# THE MAP

1. *In the meantime, however, Cairo and Mecca were beginning to be visualized in a strange new way, no longer simply as sites in a sacred Muslim geography, but also as dots on paper sheets which included dots for Paris, Moscow, Manila and Caracas; and the plane relationship between these indifferently profane and sacred dots was determined by nothing beyond the mathematically calculated flight of the crow. The Mercatorian map, brought in by the European colonizers, was beginning, via print, to shape the imagination of Southeast Asians.*

2. *In a recent, brilliant thesis the Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul has traced the complex processes by which a bordered 'Siam' came into being between 1850 and 1910.* [12] *His account is instructive precisely because Siam was not colonized, though what, in the end, came to be its borders were colonially determined. In the Thai case, therefore, one can see unusually clearly the emergence of a new state-mind within a 'traditional' structure of political power.*

3. *Up until the accession, in 1851, of the intelligent Rama IV (the Mongkut of The King and I), only two types of map existed in Siam, and both were hand-made: the age of mechanical reproduction had not yet there dawned. One was what could be called a 'cosmograph,' a formal, symbolic representation of the Three Worlds of traditional Buddhist cosmology. The cosmograph was not organized horizontally, like our own maps; rather a series of supraterrestrial heavens and subterrestrial hells wedged in the visible world along a single vertical axis. It was useless for any journey save that in search of merit and salvation. The second type, wholly profane, consisted of diagrammatic guides for military campaigns and coastal shipping. Organized roughly by the quadrant, their main features were written-in notes on marching and sailing times, required because the mapmakers had no technical conception of scale. Covering only terrestrial, profane space, they were usually drawn in a queer oblique perspective or mixture of perspectives, as if the drawers' eyes, accustomed from daily life to see the landscape horizontally, at eye-level, nonetheless were influenced subliminally by the verticality of the cosmograph. Thongchai points out that these guide-maps, always local, were never situated in a larger, stable geographic context, and that the bird's-eye view convention of modern maps was wholly foreign to them.*

4. *Neither type of map marked borders. Their makers would have found incomprehensible the following elegant formulation of Richard Muir:* [13]

*12.Thongchai Winichakul, 'Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of Siam' (Ph. D. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1988).*

*13. Richard Muir, Modern Political Geography, p. 119.*

5. *Located at the interfaces between adjacent state territories, international boundaries have a special significance in determining the limits of sovereign authority and defining the spatial form of the contained political regions. . . . Boundaries . . occur where the vertical interfaces between state sovereignties intersect the surface of the earth. . . . As vertical interfaces, boundaries have no horizontal extent. . . .*

6. *Boundary-stones and similar markers did exist, and indeed multiplied along the western fringes of the realm as the British pressed in from Lower Burma. But these stones were set up discontinuously at strategic mountain passes and fords, and were often substantial distances from corresponding stones set up by the adversary. They were understood horizontally, at eye level, as extension points of royal power; not 'from the air.' Only in the 1870s did Thai leaders begin thinking of boundaries as segments of a continuous map-line corresponding to nothing visible on the ground, but demarcating an exclusive sovereignty wedged between other sovereignties. In 1874 appeared the first geographical textbook, by the American missionary J.W. Van Dyke – an early product of the print-capitalism that was by then sweeping into Siam. In 1882, Rama V established a special mapping school in Bangkok. In 1892, Minister of Education Prince Damrong Rajanuphab, inaugurating a modern-style school system for the country, made geography a compulsory subject at the junior secondary level. In 1900, or thereabouts, was published Phumisat Sayam [Geography of Siam] by W.G. Johnson, the model for all printed geographies of the country from that time onwards.* [14] *Thongchai notes that the vectoral convergence of print-capitalism with the new conception of spatial reality presented by these maps had an immediate impact on the vocabulary of Thai politics. Between 1900 and 1915, the traditional words krung and muang largely disappeared, because they imaged dominion in terms of sacred capitals and visible, discontinuous population centres.* [15] *In their place came prathet, 'country,' which imaged it in the invisible terms of bounded territorial space.* [16]

