

Maps and Mother Goddesses in Modern India

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ABSTRACT: J. B. Harley notes that 'maps as an impersonal type of knowledge tend to "desocialize" the territory they represent; they foster the notion of a socially empty space'. Focusing on twentieth-century India, this paper considers an alternate tradition of mapping territory in which the nation is cartographically presented to its subject-citizens not as 'empty social space', but as 'Mother India', the Indian nation imagined as woman, mother, goddess. Through an analysis of such 'bodyscapes' of Mother India, I ask what is at stake in cartographically deploying the female body to map national territory. And I consider how such bodyscapes, even as they systematize a particular visual image of 'India', also consolidate the notion of the nation as motherland.

KEYWORDS: India, twentieth century, Mother India, nationalism, popular maps, bodyscapes, gender.

Why does the nation long for cartographical form, and where does this longing take it in colonial and post-colonial India?¹ In this essay, I begin to answer this question by considering two moments—one biographical, the other fictional. First, the real-life remembrance of K. M. Munshi (1887–1971), lawyer, litterateur and politician from western India. Around 1905, as a young patriot, Munshi met the Hindu nationalist Aurobindo Ghosh (1872–1950) and asked him,

'How can one become patriotic?' With a disarming smile, Aurobindo pointed at a wall map of India and said: 'Do you see this map? It is not a map, but the portrait of *Bharat-mata* [Mother India]: its cities and mountains, rivers and jungles form her physical body. All her children are her nerves, large and small. . . . Concentrate on Bharat [India] as a living mother, worship her with the nine-fold *bhakti* [devotion]'.²

A decade later, across the subcontinent, Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), India's first Nobel Prize recipient for literature, introduced a similar sentiment in his 1915–1916 Bengali novel *Ghare Bhaire* [The Home and the World]. At a crucial moment in the narrative, Sandip, one of its male protagonists, addresses Bimala, the heroine of the story, and

declares passionately: 'Have I not told you that, in you, I visualize the *Shakti* [power] of our country? The geography of a country is not the whole truth. No one can give up his life for a map! When I see you before me, then only do I realize how lovely my country is'.³

This essay is an extended note on these provocative statements, for embedded in these declarations of male devotion to and desire for woman and nation is a powerful tension between alternate traditions of spatially imagining 'India', as a geographical entity *and* as a somatic being embodied in the figure of Bharat Mata, Mother India. These statements also compel me to ask how the map transforms the nation's territory from geographical space into an intensely human place.⁴ What cartographical strategies are used to persuade the citizen-subject that his country was not just any territory but his homeland and motherland for which he should be willing to sacrifice his life?⁵ To answer this question, I analyze a number of cartographical representations of 'India', produced largely in the Tamil-speaking parts of southern

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India through the course of the twentieth century, in which the body of a woman occupies the map of the nation.⁶ I characterize these representations as 'bodyscapes'.⁷ I do so in order to bring to the foreground the use made of the human (especially the female) body to represent the territorial landscape of the nation—the nation-space—as visualized by and in the modern map.⁸ Although 'the basic question "what did map x mean to beholder y" is never in fact straightforward',⁹ I will speculate about what these bodyscapes might mean within the cartographical practices of modern India by attending to what is visually proclaimed in their imagination of national territory. But before I do so, I consider how these bodyscapes point to some problems in conceptualizing maps in the existing scholarly literature on cartography.

Maps and Bodies

Brian Harley notes that 'maps as an impersonal type of knowledge tend to "desocialize" the territory they represent. They foster the notion of a socially empty space'. He also suggests that

the lack of qualitative differentiation in maps structured by the scientific episteme serves to dehumanize the landscape. Such maps convey knowledge where the subject is kept at bay. Space becomes more important than place: if places look alike they can be treated alike. Thus, with the progress of scientific mapping, space became all too easily a socially-empty commodity, a geometrical landscape of cold non-human facts.¹⁰

In striking contrast to the scientific map, the bodyscapes I discuss here are not dehumanized, cold or socially empty. On the contrary, they insert into the impersonal geographical space of 'India' the image of an apparently familiar mother-goddess. As such, these maps—and I insist that these bodyscapes *are* maps¹¹—transform abstract territory into lived nation. Moreover, they personalize the nation-space and present it as an entity worth dying for, to remember Tagore's lines.

