Reviews

Cartographic Cinema
by Tom Conley
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.
viii, 264 pp., 40 figures, endnotes, bibliography,
filmography, index.
$26.50 Softbound
ISBN 0-8166-4357-1

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Given my own career in cartography, along with my son's early career in theater and film, I could not resist offering to review this groundbreaking work concerning the intersection of these two visual media. How these two mediums of communication relate to one another is the focus of the book and this review.

Throughout the book, Conley quotes heavily from--and builds on the works of--two French film theoreticians, André Bazin and Gilles Deleuze. At this point, I must recommend reading the endnotes with the text; these twenty-four pages of notes are crucial to understanding the author's point of view. Because the endnotes are a vital part of his discourse, this book is not quickly read, and should be digested slowly.

In many books, a reader can skip the introductory chapter--not here. Conley's Introduction is critical to understanding his movie reviews in the ten chapters that follow, a collection of essays covering the history of twentieth century cinema, primarily focusing on films from France and the United States. The author begins by positing that maps appear in most movies. He further argues that "A film can be understood in a broad sense to be a 'map' that plots and colonizes the imagination of the public . . . ." (1). As a point of pride for cartographers, he also states that "The force and beauty of cinema are enhanced when we think of it in light of cartography"(5). Conley notes that the first shots of a movie establish a real or artificial geography for the viewer on which to speculate. He presents two hypotheses: "[A] map in a film is an element at once foreign to the film but also, paradoxically, as the same essence as film;"(2) and "[R]ivaling with the proposition that rare are the films that fail to contain maps, is that the occurrence of a map in a film is unique to its own context" (5).

A number of related points are made in the course of the introduction, including: 1) maps in a film often serve as archival diagrams regarding the history and strategy of the film; 2) the film viewer, in essence, oc-cupies an 'unmoored, self-detached position' as the movie progresses; thus, 3) maps provide a trajectory of travel across the cinematic landscape; 4) accurate maps can help the viewer relate to the filmed locality; whereas, 5) inaccurate or inauthentic maps might confuse the viewer in time and place; 6) one's cognitive map of a filmed location is compared with that of the film; 7) many films promote self-mapping where the viewer becomes transported into another time and space; 8) maps and the films in which they reside provide a type of 'mobile topography'; 9) a film is an animated map providing a geography in context; 10) maps that appear in films are often coded or controlling images of facts; and finally, 11) the great auteurs [authors] of films make maps of their movies (pp. 14-21).

Chapter 1 deals with the film *Paris qui dort* [literally, *Paris that Sleeps*, but the English version title is *The Crazy Ray*] (1923), a silent science fiction movie in which a mad doctor freezes life. The lone person to escape the ray is the night watchman on the Eiffel Tower, who wakes up one morning to discover all life has stopped. From the top of the tower, he has a "bird's eye" or panoramic view of the city. This film also has an anthropomorphic globe, in a lower corner of the screen, that grimaces or smiles depending on the content of the printed remark. Even though the film is limited in scope to Paris, the inter-titles with the little globe globalize the actions.

In Chapter 2, the author examines four films of Jean Renoir from the 1930s. Conley states that maps appear at critical junctions in Renoir's films, begging viewers to see them as "human topographies"(40). In *Boudu suavé des eaux* [*Boudu Saved from Drowning*] (1932), eight baroque folio maps can be seen in a bookstore window early in the movie. Here, "maps inspire questions concerning where the personages are and how the viewer relates to their own perception of their place in space" (44). Next, Conley reviews *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* (1935), where the map takes on a life of its own, as a "character" in the movie, appearing in three different localities. In *La Grande Illusion* (1937), a prisoner of war is seen piecing together map fragments sent in chocolate bar wrappers. As he constructs his incomplete map, it can be compared to other maps used by the military. Lastly, with *La Règle du jeu* [*The Rules of the Game*] (1939), a pair of conspicuous globes is seen numerous times at the end of a balustrade to a chateau, appearing both as globes and as cannonballs, encompassing both empire and military power.

Chapter 3 covers Rossellini's film, *Roma, città aperta* [*Rome, Open City*] (1945), a movie that reflects on maps and a "theater of cruelty and torture" in World War II. Conley's "guiding hypothesis of this chapter is that in the film Rossellini taps into the tradition of *theatrum mundi*, a world-theater conceived as an atlas of maps with which its owners can assuage their broadest desires for travel and displacement" (66). Maps in this movie are used to decorate different rooms, and, especially in the map room (located next to the Gestapo torture room), maps are used by the actors and viewers to travel without leaving the room.