7. *Like censuses, v worked on the basis of a totalizing classification, and led their bureaucratic producers and consumers towards policies with revolutionary consequences. Ever since John Harrison's 1761 invention of the chronometer, which made possible the precise calculation of longitudes, the entire planet's curved surface had been subjected to a geometrical grid which squared off empty seas and unexplored regions in measured boxes.* [17] *The task of, as it were, 'filling in' the boxes was to be accomplished by explorers, surveyors, and military forces. In Southeast Asia, the second half of the nineteenth century was the golden age of military surveyors – colonial and, a little later, Thai. They were on the march to put space under the same surveillance which the census-makers were trying to impose on persons. Triangulation by triangulation, war by war, treaty by treaty, the alignment of map and power proceeded. In the apt words of Thongchai:* [18] *In terms of most communication theories and common sense, a map is a scientific abstraction of reality.*

*14.Thongchai, 'Siam Mapped,' pp.105–10,286.*

*15.For a full discussion of old conceptions of power in Java (which, with minor differences, corresponded to that existing in Old Siam), see my Language and Power, chapter 1.*

*16.Thongchai, 'Siam Mapped,' p. 110.*

*17.David S. Landes, Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World, chapter 9*

*18.'Siam Mapped,' p.310.*

*A map merely represents something which already exists objectively 'there.' In the history I have described, this relationship was reversed. A map anticipated spatial reality, not vice versa. In other words, a map was a model for, rather than a model of, what it purported to represent. . . . It had become a real instrument to concretize projections on the earth's surface. A map was now necessary for the new administrative mechanisms and for the troops to back up their claims. . . . By the turn of the century, with Prince Damrong's reforms at the Ministry of the Interior (a fine mapping name), the administration of the realm was finally put on a wholly territorial–cartographic basis, following earlier practice in the neighbouring colonies.*

8. *It would be unwise to overlook the crucial intersection between map and census. For the new map served firmly to break off the infinite series of 'Hakkas,' 'Non-Tamil Sri Lankans,' and 'Javanese' that the formal apparatus of the census conjured up, by delimiting territorially where, for political purposes, they ended. Conversely, by a sort of demographic triangulation, the census filled in politically the formal topography of the map.*

9. *Out of these changes emerged two final avatars of the map (both instituted by the late colonial state) which directly prefigure the official nationalisms of twentieth century Southeast Asia. Fully aware of their interloper status in the distant tropics, but arriving from a civilization in which the legal inheritance and the legal transferability of geographic space had long been established,* [19] *the Europeans frequently attempted to legitimize the spread of their power by quasi-legal methods. Among the more popular of these was their 'inheritance' of the putative sovereignties of native rulers whom the Europeans had eliminated or subjected. Either way, the usurpers were in the business, especially vis-à-vis other Europeans, of reconstructing the property-history of their new possessions. Hence the appearance, late in the nineteenth century especially, of 'historical maps,' designed to demonstrate, in the new cartographic discourse, the antiquity of specific, tightly bounded territorial units. Through chronologically arranged sequences of such maps, a sort of political–biographical narrative of the realm came into being, sometimes with vast historical depth.* [20] *In turn, this narrative was adopted, if often adapted, by the nation-states which, in the twentieth century, became the colonial states' legatees.* [21]

*19. I do not mean merely the inheritance and sale of private property in land in the usual sense. More important was the European practice of political transfers of lands, with their populations, via dynastic marriages. Princesses, on marriage, brought their husbands duchies and petty principalities, and these transfers were formally negotiated and 'signed.' The tag Bella gerant alii, tu, felix Austria, nube! would have been inconceivable for any state in precolonial Asia.*

*20. See Thongchai, 'Siam Mapped,' p. 387, on Thai ruling class absorption of this style of imagining. 'According to these historical maps, moreover, the geobody is not a modern particularity but is pushed back more than a thousand years. Historical maps thus help reject any suggestion that nationhood emerged only in the recent past, and the perspective that the present Siam was a result of ruptures is precluded. So is any idea that intercourse between Siam and the European powers was the parent of Siam.'*

*21. This adoption was by no means a Machiavellian ruse. The early nationalists in all the Southeast Asian colonies had their consciousnesses profoundly shaped by the 'format' of the colonialstate and its institutions. See chapter 7 above.*