Harley has also suggested that because everywhere in the modern world the state has been the 'principal patron of cartographic activity . . . maps are pre-eminently a language of power, not of protest'.¹² Yet these Indian bodyscapes are not the work of the state but of individual citizen-subjects, patriotic organizations and political parties. While we may not necessarily see them as articulating a language of protest, they none the less challenge normative state-sponsored cartographical representations of 'India'. As such, they are expressions of a

cartographical practice that prevails *outside* the purview of the modern state, colonial as well as post-colonial, although they do appropriate some of the latter's protocols and forms.¹³ For instance, state-produced maps are preoccupied with the clear delineation of borders and boundaries.¹⁴ In striking contrast, these bodyscapes are invariably transgressive in this regard. They pay scant regard to national borders and boundaries and even subversively undo or dissolve them. Again, in contrast to state-produced scientific maps, these bodyscapes mark the eruption of the poetic, the religious and the gendered imaginations of and about the nation.

Finally, these bodyscapes alert us to what the Shakespearean scholar Valerie Traub (invoking Louis Montrose) refers to as the 'work of gender' in discourses of cartography. This work of gender has been largely ignored, however, in the existing literature on the subject. As she notes, European maps and atlases of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries often incorporated human bodies, both male and female. 'Within the history of cartography, it is usual to view the use of bodies as an ornamental embellishment which adds interest and flavor to—and sometimes detracts from—the more scientific business of cartographic representation'.¹⁵ Anthropomorphic maps in particular have generally been dismissed as cartographical curiosities, and their logic and role in imaginations about space and place, of nation and community, have scarcely been scrutinized.¹⁶ Following Traub, I argue that the bodyscapes I analyze here incorporate a 'strategy of spatializing' that is ultimately predicated on the gendered imaginations that undergird the nation. In recent years, we have been reminded many times that nationalism is a deeply gendered ideology.¹⁷ In this paper, I underscore the important role that cartography has played in producing (and reproducing) the nation as a gendered place.

Nation-Space as Scientific Map

'The geography of a country is not the whole truth' declared Tagore in 1915–1916. Yet for a century or so prior to this statement, the British colonial state in India had been attempting to convince its subjects to the contrary, through its various survey activities and through the subject of geography.¹⁸ As scholars are beginning to demonstrate, the systematization of geographical knowledges into a discipline and the introduction of that discipline into the curricula of schools and universities were