The fourth chapter covers four American films, beginning with *High Sierra* (1941), in which Humphrey Bogart plays an escaped criminal on a desperate journey in a "rush to death." The movie has a montage sequence that in part features a map; a hand is seen pressing tacks as the pursuit of the criminal narrows. An iris dissolve reinforces the image of the tightening search. Basically, "the film uses maps to situate and enclose the tragic hero"(88). *Desperate Journey* (1942) starts with the first of a number of maps of northern Europe which covers the territory where Errol Flynn and Ronald Reagan conduct an aerial bombing mission over Nazi Germany, crash, get captured, escape in a cross-country car chase, and finally steal an airplane to go home.

Casablanca (1942) opens with the three main actors' names (Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, and Paul Henreid) superimposed over a map of Africa. This scene is followed by a globe that re-orients the viewer by starting over the north Pacific, which then rotates and zooms to India, the Middle East, eastern Africa, and finally to Paris. At this point in the narrative, lines of fleeing refugee trails are traced on a map, ghosted over stock photos of the refugees, to Troyes and Marseille, across the Mediterranean to Morocco, and stopping at Casablanca. Interestingly, no name accompanies the dot for Casablanca, but when the map reappears at the end of the movie, this city's name appears on the map. In *Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1982), another desperate journey's itinerary is mapped by a red line drawn over a Mercator projection and under the image of a Pan American overseas cruiser.

Chapter 5 discusses *Les Mistons* [*The Rascals*] (1957) and how the film presents cartographic allegories within a figurative juvenile geography. "From its very first shots *Les Mistons* betrays a new sense of cartography through the marriage of mapping to cinema. A geographical space is plotted and espoused in the narrative in which children seem to be orphans of the world they inhabit" (122). The sixth chapter concerns *Les Amants* [*The Lovers*] (1958), a movie that deals in part with the interplay of an estate map, a Michelin road map, and an allegorical map, *Carte du Pays de*

Tendre [*Map of the Country of Love*]. In this film, two lovers plan their travels, in which a desperate journey becomes tender travel. Conley declares in Chapter 7 that "Few cities are riddled with maps as much as Paris in Truffaut's first full-length feature," (142) *Les Quatre cents coups* [*The 400 Blows*] (1959). Early on, a maze of maps is presented along a classroom's four walls, portraying the interaction between maps, French history, the teacher, the children, and a disciplined child. Late in the movie, cartographic versus physical memory is addressed by one of the characters (now grown) while reminiscing (233).

In Chapter 8, the author expounds upon how the maps in *Thelma and Louise* (1991), can "have an engaging and unsettling presence" (156). This movie portrays another desperate journey, this time for two women, who, after killing a rapist, unsuccessfully consult a road map to plot their escape. Later, in a motel room, three decorative baroque maps obviously fail to alleviate the women's feeling of being lost. Meanwhile, a tractor trailer, labeled "Zip," drives by. "In an alert but unpublished sequence, T. Jefferson Kline notes that 'Zip' is a 'sort of message without a code.' Systems of surveillance and advertising use 'zip codes' to locate where and who we are. At this moment, when they are 'zipped,' the two ladies are totally lost" (234).

Chapter 9 presents *La Haine* [*The Hate*] (1995), which covers the 1968 student riots and their aftermath. Three maps appear in this film: 1) the Apollo image of the earth as seen from the moon (in the opening credits and later in the city and suburbs on advertisements); 2) "a meteorological map of France under which the children place themselves for a moment indicates that the film is an allegory and its meaning moves from *police* to *polis* and from *polis* to *cosmos*" (190), and 3) somewhat less noticeable, a type of world projection onto the black and white splotches of a cow about which one of the characters "seems to imagine a world-map . . . that his fantasies bring into the courtyard of the housing project" (190).

For the last film that Conley reviews, *Gladiator* (2000), the emperor Marcus Aurelius asks Maximus to "look at this map" (195). For the viewer, this quick look at a map of Italia (by Ptolemy?) only provides the northern portion of the empire, perhaps indicating that Romans may have been too ambitious in expanding the empire northward. Later in the movie, the emperor Commodus looks at a 3D model of a coliseum with toy gladiators, which transforms through special effects into a finished stadium. At this point, Conley gets carried away with comparisons of the gladiator games to the modern NFL by emphasizing that "*Gladiator* became a mobile map that moved toward contemporary genres of entertainment and an array of films past and present"(206).