10. The second avatar was the map-as-logo. Its origins were reasonably innocent – the practice of the imperial states of colouring their colonies on maps with an imperial dye. In London's imperial maps, British colonies were usually pink-red, French purple-blue, Dutch yellowbrown, and so on. Dyed this way, each colony appeared like a detachable piece of a jigsaw puzzle. As this 'jigsaw' effect became normal, each 'piece' could be wholly detached from its geographic context. In its final form all explanatory glosses could be summarily removed: lines of longitude and latitude, place names, signs for rivers, seas, and mountains, neighbours. Pure sign, no longer compass to the world. In this shape, the map entered an infinitely reproducible series, available for transfer to posters, official seals, letterheads, magazine and textbook covers, tablecloths, and hotel walls. Instantly recognizable, everywhere visible, the logo-map penetrated deep into the popular imagination, forming a powerful emblem for the anticolonial nationalisms being born.[22]

11. Modern Indonesia offers us a fine, painful example of this process. In 1828 the first feverridden Dutch settlement was made on the island of New Guinea. Although the settlement had to be abandoned in 1836, the Dutch Crown proclaimed sovereignty over that part of the island lying west of 141 degrees longitude (an invisible line which corresponded to nothing on the ground, but boxed in Conrad's diminishing white spaces), with the exception of some coastal stretches regarded as under the sovereignty of the Sultan of Tidore. Only in 1901 did The Hague buy out the Sultan, and incorporate West New Guinea into the Netherlands Indies – just in time for logoization. Large parts of the region remained Conrad-white until after World War II; the handful of Dutchmen there were mostly missionaries, mineral-prospectors – and wardens of special prison-camps for die-hard radical Indonesian nationalists. The swamps north of Merauke, at the extreme southeastern edge of Dutch New Guinea, were selected as the site of these facilities precisely because the region was regarded as utterly remote from the rest of the colony, and 'stone-age' local population as wholly uncontaminated by nationalist thinking.[23]

12. The internment, and often interment, there of nationalist martyrs gave West New Guinea a central place in the folklore of the anticolonial struggle, and made it a sacred site in the national imagining: Indonesia Free, from Sabang (at the northwestern tip of Sumatra) to – where else but? – Merauke. It made no difference at all that, aside from the few hundred internees, no nationalists ever saw New Guinea with their own eyes until the 1960s. But Dutch colonial logo-maps sped across in the colony, showing a West New Guinea with nothing to its East, unconsciously reinforced the developing imagined ties. When, in the aftermath of the bitter anticolonial wars of 1945–49, the Dutch were forced to cede sovereignty of the archipelago to a United States of Indonesia, they attempted (for reasons that need not detain us here) to separate West New Guinea once again, keep it temporarily under colonial rule, and prepare it for independent nationhood. Not until 1963 was this enterprise abandoned, as a result of heavy American diplomatic pressure and Indonesian military raids. Only then did President Sukarno visit for the

22. In the writings of Nick Joaquín, the contemporary Philippines, preeminent man of letters – and an indubitable patriot – one can see how powerfully the emblem works on the most sophisticated intelligence. Of General Antonio Luna, tragic hero of the anti-American struggle of 1898–99, Joaquín writes that he hurried to 'perform the role that had been instinctive in the Creole for three centuries: the defense of the form of the Philippines from a foreign disrupter.' A Question of Heroes, p. 164 (italics added). Elsewhere he observes, astonishingly, that Spain's 'Filipino allies, converts, mercenaries sent against the Filipino rebel may have kept the archipelago Spanish and Christian, but they also kept it from falling apart;' and that they 'were fighting (whatever the Spaniards may have intended) to keep the Filipino one.' Ibid., p. 58.

23. See Robin Osborne, Indonesia's Secret War, The Guerrilla Struggle in Irian Jaya, pp. 8–9.

first time, at the age of sixty-two, a region about which he had tirelessly orated for four decades. The subsequent painful relations between the populations of West New Guinea and the emissaries of the independent Indonesian state can be attributed to the fact that Indonesians more or less sincerely regard these populations as 'brothers and sisters,' while the populations themselves, for the most part, see things very differently.[24]

