



## MAPPING INDIA

Author Manosi Lahiri

Niyogi Books India, 2012, 2013

ISBN 978-81-89738-98-3      30x30 cm (12 in x 12 in)

Hardcover, 320 pages, 167 maps and 19 photographs in colour

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhODHjFVqmY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYqbh0d4iKc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwXG4j piaA8>

*Mapping India* presents an overview of important maps that eloquently reflect the changing social and political fortunes of India over the past five centuries. These maps speak of the commercial interests and wars that led to the colonisation of India, and show territories that were conquered or controlled through treaties. They also record changed courses of rivers, routes taken by armies, people living in communities in new cities, places where famines occurred, how the highest peak was discovered and named. Maps document when native royalty gathered to pay respect to the British Emperor, and the route Mahatma Gandhi took for the Salt March.

*Mapping India* is the story of India recounted through its maps, from the earliest chronicles of India to its post-Independence strides. The first maps of India were drawn based on the accounts of travellers, explorers and traders. When the sea route to India opened, sailors ferried back information about the ports they touched on their way to India. Marine charts of the routes along the ocean coasts and artistic representations of port cities followed.

As Europeans came in large numbers to trade and conquer, territories further inland were mapped. The British surveyed lands under their rule to settle borders, calculate tributes, assess taxes and record defence positions. Later, as scientific knowledge and instruments improved,

extensive terrestrial surveys and mapping took place. At the end of the colonial period, once again, it was maps that identified the boundary between the new nations of India and Pakistan.

#### COMMENTS

**Portolan** Washington Map Society's Journal Spring 2014. *Stephen R. Fox.*

'In *Mapping India*, she (Manosi Lahiri) has provided both the general reader and the cartographic specialist a general survey work of great erudition and visual appeal.'

**IMCOS** International Map Collectors' Society Journal No. 129, Summer 2012. *Susan Gole.*

'This magnificent publication will fill many gaps in our knowledge of the mapping of India. Dr Lahiri is a well-respected geographer, who has studied in Calcutta, SOAS London and Delhi, and her deep knowledge of both the geography of India as well as its history shows throughout.'

**The Economist** Mar 24th 2012 India in Maps *from the print edition*

'Lines of history: A visual chronicle of a sweeping—and often fraught—landscape.

"Mapping India" contains a wealth of illustrations, from a 15th-century map ... to the red dividing lines drawn by Cyril Radcliffe in 1947. The maps from the intervening centuries serve as a fascinating visual history of the creation of the modern Indian state.'

**The Hindu** January 7, 2014. Geographic Lines of History. *Sangeetha Devi Dundoo.*

'Maps narrate fascinating stories of history — stories of early trade routes, conquests and growth in the region. ... Manosi Lahiri has had a long journey in tracing the history of maps of India... she tells us lesser-known facets of mapping in India'.

**GEOGRAPHICAL** Magazine of the RGS with IBG, July 2012. *Mick Herron.*

'This is a most fascinating subject, and one that's well served by this beautiful copiously illustrated volume, which reflects Lahiri's lifetime's worth of accumulated knowledge.'

**Times of India: The Crest Edition** November 10, 2012. Charting Indoustan, *Malini Nair.*

'Historical maps of India were never for Indians, they were for European explorers, traders, colonizers, says Lahiri.'

**Institute of Commonwealth Studies Library, Wednesday, 25 July 2012**

**Book of the Month: Mapping India** 'This work is notable for the beautiful reproductions of maps held in repositories including many Indian archives, especially previously classified'.

**The Telegraph** Calcutta India, March 30, 2012. *Bhaswati Chakravorty.*

'Maps that Lahiri presents in her widely researched book are alluring and piquant, taking the reader back almost to the mythical imagining of a land with four *dhams* or pilgrimage centres at its four corners.'

The book is available from Amazon, ebay, barnesandnoble, Flipkart and other online stores.