Within his concluding chapter, the author makes

these salient points: "[T]he maps we discern in a movie often heighten our awareness about perception and subjectivity" (207), and "a map in a movie can unsettle or displace the inferred contracts tendered at the beginning of every film about the conditions of viewing that follow" (208). But "When a cartographic shape–be it a projection, a globe, an icon of the world, an atlas, a diagram, a bird's-eye view of the landscape, a city-view–is taken as a point of departure, it becomes a model, a patron, or even a road map from which transverse readings can be plotted" (208) and "[C]artography and cinema share in the design of what one critic long ago (Jameson 1982) called 'strategies of containment'" (212).

This book was written more for film historians than cartographers; indeed, it reads like it belongs in a film history classroom. Unfortunately, only forty figures appear in the text for the sixteen films discussed (plus the numerous other films referenced). Given the graphic nature of both cartography and cinema, Conley should have provided more figures to help the reader better visualize his points. While a DVD insert with film clips would provide much appreciated context, I doubt that copyright restrictions would allow such a feature. Regardless of these criticisms, this reviewer will likely never watch movies in quite the same way again.

Placing History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and GIS Are Changing Historical Scholarship
Edited by Anne Kelly Knowles, with a digital supplement edited by Amy Hillier, and a foreward by Richard White.
Redlands, California: ESRI Press, 2008.
313 pp., 85 figures, endnotes, bibliography, index, author biographies, CD insert.
$49.95. Softbound
ISBN 978-1-58948-013-1

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This book springs from both a conference at the Newberry Library in 2004, "History and Geography: Assessing the Role of Geographic Information in Historical Scholarship," and as a sequel of sorts to Knowles' earlier edited work, *Past Time, Past Place: GIS for History* (2002), to which it serves as a compendium of projects now completed. More than half of this book's chapters range in topic across time and space, while the others provide theoretical and methodological discussions usable for future research. In total, thirteen authors from history, geography and planning departments across academia present a foreward, ten chap-

ters, and a conclusion to address how maps, spatial data, and GIS are changing historical scholarship.

Knowles begins the introductory chapter by identifying the differences between geographers and historians and notes some reasons why historians have generally been reluctant to use GIS. She posits that historical GIS (HGIS) scholarship combines historical geography and spatial and digital history with databases that record both locations and time, thus enabling maps (including animations) to illustrate changes over time. She uses examples to show that HGIS has been focused on the themes of the history of land use and spatial economy, reconstructing past landscapes and built environments, and infrastructure projects to facilitate the use of HGIS research. Lastly, Knowles helpfully addresses the conceptual and technical challenges facing historians and geographers who plan to use GIS in their research. Particularly, she discusses the paucity of colleagues doing similar work, the ability to recognize geographic information embedded in historical sources, the variable of accuracy in mapping over time, and the lack of standards in documentation.

In Chapter 2, Peter Bol describes the use of GIS for investigating the history of China in a study based at Harvard and Fudan universities. The China Historical GIS (CHGIS) is an ambitious project covering more than 2100 years and ultimately consisting of three elements: "a continuous time series of the administrative hierarchy from the capital down to the county"; "major nonadministrative settlements, particularly market towns that proliferated during the last millennium"; and "historical coastlines, rivers, lakes, and canals" (28). The administrative structure has been modeled as points, for example, capital–county seat–village, with shifting lines and areas of control against the landscape. Indeed, as Bol notes, "For much of the last millennium, demarcating boundaries was the exception rather than the rule" (42). Nonetheless, the CHGIS maximizes the point coverage of settlements as much as possible so that Thiessen polygons can be used to approximate the county boundaries over time. Supplementing that data are compilations of local gazetteers, market networks, lineal villages, and religious networks. In all, CHGIS aims to "take into account such historical shifts in sources and spatial conceptions" (54).

The third chapter, "Teaching with GIS," is split into two parts: "The Value of GIS for Liberal Arts Education" by Robert Churchill and "A Guide to Teaching Historical GIS" by Amy Hillier. In Part I, using several pertinent examples, Churchill discusses how GIS adds value to education. "First, GIS can teach valuable analytical and problem-solving strategies that transcend disciplinary boundaries. Second, GIS emphasizes visualization and underscores the indispensable value of the visual by using maps to communicate results.