13. This difference owes much to census and map. New Guinea's remoteness and rugged terrain created over the millennia an extraordinary linguistic fragmentation. When the Dutch left the region in 1963 they estimated that within the 700,000 population there existed well over 200 mostly mutually unintelligible languages.[25] Many of the remoter 'tribal' groups were not even aware of one another's existence. But, especially after 1950, Dutch missionaries and Dutch officials for the first time made serious efforts to 'unify' them by taking censuses, expanding communications networks, establishing schools, and erecting supra-'tribal' governmental structures. This effort was launched by a colonial state which, as we noted earlier, was unique in that it had governed the Indies, not primarily via a European language, but through 'administrative Malay.'[26] Hence West New Guinea was 'brought up' in the same language in which Indonesia had earlier been raised (and which became the national language in due course). The irony is that bahasa Indonesia thus became the lingua franca of a burgeoning West New Guinean, West Papuan nationalism.[27]

14. But what brought the often quarrelling young West Papuan nationalists together, especially after 1963, was the map. Though the Indonesian state changed the region's name from West Nieuw Guinea, first to Irian Barat (West Irian) and then to Irian Jaya, it read its local reality from the colonial-era bird's-eye atlas. A scattering of anthropologists, missionaries and local officials might know and think about the Ndanis, the Asmats, and the Baudis. But the state itself, and through it the Indonesian population as a whole, saw only a phantom 'Irianese' (orang Irian) named after the map; because phantom, to be imagined in quasi-logo form: 'negroid' features, penis-sheaths, and so on. In a way that reminds us how Indonesia came first to be imagined within the racist structures of the early-twentieth-century Netherlands East Indies, an embryo 'Irianese' national community, bounded by Meridian 141 and the neighbouring provinces of North and South Moluccas, emerged. At the time when its most prominent and attractive spokesman, Arnold Ap, was murdered by the state in 1984, he was curator of a state-built museum devoted to 'Irianese' (provincial) culture.

24. Since 1963 there have been many bloody episodes in West New Guinea (now called Irian Jaya – Great Irian), partly as a result of the militarization of the Indonesian state since 1965, partly because of the intermittently effective guerrilla activities of the so-called OPM (Organization for a Free Papua). But these brutalities pale by comparison with Jakarta's savagery in exPortuguese East Timor, where in the first three years after the 1976 invasion an estimated one-third of the population of 600,000 died from war, famine, disease and 'resettlement'.I do not think it a mistake to suggest that the difference derives in part from East Timor's absence from the logos of the Netherlands East Indies and, until 1976, of Indonesia's.

25. Osborne, Indonesia's Secret War, p. 2.

26. See above, p. 110.

27. The best sign for this is that the anti-Indonesian nationalist guerrilla organization's name, Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM), is composed of Indonesian words.

## Colonists and Maps

01-01
*Mercatorian map*
01-02
*European colonizers*

02-01
*bordered ‘Siam’*
02-02
*colonially*
02-03
*determined*

06-01
*Boundary-stones and similar markers*
06-02
*British*
06-03
*first geographical textbook*
06-04
*American missionary J.W. Van Dyke*

07-01
*European-style maps*
07-02
*military surveyors – colonial*
07-03
*instrument to concretize projections*

08-01
*new map*

09-01
*two final avatars of the map*
09-02
*legitimize the spread of their power*
09-03
*‘historical maps’*

10-01
*map-as-logo*
10-02
*imperial states*
10-03
*colouring their colonies on maps*
10-04
*logo-map*

11-01
*Dutch Crown*
11-02
*lying west of 141 degrees longitude*
11-03
*The Hague*
11-04
*incorporate West New Guinea into the Netherlands Indies*

12-01
*Dutch*
12-02
*logo-maps*
12-03
*Dutch*
12-04
*cede sovereignty*

13-01
*census and map*
13-02
*Dutch missionaries and Dutch officials*

14-01
*colonial-era bird’s-eye atlas*

## Colonized Area and Maps

01-01
*Cairo and Mecca*
01-02
*sacred Muslim geography*

02-01
*Siam*
02-02
*‘traditional’ structure of political power*

03-01
*Siam*
03-02
*hand-made*
03-03
*‘cosmograph’*
03-04
*not organized horizontally*
03-05
*diagrammatic guides*

06-01
*along the western fringes of the realm*
03-02
*Phumisat Sayam [Geography of Siam]*

