



F you were across a Turkey carpet, you might have a very good idea of the red and blue threads right under your nose, but you wouldn't be able to understand the beautiful pattern of the whole carpet; your field of view would be too small. You wouldn't really find out what the pattern was unless you made a picture of the carpet small enough to be seen by your cockroach eye-that is, a map of the carpet. How small you'd have to make the picture would be the scale of the map; what the map showed would be the kind of map, for your picture might be a general pattern of the carpet, or it might be one showing some special feature—the tracks to where crumbs were likely to be dropped near arm chairs, or something like that, Man is like the cockroach; unless he reduces the world about him to a picture the lines of which he can comprehend at once, the great patterns of life escape him. The map gives him a new and wider vision."

In the first of a series of eight talks, The Wonderful World of Maps, D. W. McKenzie, Senior Lecturer in Geography at Victoria University College, uses the simile of the insect and the carpet to point the fundamental necessity of maps to man.

Our intellect is so shaped that in observation we proceed from the particular to the general, imposing patterns where we can; and maps are perhaps the most satisfactory of these patterns, for they limit the unknown, and tell us where we are in relation to home, and where home is in relation to the world.

The story of the development of maps, especially in their earlier stages, relies a lot on the arts of detection. For, as Mr McKenzie explains, a lot of the

LEFT: D. W. McKenzie, senior lecturer in geography at Victoria University College.

a cockroach crawling trkey carpet, you might do idea of the red and the under your nose, but be able to understand pattern of the whole dof view would be too buldn't really find out n was unless you made the carpet small enough our cockroach eye—that the carpet. How small make the picture would be considered and the carpet word, expendable. They disappear for all sorts of reasons. For a start, most of the earlier maps were for travellers and thrown away. Then travelling wasn't always safe, and many a map decayed with its owner's bones; and many a chart was worn out at sea or lost in wreck."

Another reason for their non-survival was the continuous assumption (probably still rife today) that a new map is always superior to an old one. The danger of this can be seen, especially if, as so often happened, the old one was based on some observation and the new only on the idea that things should be in a certain order. This happened when the accumulated work of Greek map-makers like Eratosthenes, Marinus of Tyre, and Ptolemy was disregarded in favour of Biblical authority during the Middle Ages. The Book of Ezekiel reads: "This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her." By a literal interpretation of this text Jerusalem became the centre of the world in the maps of the medieval cartographers.

Apart from portalan charts—remarkably accurate charts that possibly originated with the sailors of Genoa—little accuracy was shown by maps of this time; rather imagination and ill authority ruled the day. This imagination took the form of peopling the outermost regions with monsters, "fantastic creatures," says Mr McKenzie, "that the medieval mind loved. A man with one eye in his forehead shades himself with an enormous foot held up in the air. On other maps there are men with faces in their chests, heads like donkeys, or feet turned backward—as well as

N.Z. LISTENER, MAY 17, 1957.