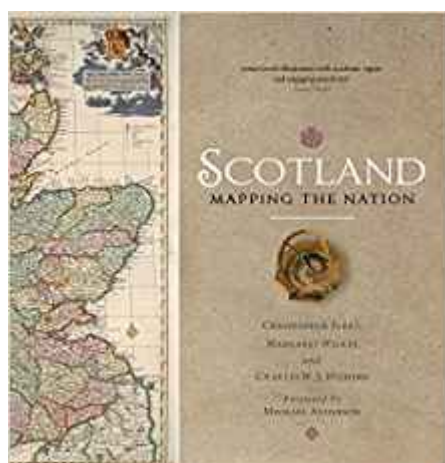




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Fleet, C., Wilkes, M., and Withers, C.W.J. *Scotland: Mapping the Nation*. First edition (reprint). Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2011. 336 p. \$40.02. ISBN: 978-1780274836.



*Scotland: Mapping the Nation* is part-historical narrative, part-cartographic journey through Scotland's history as a nation as seen through the lenses of topographic, cultural, and geopolitical maps. Written by professional historians and geographers, the purpose of the book is to explore how different types of maps, their myriad meanings, and their value in society illuminate a broader narrative on the historical geography of a region. The authors intend for this book to tell a history of Scotland by *placing* the nation within a chronology of maps — some being strongly representative of the topographical nature of the region's waterways, landscapes, and human built infrastructures, while others use political cartoons and fantastical renderings to describe how Scotland is geographically *imagined* through maps. The authors also endeavor to expand in the reader's mind their understanding of what maps can look like and their functionality, providing examples of Scotland's history revealed through maps that are political documents, military sketches, tourist guides, and marine charts, to name but a few. From a historical geography perspective, the authors' choice of the title *Scotland: Mapping the Nation* was an astute descriptor of the text, as the work successfully highlights how *mapping* a geographic region not only refers to creating cartographic renderings of the landscape, but also situating, through narrative, the region's history and culture in a broader geographical context.

Fleet, Wilkes, and Withers note that they have not endeavored to create a complete coverage of maps in Scotland, nor are they attempting to provide a comprehensive history of mapmaking techniques or production, but rather, they intend to bring the



power of maps to a wider audience through a case study of both the imaginative and documented histories of Scotland. These introductory remarks provided by the authors are realized throughout the content of the book, as the chapters logically follow a history of Scotland as narrated through maps: from 16th century maps of medieval Scotland mainly arising from an intellectual culture centered around monasteries, to military wartime maps (from Germany, for example) intended on assisting in aerial bombardment of Scotland, and to 20th century recreation maps highlighting the nation's hunting reserves, fishing pools, and walking trails.

While the text is focused on, quite literally, mapping the history of Scotland, many portions of the book lend insight into broader cartographical trends within history. For example, using Scotland as a case study, the authors highlight the increased period for cartographic scholarship and mapmaking in the late 16th century due to greater amounts of intellectual activities (even outside of religious centers), rising military and commercial needs, and questions of national identity and political governance. As a discipline, it is important to recognize geography's problematic historical linkages to colonialism, environmental determinism (and racism), and violent military forays. While some geographical texts do a poor job of acknowledging geography's role in these contested histories, within *Scotland: Mapping the Nation* the authors have done an excellent job of consistently framing each section by reiterating that maps hold power by prioritizing one group over another, choosing to represent *some* facets of the landscape while leaving out others.

Although the text is written relatively jargon-free and includes a brief primer on the social and historical significance of maps within Chapter 1, having even a cursory familiarity with cartographic and geographic concepts would be useful when reading this text. For example, the text makes regular mention of elements such as scale and latitude/longitude, and land surveying vocabulary. Readers without a geographical background may want to first brush up on basic scales, symbols, and measurements used to cartographically represent Earth prior to reading this book. The book's cartographic elements and written text are presented in relatively even fashion, with neither format feeling as though it overshadows the other. At the end of the book, the authors provide an extensive guide to further reading, offering resources delineated by chapter for a further glimpse into not only Scotland's history but also more information on the historical development of cartography. The index is representative of the maps and textual elements provided throughout the book; however, a comprehensive listing of all of the maps separate from the index



would have been a useful element of reference. As it exists in this first edition, the reader must search for the maps within the index and this could prove a hindrance to those wanting to quickly reference a certain map within a particular time period.

A growing trend in geographic and cartographic scholarship is to critically examine how and why certain aspects of the landscape are mapped. This can be known as critical cartography, critical geographic information science (GIS), and/or critical mapmaking. *Scotland: Mapping the Nation* provides a strong resource for research within this area as it illuminates how a nation's development is shaped, remembered, memorialized, and contested through maps, highlighting that each map in existence is made from a particular viewpoint which reinforces the ideologies of the mapmaker. All elements, whether discarded or included, within a map are subject to critical analysis, and this book would serve as a good reference in teaching how and why a nation's history, present, and future can be shaped by maps.

Overall, the authors of this book fully achieve their mission of providing a case study into how and why maps complement historical narratives about a place — whether that place is imagined through cultural and geopolitical storytelling or represented in reality — and would complement many cartographic and historical library collections, particularly map libraries which may have some of the original maps included within the text, in which case this book's textual elements would serve as an excellent accompaniment to those maps.

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