07-01
*Thai*

09-01
*in the distant tropics*

11-01
*New Guinea*
11-02
*Sultan of Tidore*
11-03
*Merauke*
11-03
*Dutch New Guinea*

12-03
*West New Guinea*

13-01
*New Guinea*

# The Way Colonizers Influenced Cognition Through Maps

01-01
*visualized in a strange new way*
01-02
*dots on paper sheets*
01-03
*the plane relationship*

02-01
*complex processes*

03-02
*bird's-eye view convention of modern maps was wholly foreign*

06-01
*pressed in from Lower Burma*
06-02
*vectoral convergence of print-capitalism*
06-03
*new conception of spatial reality presented by these maps*

07-01
*totalizing classification*
07-02
*policies with revolutionary*
07-03
*chronometer*
07-04
*geometrical grid*
07-05
*measured boxes*
07-06
*'filling in' the boxes*
07-07
*alignment of map and power*
07-08
*scientific abstraction of reality*
07-09
*anticipated spatial reality*
07-10
*a map was a model for, rather than a model of*
07-11
*new administrative mechanisms*
07-12
*troops*
07-13
*back up their claims*
07-14
*wholly territorial–cartographic basis*

08-01
*intersection between map and census*
08-02
*delimiting territorially*

09-01
*quasi-legal methods*
09-02
*putative sovereignties of native rulers*
09-03
*reconstructing the property-history*
09-04
*new cartographic discourse*
09-05
*political–biographical narrative*

10-01
*detachable piece of a jigsaw puzzle*
10-02
*wholly detached from its geographic context*
10-03
*explanatory glosses could be summarily removed*
10-04
*infinitely reproducible series*

11-01
*logoization*
11-02
*Conrad-white*

12-01
*showing a West New Guinea with nothing to its East*
12-02
*separate West New Guinea*
12-03
*under colonial rule*

13-01
*remoteness and rugged terrain*
13-02
*'unify' them*
13-03
*censuses*
13-04
*expanding communications networks*
13-05
*establishing schools*
13-05
*erecting supra-'tribal' governmental structures*

14-01
*the map*

# The Response and Adaptation of the Colonized to Maps

01-01
*indifferently profane and sacred dots*
01-02
*shape the imagination of Southeast Asians*

02-01
*emergence of a new state-mind*

03-01
*useless for any journey*

06-01
*Thai*
06-02
*begin thinking of boundaries as segments of a continuous map-line corresponding*
06-03
*demarcating an exclusive sovereignty wedged between other sovereignties*
06-04
*established a special mapping school in Bangkok*
06-05
*made geography a compulsory subject*
06-06
*immediate impact on the vocabulary of Thai politics*
06-07
*krung and muang largely disappeared*
06-08
*place came prathet, 'country,'*
06-09
*in the invisible terms of bounded territorial space*

07-01
*Prince Damrong's reforms*
07-02
*administration of the realm*

08-01
*infinite series of 'Hakkas'*
08-02
*'Non-Tamil Sri Lankans'*
08-03
*'Javanese'*

09-01
*nation-states which, in the twentieth century, became the colonial states' legatees*

10-01
*anticolonial nationalisms*

11-01
*die-hard radical Indonesian nationalists*
11-02
*'stone-age' local population*

12-01
*nationalist martyrs*
12-02
*central place in the folklore of the anticolonial struggle*
12-03
*imagined ties*

13-01
*linguistic fragmentation*
13-02
*over 200 mostly mutually unintelligible languages*
13-03
*Many of the remoter 'tribal' groups were not even aware of one another's existence*
13-04
*'administrative Malay'*
13-05
*lingua franca*
13-06
*burgeoning West New Guinean, West Papuan nationalism*

14-01
*young West Papuan*

# The Colonized Regions' Perception of Indigenous Maps

03-01
*symbolic representation*
03-02
*traditional Buddhist cosmology*
03-03
*queer oblique perspective or mixture of perspectives*

06-01
*as extension points of royal power*
06-02
*imaged dominion in terms of sacred capitals and visible*

