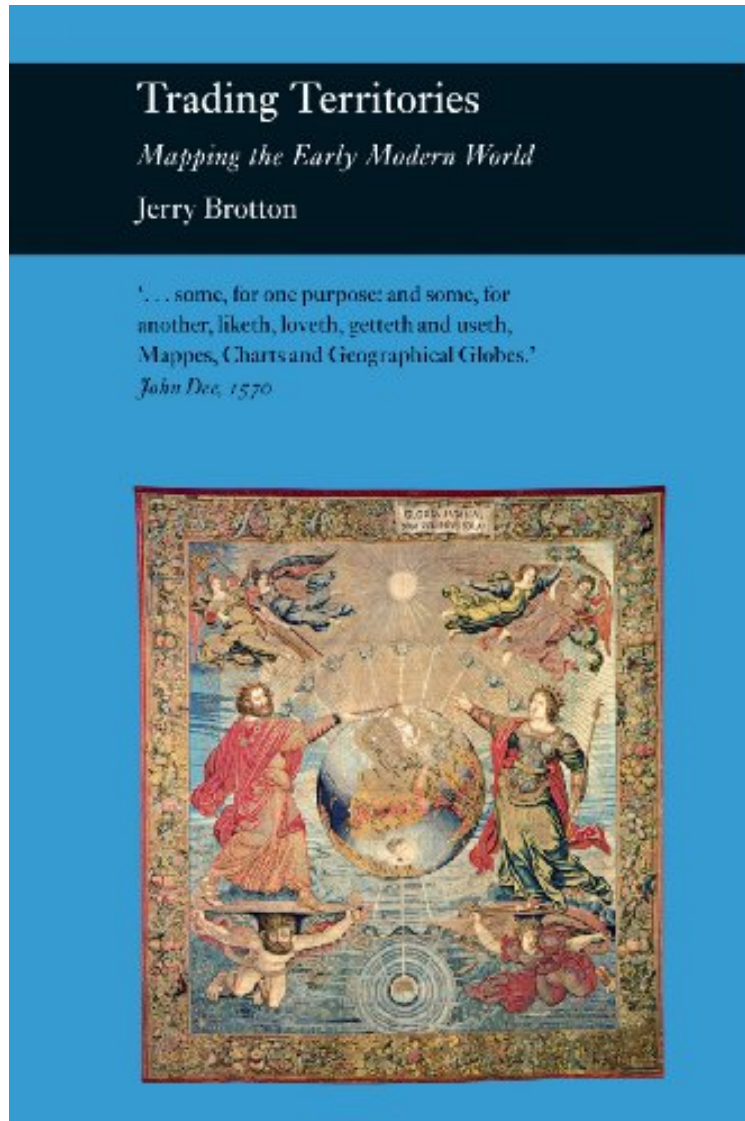


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Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World (Picturing History)

Jerry Brotton

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Jerry Brotton : Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World (Picturing History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World (Picturing History):

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A must read for any early map enthousiast !By A CustomerThis book is refreshing in that it presents new or original relations between historical facts which you might be aware of,

but which you come to see in a new light while reading. The reading journey brings you to early Portuguese mapmakers, sailors and kings, the Ottoman empire and its relatively sophisticated geographical knowledge and how "European" mapmakers were influenced thereby in the early days of the Renaissance, to end with such wellknown cartographers as Mercator and Ortelius. The story of the Portuguese and the Spaniards that try to solve their conflicts after the Treaty of Tordesillas also (or perhaps primarily) with the help of smart map-makers has been told before, but Brotton tells it very interestingly by describing the conflict over the Moluccas. There is quite some interesting historical detail provided, also by making use of quotes from original sources, yet at the same time the broad story to be told is not forgotten. The book is digestible (about 200 pages), nicely illustrated and printed. It contains references, a bibliography for those who want some clue what to read more on some subjects, and the book has a good index. 6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A hidden pearl

By Ashwin
It was my fascination with maps that drew me to this book. After reading Hapgood's classic, I doubted that any other book could do justice to Map making and seafaring, in the manner dealt with by Hapgood. However, this book has put map-making, colonialism, Portuguese adventurism and trade into one little fast paced book. The book is written in simple english and is extremely readable. Brotton has treated the book like a movie, and it begins with a tapestry in the amazing marriage of two countries' rulers... and then slowly travels back in time into the importance of the tapestry and the marriage. In doing so, he wonderfully charts out the importance of the voyages of the Portuguese, the critical significance of maps as a means to establish ones' territorial rights, and the very fine relationship between cartographers and the rulers. This book also does the task of smashing some of the myths of Islamic empires being "barbarians", who did not invest in knowledge of the world. The book also integrates many different views and perspectives, and motives that drove the making of maps. All in all, a very interesting and complete book, a little pearl of joy for its small size, and wonderfully glossy pages, and plethora of illustrations. Read it even if you dont plan on buying it. 2 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A Dry Read

By Malcolm Cleggett
Factual analysis that is good and presents information well. A few anecdotes could lighten the book up a bit but that's not the point of this book.

Trading Territories is a beautifully illustrated book that offers a new account of the status of maps and geographical knowledge in the early modern world. Focusing on how early European geographers mapped the territories of the Old World Africa and Southeast Asia Jerry Brotton contends that the historical preoccupation with Columbus's discovery of the New World in 1492 has tended to obscure the importance of the mapping of territories that have been defined as eastern.

From Booklist Brotton clearly shows the commercial and political pressures that made mapmaking so important during the 1600s; and he shows the geographical, logistic, and printing limitations that made mapmaking difficult and haphazard. He corrects many common historical omissions and false notions: he grants Arabs, Muslims, Asians, and Ottomans their rightful place in preserving and furthering the art of mapmaking, and he argues convincingly that Ottomans and Europeans got along more peacefully than usually portrayed. The book's academic style and long paragraphs present a challenge, but the commonsense arguments are easy to follow. Tales of politics, personal ambition, and exploration, and a touch of humor, also keep the book interesting. The book excellently tells the story of mapmakers' progressing from servants whose maps distorted kings' territories to independent scholars whose maps' political neutrality and geographical accuracy were rewarded by private companies. The illustrations show maps developing from ancient geographers' fantastical notions to increasingly sophisticated and accurate documents. Map buffs and those interested in early world exploration should enjoy this one. Kevin Grandfield "In this outstanding study of maps and mapping, Jerry Brotton reveals a dynamism in the transaction between East and West beyond anything we have previously appreciated."