the thrall of his own propaganda. His conflict with Roan, a mere twelve-year-old at their first encounter, is therefore a prolonged psychological struggle in which each must confront his true nature.

The struggle is complicated for Roan by his discovery that, despite his pacifist upbringing and beliefs, he turns out to be a gifted warrior. Easily passing through the various grisly stages of initiation into the Brotherhood, he is on the point of being accepted into their number when he discovers that for every one who joins, another must be sacrificed. This knowledge, coupled with his dawning awareness that Saint is a fraud and not a teacher, is enough to propel him out into the wilderness to live by his wits or die.

The balance of the narrative concerns Roan's journey across various alien landscapes, where he pieces together something of his true identity from the scattered survivors who remain. He is, in fact, Saint's dialectical opposite, the great-grandson of a true visionary who fled the conflagration, driven by a vision of peace and passive resistance. It was this ancestor, of course, who founded the village of Longlight, now left in ruins by Saint's depredations. By glimpsing small fragments of the past, Roan begins also to understand the lessons of history — that humanity has been reduced to its present desperation by a cycle of violence and revenge. Running in tandem with Roan's process of enlightenment are Saint's repeated attempts to recapture him. Characteristically, Saint wants to possess and control the rebel, not to destroy him, and it is this overweening desire that proves his undoing. In a satisfying final confrontation, the man of many compromises is annihilated by the youth, whose more solid moral vision prevents him from ever taking the easy way out.

It remains only to observe that, in fiction, the banality of evil seems also to imply the banality of good. A Manichean division of the world into the faceless opposites of good and evil leaves an intelligent protagonist with no real choices: he or she is destined to resist evil unthinkingly and to represent good without pausing to reflect. Although we are perhaps enduring a historical moment where moral choices seem obvious and automatic, writers and readers of fantasy know in their bones that things are never really as simple as they appear.

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Are We There Yet? Stories of Maps and Their Mapmakers / *Gordon Lester*

The Road to There: Mapmakers and Their Stories. Val Ross. Tundra, 2003. 146 pp. $29.99 cloth. ISBN 0-88776-621-8.

In Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* (1997), Kublai Khan asks Marco Polo the purpose of his journeys. Marco answers, "Elsewhere is a negative mirror. The traveler recognizes the little that is his, discovering the much he has not had and will never have" (29). If Elsewhere is a negative mirror, then maps are distorted mirrors that reflect the desires, fears, cultural values, and personalities of their makers. Val Ross's

The Road to There: Mapmakers and Their Stories presents a history of cartography through the stories of famous cartographers and explorers.

The Road to There is a timely book. There has been a steady publication of glossy books on old maps since the late 1980s. There has also been critical interest in the role cartography played in European colonization, and the trope of "mapping" is frequently used in literary studies. Ross, an award-winning Canadian journalist, has condensed and adapted for younger audiences *New York Times* journalist John Noble Wilford's popular history, *The Mapmakers*, first published in 1981 and revised in 2000. But while Wilford's book is primarily text-based with some black-and-white images, Ross's book contains 132 colourful maps, photographs, and illustrations. In addition, there are also a number of maps that show where the mapmakers lived and traveled according to present-day political divisions. The beautiful images and dustjacket make *The Road to There* resemble a smaller version of another contemporary history of cartography, John Rennie Short's *The World Through Maps* (2003).

Ross has selected from the vast quantity of information gathered by Wilford and from her own extensive research (there is an excellent list of "Further Reading" at the end of the book) to develop thirteen stories that make up the book's thirteen chapters. The first chapter, on the Vinland Map forgery, describes how experts examine and date old maps by showing how the Vinland Map was discovered to be a fake. The rest of the chapters are in chronological order and cover various important people in cartography and exploration. The second chapter describes how Christian King Roger II of Sicily sponsored Muslim cartographer Al-Idrisi in the twelfth century to create a sophisticated map of the world. The third chapter tells of the trips to India and Africa of Cheng Ho and the Chinese Treasure Fleet. There are chapters on Portugal's Prince Henry the Navigator and the circumnavigation of Africa; Gerard Mercator and the Mercator projection for world maps; the Cassini Family, who mapped France; Captain Cook, who mapped much of the Pacific Ocean; and Alexander von Humboldt, who developed thematic maps to show patterns of information, such as water temperatures and the distribution of plants. There are also chapters on how the Ocean floor was mapped and on how aviation and satellites are used to make maps.

Within each chapter are one or more "capsules," which present additional information related to the main topic of each chapter. For example, in the Mercator chapter, there is a capsule on how Gemma Frisius, Mercator's university math teacher, helped figure out how travelers could determine longitude, as well as a capsule on how Mercator was the first to draw parallel lines of longitude on a map, which distorts scale and area to preserve shape and direction. The capsules effectively create greater technical or historical depth per chapter without interrupting the chapter's narrative.

Ross has included a good deal of Canadian content throughout her book. She uses the chapter on the fake Vinland Map to discuss the Vikings' voyage to North America and their settlement in what is now Newfoundland around the year 1000 C.E. David Thompson, who mapped about 80,000 square kilometres of northwest North America for the Hudson's Bay Company, gets a capsule, as does Roy Brown, who shot down (or helped shoot down) the Red Barron in the First World War and then went on to become a famous bush pilot explorer and surveyor of northern Canada. Also, John Murray, who was knighted for his work on cartography, is the key figure for the chapter on mapping the depths of the ocean.

The Road to There demonstrates that maps do not have to be drawings on paper and that they reflect the circumstances and cultures of the people who make them. Ross explains how the Viking sagas contain maps of Vinland within their poetry and how the Pacific Islanders made maps of islands and ocean currents with shells and palm fibers. She also shows how the Ammassalik people of Greenland carved the outlines of the land into wood so they could be read by feel in the dark or in blizzards.

Ross begins her book with a hint toward post-structuralism. In her introduction, she lists Lilliput, Mordor, and Jurassic Park among the fictional places that have detailed maps of their territories. She goes on to say that "all mapmaking, even the most scientific, involves some degree of imagination" (1). But she doesn't expand on the range of ways that maps involve the imagination, except to mention the practice of colouring countries and the imposition of lines of latitude and longitude. She doesn't say, in the case of graphic maps, that there will *always* be gross distortions when three-dimensional objects are represented in two dimensions. (If, for example, you run over a cat to make it flat, no matter *how* you run it over, the flat cat will always look quite different than it did before it was run over.)

Instead, the rest of Ross's narrative points out how maps have become more accurate over the centuries. In the chapter on the Cassini family, Ross writes in a caption critiquing the Vallard Chart:

> The Vallard Chart of 1547, showing the "Landing of Jacques Cartier" in the New World, is a beautiful thing, but it shows the inaccurate state of French mapmaking before the time of the Cassins. South is at the top, and the St. Lawrence River flows into a wilderness in which the Great Lakes do not even appear. (56)

Why is it inaccurate to orient a map with South at the top? How many Europeans had been to the Great Lakes in 1547? The book ends up describing a positivist narrative of Western cartography. Overall, however, I was very impressed with *The Road to There*. By limiting the book to thirteen chapters, Ross was undoubtedly forced to leave out material (I think the Gall-Peters map and the arguments surrounding it was a significant omission), but the amount of information she does convey concisely and accessibly is admirable.

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