drewal, James R. Gibson, John Hemming, David Lewis-Williams, Peter Nabokov, Benjamin S. Orlove, Nicholas Peterson, Alexei Postnikov, Allen F. Roberts, Polly Roberts, Frank Solomon, Jeanette Sherbondy, Yi-Fu Tuan, Gary Urton, Jan Vansina, Denis Wood, H. C. Woodhouse, and Karl S. Zimmerer.

We owe a special debt to Jude Leimer, who has been managing editor of the History of Cartography Project since 1982 and has provided the editorial and managerial continuity so crucial to an undertaking of this type. She has controlled the daily operations of this work—in liaison with the University of Chicago Press and with authors, advisers, and editors—with such determination and strength of personality that I can only describe her as indispensable.

Anyone who has experienced the problems of managing a small office within a large university will also appreciate how essential were the contributions of Susan MacKerer and her successors Veronica Cid and Beth Freundlich. Beth joined the Project in September 1996 and has expertly taken control of our finances, accounts, budgets, outreach, and office management.

There are two project assistants on staff, one responsible for illustrations and one for bibliographical work. Christina Dando, followed in 1996 by Kristen Overbeck, doggedly pursued libraries and archives to the remotest corners of the world through mail, courier (both commercial and personal), fax, e-mail, and telephone, and it is due to their efforts that we have been able to select the highest-quality illustrations in often difficult circumstances. Line drawings and reference maps were skillfully prepared at the University of Wisconsin Cartographic Laboratory in the Department of Geography at Madison by its director, Onno Brouwer, and his staff of graduate and undergraduate assistants: Michael Desbarres, Daniel H. Maher, Ryan Meyer, Kathryn Sopa, Qingling Wang, and Richard Worthington. Another cartographer who contributed extensively to this volume was Josh Hane, who was tragically killed in a climbing accident on Mount Hunter, Denali National Park, Alaska, on 22 June 1996.

In addition to its role in helping to define the scope and methods of the history of cartography, the *History* is intended to provide a basic work of reference for both scholars and general readers. As a result, continuing

attention has been paid to bibliographical accuracy. Barbara Whalen, followed by Margo Kleinfeld, exactly tracked down and checked arcane references and quotations in sometimes obscure publications in many languages. They have been helped by the excellent library facilities on our campus and the efficient Inter-Library Loan department at Memorial Library led by Judy Tuohy. Translation assistance was provided for this volume by Michael Batek, Valentin Bogorov, Maria Dziemiela, Peyton Engel, Heidi Glaesel, Laurie S. Z. Greenberg, Fernando Gonzales, Mathias Le Bosse, Frank Poulin, Todd Reeve, and Gnoumon Yazon. Other essential clerical, computer, and library help has been provided by Christian Brannstrom, Charles Dean, Paul Dziemiela, Rich Hirsch, Drew Ross, Daniel Samos, and Donna Troestler. The year 1996 also brought us much-appreciated volunteer research and editorial assistance from Howard Schwartz. Ellen D. Goldlust-Gingrich maintained the high standard of her previous indexes for books in the series.

None of this exacting work would be possible without the financial support of many funding agencies, foundations, and individuals listed on the financial support pages in the front of this book. We continue to be especially grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for their faith in and support of the *History*. We would also like to acknowledge the support of the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation and the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation.

Among the individuals who have made donations to the *History* we especially acknowledge the generosity of founders Roger S. and Julie Baskes, William B. Ginsberg, Arthur and Janet Holzheimer, Arthur L. Kelly, Bernard Lisker, Duane F. Marble, Douglas W. Marshall, Glen McLaughlin, Kenneth and Jossy Nebenzahl, Brian D. Quintenz, David M. Rumsey, and Roderick and Madge Webster. I would also like to acknowledge the Department of Geography, College of Letters and Science, and the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin-Madison for their long-term institutional and financial support of this project.

As in previous volumes, we are delighted to have the opportunity to thank several people at the University of Chicago Press. Penelope Kaiserlian, associate director, has continued to be one of the Project's greatest friends and trusted advisers. Alice Bennett, who has remained our copyeditor par excellence since volume 1, has improved the consistency and accuracy of the text. Robert Williams, designer, has proved once again that his versatile design for the books in the series has stood the test of time.

On the personal side, Malcolm would like to thank Margaret for her invaluable assistance and constant encouragement. My personal debts are growing too rapidly to specify, but Ros, Justin, and Jenny still weather the challenges provided by a project whose boundaries sometimes appear to exceed the available energy.

David Woodward