

"Christian Jacob's simple question—What is a map?—opens for the reader a profound and complex but also compelling meditation on cartography as a means of recording, creating, and communicating spatial knowledge in images and words. Much more than a history of cartography, Jacob's *L'empire des cartes* profoundly influenced recent thinking and writing about maps and mapping. Now carefully translated into English, *The Sovereign Map* and its philosophical and cultural insights will reach a wider readership at a time when interest in the matter and meaning of maps has never been more intense or more necessary."

✧ DENIS COSGROVE, University of California, Los Angeles ✧

"*The Sovereign Map* is a compelling, often poetic, and always thought-provoking reconsideration of the nature of maps and their history. Jacob takes nothing for granted, not even the practices of map folding, in order to apply a truly fresh eye to these otherwise familiar and mundane images. In the process, he covers extensive intellectual ground, from Aristophanes to Jules Verne, from the Museum at Alexandria to modern national mapping agencies. The result is a multilayered vision of the architecture, rhetoric, materiality, and plasticity of maps and of the rhythms and discontinuities of their histories. The scholarly breadth, rigor, and humor of Jacob's discussion lead us to a new appreciation of maps as deeply human texts and of the very nature of knowledge and representation."

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"Jacob's genealogy of maps is a tour de force combining literary and visual analyses, history of science, science studies, and cartographic theory to produce a gripping account of how maps work to seduce us, persuade us, and shape us. *The Sovereign Map* interrogates the grammars, visual forms, and material media used to produce specific maps, narrating the ways in which 'the rhythms of cartographic production' shape the histories of collective imagination. Importantly, Jacob shows how specific technologies and practices of map-making and use (such as print culture) frame and order our understanding of the world by naming, classifying, coding, and organizing the elements on the map. *The Sovereign Map* is both an exciting history of map-making and a history and sociology of the making of geographical knowledge."

✧ JOHN PICKLES, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ✧

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