

practices, which themselves do work through mapping. And it helps clear a path by which researchers in the humanities and social sciences alike might better understand and express that “it is not so much what people do with maps as it is what maps do with people” (Wood, p. 300). For this alone, the book is an important bridge between the relatively recent innovations of critical cartography, in particular, and a host of other fields just as recently innovated by the methods and metaphors of cartography in general.

## References

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MAPPING GREECE, 1420–1800, A HISTORY: MAPS IN THE MARGARITA SAMOURKAS COLLECTION / George Tolias. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, HES & DE GRAAF, and National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2012. Pp. 546; 298 maps (174 col., 124 b&w); catalogue of maps compiled by Leonora Navari; 28.5 × 29 × 5 cm. ISBN 9781584563020 (cloth), US\$250.00. Available from [www.oakknoll.com](http://www.oakknoll.com).

*Mapping Greece* is a lavishly produced publication with a serious intellectual goal. Packed into 546 pages are dozens of high-quality colour maps, accompanied by well-written scholarly chapters on map traditions in general and those that have come to shape our concept of Greece in particular.

Given the book’s list price of \$250.00, you might want to try before you buy. Oak Knoll Press has gone a long way toward allowing potential purchasers to assess the text and image quality by making one chapter and a slideshow of several maps freely available to download or view. More importantly, perhaps, the entire map collection of Margarita Samourkas is available online at [http://cartography.web.auth.gr/Maplibrary/New/ENGLISH\\_New/Sylloges\\_SamourkaEN.htm](http://cartography.web.auth.gr/Maplibrary/New/ENGLISH_New/Sylloges_SamourkaEN.htm).

While author George Tolias takes the Samourkas Map Collection (a catalogue of which, compiled by Leonora Navari, is provided as an appendix) and the region of Greece as his starting point, his aim is much more ambitious, and he broadens his scope to include a history of map-making, map-makers, and mapping tradition in the Netherlands, France, Italy, Germany, and England during the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods.

Many different kinds of maps have portrayed the area of

modern-day Greece. The earliest is Tabula X of Ptolemy’s *Geography*, which shows the Roman province of Achaëa with its rivers, mountains, and towns. Portolan charts, in contrast, are not greatly concerned with the hinterland, as their purpose was to provide an accurate representation of the coastline and thus to aid navigation. In the *Mappae Mundi*, which provide a circular representation of Christian cosmography, Greece survives as a Roman province; on rare occasions, the sacred island of Delos replaces Jerusalem as the centre of the world. Among regional maps intended to aid travelling soldiers, merchants, and pilgrims, the best known is Cristoforo Buondelmonti’s *Liber Insularum Archipelagi*, which combines observation and maritime cosmography with historical and mythological information. The emergence of the city atlas and of topical maps (e.g., war maps, political maps, historical maps, naval maps, administrative maps) marks a focus by map-makers on specific target audiences. However, it is arguably the introduction of the world atlas (e.g., by Mercator and Ortelius) – an authoritative, standardized image of the world in book format – that had the greatest impact on shaping people’s image of Greece by locating maps of Greece in the section on Europe, detailing its glorious past, and thereby linking its future to the Christian European project. With travel opening up in Greece and the Aegean Sea, writers such as Jean de Thevenot, George Wheler, Jacob Spon, and Joseph Pitton de Tournefort were able to report on its inhabitants, history, industry, local customs, and archaeological remains, and thus satisfy the educated Enlightenment reader’s appetite for first-hand knowledge of this region. These writings often portray modern Greeks through the eyes of classical Greek literature. While this attitude had some negative consequences, notably a partial blindness to the realities of the modern world, it also allowed political momentum to gather to liberate the region from Ottoman rule.

Underlying this meta-narrative of the development of cartography, however, is Tolias’ ultimate question: Do maps of Greece reflect ever-shifting geopolitical realities or ambitions, or do they mirror a nascent modern or established ancient Greek identity? For, as he acknowledges, to map Greece is not to discover a “state” but to map the progression of an idea, as Greece had only ever existed as a fluid ethno-cultural area. Tolias approaches this challenge by tracking the geographic scope of maps of Greece over centuries, identifying two contrasting traditions that existed side by side. The first (“small Greece”) refers back to Ptolemy’s *Geography* and presents the geographic limits of Greece as circumscribed by the Greek mainland, the Aegean islands, and Crete. This regional definition of Greece harks back to the Greek city-states (and their colonies) of classical antiquity and to Greece as a province of the Roman Empire. In contrast, the tradition of “large Greece” follows Waldseemüller and includes the entire Balkan peninsula and western Asia Minor with-

in its boundaries. This tradition became prominent in the context of the slow demise of the Ottoman Empire and the appreciation of Greece as part of Christian Europe. Both traditions helped to raise awareness of Greece among European intellectuals and politicians and contributed to the call to liberate Greece from Ottoman rule. Thanks to its long-lasting and pervasive popularity, however, the “small Greece” tradition in particular appears to have exerted a major influence and to have had a direct impact on the territorial boundaries of what has become the modern Greek state.

In the end, the mapping of Greece was never about self-identification by Greeks themselves; instead, the maps represent Western world views, ideologies, state interests, and collective representations of an ethno-cultural area.

Although I am not a cartographer, I found this book very illuminating and stimulating. Rather than taking a traditional and descriptive approach that focuses on methods and techniques of map-making, Tolias approaches maps by asking critical and probing questions, and offers an in-depth analysis of their role in shaping our current understanding of Greece. He is able to show that, as is so often the case with material culture, maps and people have always been closely intertwined: both shape and influence each other in a continuous feedback loop. No doubt they will continue to do so in the future.

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