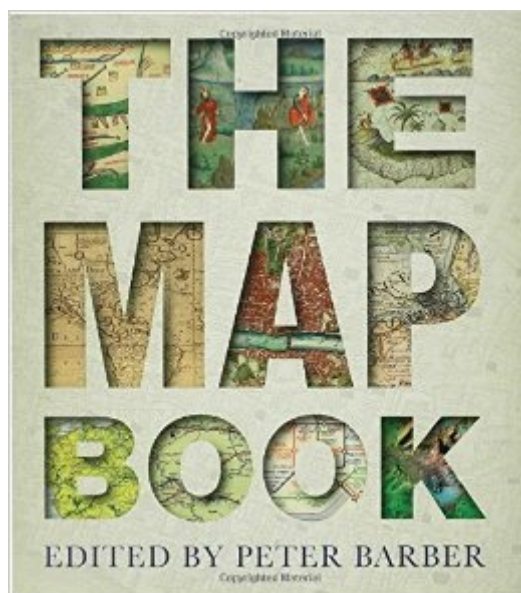


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The Map Book



Synopsis

'Journey over all the universe in a map, without the expense and fatigue of traveling, without suffering the inconveniences of heat, cold, hunger, and thirst.' --Miguel de Cervantes, in Don Quixote

From the earliest of times, maps have fired our imaginations and helped us make sense of our world, from the global to the very local. Head of Map Collections at the British Library, Peter Barber has here compiled an historic and lavish atlas, charting the progress of civilization as our knowledge of the world expanded. Simply organized as a progression through time, The Map Book collects some 175 maps that span four millennia - from the famed prehistoric Bedolina (Italy) incision in rock from around 1500 B.C. to the most modern, digitally enhanced rendering. Many of the maps are beautiful works of art in their own right. From Europe to the Americas, Africa to Asia, north to south, there are maps of oceans and continents charted by heroic adventurers sailing into the unknown, as accounts spread of new discoveries, shadowy continents begin to appear on the margins of the world, often labeled 'unknown lands.' Other maps had a more practical use: some demarcated national boundaries or individual plots of land; military plans depicted enemy positions; propaganda treatises showed one country or faction at an advantage over others. So much history resides in each map--cultural, mythological, navigational--expressing the unlimited extent of human imagination. This is captured in the accompanying texts--mini essays by leading map historians--that are as vivid and insightful as the maps themselves. They make The Map Book as much a volume to be read as to be visually admired.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The Map Book" provides ample evidence of Mr. Barber's and his colleagues' knowledge and love of maps. The finely detailed reproductions of the historical maps alone would be worth the price the price of the book, but the addition of the well-informed and entertaining essays which accompany each map imbue the maps with greater meaning and provide a window into the thoughts, traditions, and motives of the mapmakers and those for whom the maps were intended. One could open this book at any page and become engrossed from the history and culture represented by each of the maps. With the physical dimensions and glossy pages of a coffee table books, "The Map Book" goes beyond most of the genre by being not only pleasing to the eye, but stimulating to the mind as well. This book never fails to catch the attention of my guests and I never fail to be pleased at the undeserved compliments given to me from my simply having and displaying the book.

This book just arrived in the mail yesterday! Wow! I never thought I would be saying this about ANY item that takes almost three months to arrive (we are in the 21st century are we not?), but it was worth the wait. The breadth of this book's coverage is amazing - the organization by year is really interesting - you can see the progression of maps (and the dozens upon dozens of invented uses of maps). Many of the maps featured in this book seem to be rare gems. And the paper and print quality are top-notch. Best of all, this book tries to educate while it's busy pleasing the eye, asking its readers thought-provoking questions (like showing a composite satellite image and asking "is this a map"?). More than just a coffee table book, I am excited to finally own this visual feast! Very thought-provoking... being a geek is cool again! :-)

I really looked forward to getting this book and wish I had read the reviews first. While I can enjoy the overall design of the maps, I certainly found my enjoyment lessened by the fact that I cannot read the print on most of them, even with a magnifying glass. This, in turn, lessened the appeal of the text. Just a mess, to be honest. Didn't any editor notice the size of the print on the maps? Or are they sight-impaired? I am just glad that I only paid \$8 for this, used, including shipping.

If you love historical maps, this is a good starting point. A couple of hundred maps are presented; one page for the map and one for the text. Other reviewers have described the content further so I will just focus on what I perceived as weaknesses:- Better resolution should have been used for printing. At least the hard cover edition should have been printed so well that one could use a magnifying glass to get more information. Still the resolution is better than similar books printed in the 90s.- A bit too many maps prior to 1700, around half the book.- A very UK-centric approach for

the last 3-400 years. The French were producing maps very early (not covered), the Germans had great maps with interesting typography 100 years ago (not covered), the Russians have produced very odd maps, like the one's given to soldiers (not covered), and the Japanese also have interesting maps (not covered).- The text is short and descriptive but not insightful. The book *The Image of the World: 20 Centuries of World Maps* has a much more insightful text. So that is the book you should read to better understand world maps. If you want a coffee table book for the thinking person, this is a great choice. Four stars.

This book blends a history lesson with interesting maps. Sometimes the maps leave you wanting more detail, but overall, it's an intriguing idea. I gave it as a gift to a map lover, and it was well received.

I am retired military (Army Special Forces) and I have a Masters in History (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) and I am a map and cartography nut. I have thousands of maps and dozens of Atlas, map & cartography books. I expected a good book from the reviews and I am very happy to report that this is a great book. It is simply excellent and one of the best map books ever published. As I've only had it for a few days, I am far from finished with it, but it is full of great maps and very insightful and scholarly information that is also fun, interesting, informative and easy to understand. My wife is not a map nut and she has been looking it over and reading it as well. The last two times I went to get it, she had it and was not thrilled to give it back to me. She told me that she thinks it is the best map book she has ever seen and she teaches geography & cartography (and many other subjects) to her Montessori students. As far as the mechanics of the book itself, it is large (10x12x1.5), very heavy, at just under 4 pounds and the book is very well made. It has great quality paper, great ink (that does not smell like a chemical spill) and a first rate cover & binding. My compliments to the editor Peter Barber and the publisher Walker & Company. I now know why they call it "The Map Book".

This book contains primarily historical maps with descriptions. The descriptions associated with each map added interesting information. Its contents are ordered chronologically, and one can trace the growing sophistication of geographical knowledge as one pages through the book

Thinking this was sort of like an Atlas, but it isn't. Maps of ancient places, ancient cultures, mapped out territories of the monarchy, it goes on and on. Great coffee table book. I'd give the book a 5, it is

in excellent condition, but I was hoping for an Atlas. My fault.

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