# Maps Prescribed by Colonists

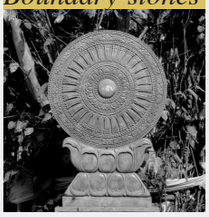
01-01
*Mercatorian map*

*1569*
*Flemish*

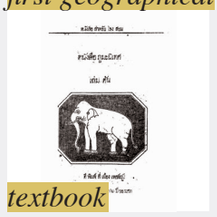
02-01
*bordered ‘Siam’*

*1869*
*French*

06-01
*Boundary-stones*



06-03
*first geographical textbook*



01-01
*European-Style*

*1761*
*Europe*

09-01
*two final avatars of the map（1）*

09-01
*two final avatars of the map（2）*

09-03
*‘historical maps’*

*1490*
*Europe*

10-01
*map-as-logo*

10-02
*imperial states*

10-04
*logo-map*

*1913*
*Africa*

11-02
*lying west of 141 degrees longitude*

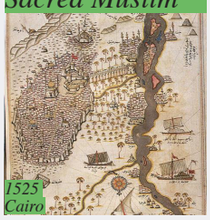
*1895*
*COLONIAL NEW GUINEA*

14-01
*colonial-era bird’s-eye atlas*

*1674*
*New York*

# Colonized Regions and Their Traditional Maps

01-02
*Sacred Muslim*



*1525*
*Cairo*

01-02
*Sacred Muslim*


*1740*
*Mecca*

03-03
*‘cosmograph’*

03-05
*diagrammatic guides*


*Siam*

09-01
*in the distant tropics*


11-01
*New Guinea*

11-03
*Merauke*

# Written Response

*In Anderson's "Imagined Communities"(Anderson, 2006), maps are seen not just as geographical tools, but as embodying the power dynamics between colonisers and colonised. He notes that colonisers impose their perspectives and ideologies on colonised territories through instruments such as the Mercator map (Anderson, 2006, p. 119) This practice not only defines geographical spaces, but also reshapes cultural and identity perceptions. Through these maps, colonisers effectively construct a Eurocentric worldview that simplifies global geography into manageable units.*

*To analyse these dynamics, I categorise the vocabulary into five key areas: Colonisers' maps, Colonised maps, The impact of maps on cognition, Colonised responses and adaptations, and Understanding Indigenous maps. This classification allows us to clearly distinguish the perspectives of both groups and to examine how each group constructs and perceives their identities in relation to geographical spaces.*

*For example, although Siam was never formally colonised, it was significantly influenced by the colonial dynamics of surrounding regions. The presence of colonial powers forced Siam to engage with modern geographical practices and establish geographical curricula (Anderson, 2006, p.120). The need to define borders and construct a coherent national identity in response to external pressures led to an increased focus on contemporary mapping methods. As a result, colonial maps subtly reconfigured Siam's cultural frameworks and ideological structures, resulting in profound transformations of its cultural identity.*

*Similarly, New Guinea's complex topography has given rise to over 200 different languages, many of which are mutually unintelligible.(Anderson, 2006, p.122) Colonial rule disrupted the organic development of these diverse cultures by imposing Indonesian as a unifying language. This enforced linguistic uniformity illustrates the extent to which colonial powers can exert influence over their territories, reshaping cultural identities and social structures.*

*In discussing these power dynamics, it is important to recognise that the relationship between colonisers and colonised is not simply one of oppression. While colonial powers impose their ideologies and practices, colonised people actively adapt and resist, forging their own connections to land and identity. This process of cultural negotiation allows them to redefine their identities in the face of colonial pressures, highlighting the resilience of local cultures. Understanding this interplay is crucial for a comprehensive analysis of how maps and colonial histories continue to influence contemporary identities and social structures.*

*This classification approach provides a structured framework for exploring the dynamic interactions between colonisers and colonised. By examining the influence of maps on cognition and identity, I uncover the complexities of power relations and cultural resistance that define these historical contexts.*

*I conclude that maps are crucial to the formation of cultural identity, as they reflect socio-political dynamics and power relations. Their construction and interpretation can either reinforce or challenge cultural narratives, revealing the historical legacies of colonialism that persist in contemporary geopolitical conflicts. These struggles over territory not only shape the definition of borders, but also deeply influence contemporary lives and cultural identities. Understanding how these dynamics manifest themselves in the world is essential to grasping the complexities of cultural identity and its ongoing evolution.*

*Anderson, B.（2006） Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Verso, London. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central.*