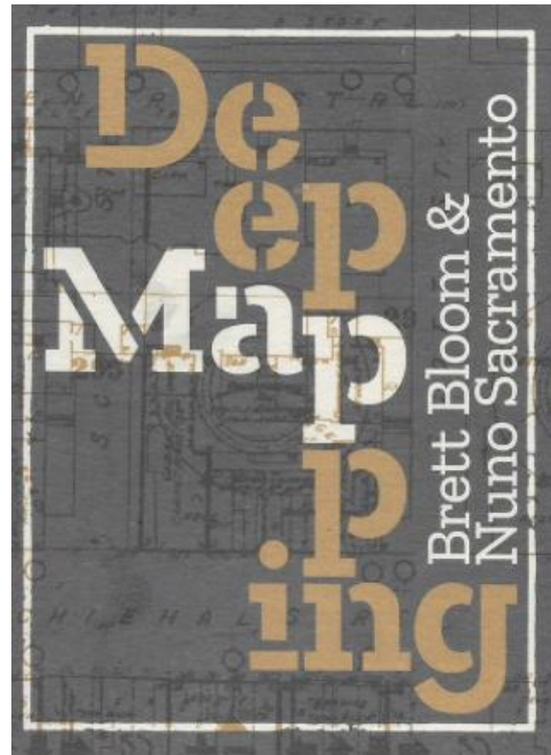Brett Bloom and Nuno Sacramento

Deep Mapping: Applicable Tactics from a Specific Territory

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Brett Bloom and Nuno Sacramento's *Deep Mapping* (2017) is a guidebook for creating deep maps. The book offers an introduction to the concept, originally inspired by William Least Heat Moon's book *PrairyErth: a deep map* (1999), and provides practical instructions on how to run deep mapping workshops. It is a quick read, though it still manages to fit in an admirable amount of history, theory and personal perspectives. It is punctuated with pictures from workshops they facilitated together, and clearly articulates outlines, suggestions and tactics for facilitating the creation of Deep Maps.

Deep Maps are 'expansive tools' that highlight 'the many lives, names, perspectives and positions, of the ones that, according to dominant forces, do not belong there' (p. 18). Deep mapping decolonises cartography. Refuting a top-down approach in favour of perspectives from below, it encourages multi-modal mapping methods created in collaboration. This collaboration is not limited to the mappers themselves, and Sacramento and Bloom encourage cartographers to actively engage the oral history of a place.

Key to their methodology is walking. The book advocates entering the landscape by foot and talking to people on the ground to gain new perspectives on the landscape that go beyond the dominant narratives located in the archives. Leaving behind books, archives and the Internet, getting out of the car and venturing into the landscape by foot, is essential to the process of deep mapping. Sacramento, who was 'born in Mozambique' and 'bred in Portugal' offers an account of walking through rural Scotland that starkly contrasts the tropes of Romantic walking established by fit, white male walkers. He is 'too fat to be a hill walker' and his subjective experience is informed by his position as a stranger with a dark complexion that marks him as 'out of place' (p. 39). This willingness to interrogate the way his body reads in the landscape is one of the books great strengths, and reveals the potential power of Deep Maps, which ideally provide overlooked perspectives on place. Though the role of walking is stressed, the book does not fetishize or romanticise walking. It encourages exploration by car and public transit, challenging mappers to vary their perspectives as much as possible.

Bloom and Sacramento manage to create a readable and compelling account of the Deep Mapping process. The book draws on their longstanding correspondence, which began in Aberdeen in 2007, and their position as artists and activists provides a strong practitioner perspective to the text (p. 8). After Sacramento took up the directorship at the Scottish Sculpture Workshop in Lumsden they organised Camp Breakdown Break Down, a workshop that interrogated questions of climate change. Fittingly, much of the book focuses on petroleum and the infrastructure of the oil industry, offering maps that focus on the flow of petroleum and processes of industrialisation. Like Sacramento's previous book, *ARTocracy* (2010)*,* also written in collaboration, *Deep Mapping* does not simply articulate a theory, but offers opportunities to put theory into practice.

Alongside the history of deep mapping and some explication of subjective experiences of creating deep maps, it offers a succinct guide to the creation of maps. The book's focus on practical methods is one of its great strengths. It is an emergent methodology, not fully fleshed out, and the book offers enough practical examples to provide an entry point for the reader's creation of their own responses and tactics. Additionally, it demonstrates these tactics through subjective narratives and examples of maps. These tactics are not overprescribed, however, leaving plenty of room for readers to create their own particular responses. Indeed, it invites the reader to 'share [their] form of Deep Mapping' with the authors, ostensibly in service of further developments of the form. While the maps they offer focus specifically on petro-culture, something informed by northern Scotland's deep ties to the oil industry, the tactics provided in the book could be applied to any number of topics or concepts. Without engaging in the methods outlined in the book, it is challenging to comment on their efficacy, however, the outlined tactics are clear and easy to follow and seem to provide a workable and adaptable template.

It is clear the authors worked with a variety of people in their workshops, and they do a good job of outlining their contributions to the different workshops, which show admirable cultural breadth. That being said, without knowing the authors it might be challenging to identify which aspects were written from Sacramento's perspective and which were written from Bloom's perspective, and the text might have benefited from a stronger delineation of the two authors' perspectives. It might also have benefitted from the inclusion of more voices; Deep Mapping is about a multiplicity of voices and I found myself curious about workshop participants' perspectives and wanted to know more about how Deep Maps have contributed to their own practice. This is a small quibble, however, and testifies to the engaging nature of the writing and workshop descriptions, which left me with a desire for more knowledge, more examples and more multi-vocal perspectives.

Overall, it is a book I would highly recommend for those looking for an entry-point to the Deep Mapping process. While books like Nato Thompson's *Experimental Geography* (2008) have previously explored this ground, presenting what could be termed Deep Maps by a variety of artists, this book feels like a practical call to action that is not overly concerned with the artistic prowess displayed in Thompson's text. I could imagine the everyday reader finishing the book with a sense that this is something s/he could do. While specific to its own creation in the rural context of North Scotland, it offers a variety of starting points for the reader to craft her own Deep Mapping process that could ostensibly be applied anywhere in the world.