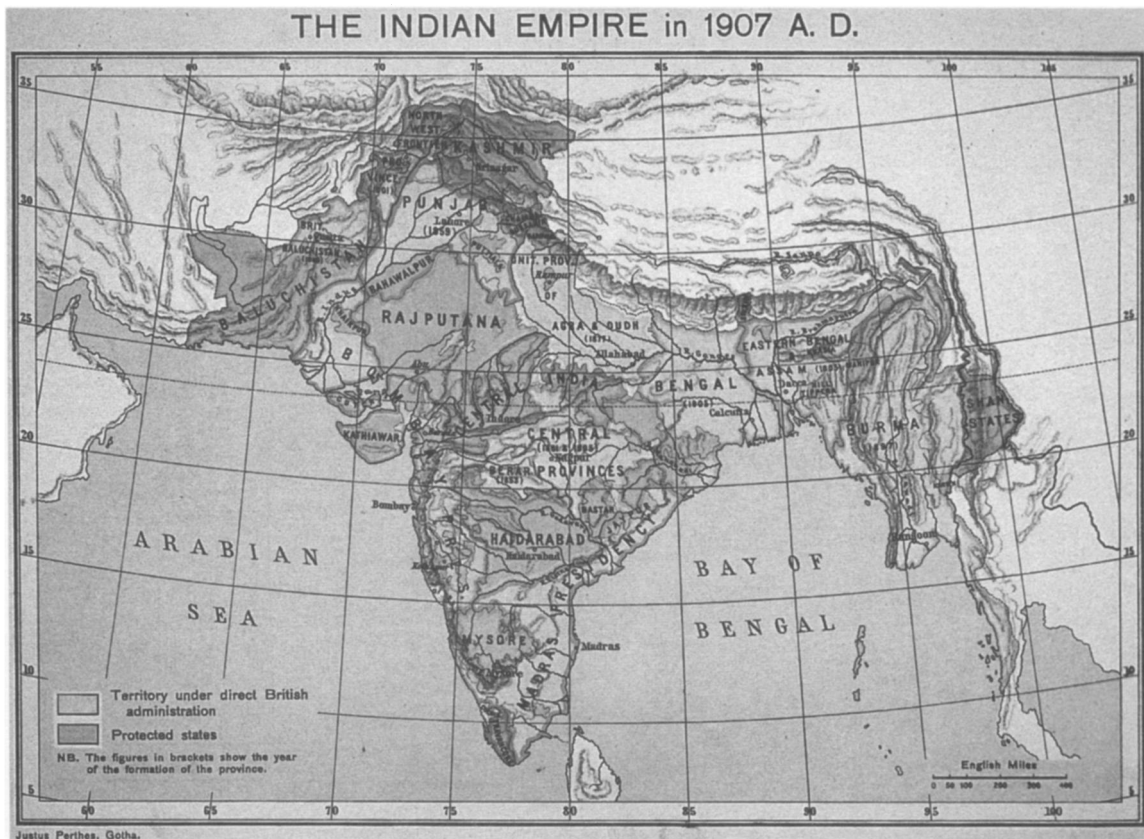


Fig. 1. The Indian Empire in 1907. From Charles Joppen, *Historical Atlas of India for the Use of High Schools, Colleges, and Private Students* (London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1907), No. 26.

intimately related to the expanding demands of European capitalism in the nineteenth century and to the consolidation of colonial rule everywhere in the world.¹⁹ For the colonial state in India, 'to know the country' at the least meant to know it geographically. Colonial texts from the early years of the nineteenth century claimed to record the 'true' geography of India, rescuing it from the realm of mystical, irrational speculations in which it was deemed embedded in Hindu cosmologies.²⁰ The 'India' they sought to cartographically create was imagined as an abstract, rational, disenchanted place, a bounded mapped entity extending from north to south, peninsular in shape and confined to a fixed graticular grid on the earth's surface (for example, Fig. 1).²¹ As Matthew Edney rightly notes, such a map image was essential to the colonial definition of India as a single and coherent political and territorial entity, an imperial space over which the British reigned supreme.²²

It is in this form that 'India' was progressively disseminated to Britain's colonized subjects through the pedagogical discipline of geography whose

'peculiar importance' as the subject 'most likely to open the mind of a native of India' was emphasized as early as the 1830s.²³ From the start, the 'scientific' map was the principal technology through which the new geographical consciousness was propagated. 'It is impossible to teach geography properly without maps' wrote John Murdoch, missionary educationist, in 1871.²⁴ Wall maps and globes appeared in schools in different parts of the subcontinent from around mid-century, and the geography teacher was frequently instructed to make use of them. In the absence of a globe in the classroom, for example, teachers were instructed to use an orange or a wood-apple to emphasize that the earth was spherical, that it was freely suspended in the universe and so on.

At this point, we know little about the dissemination of scientific mapping practices and technologies among modern Indians, or about the spread of modern cartographical literacy.²⁵ We also know little about the uses to which maps have been put by modern Indians in their everyday lives, or the growth of 'map-mindedness' more generally.²⁶

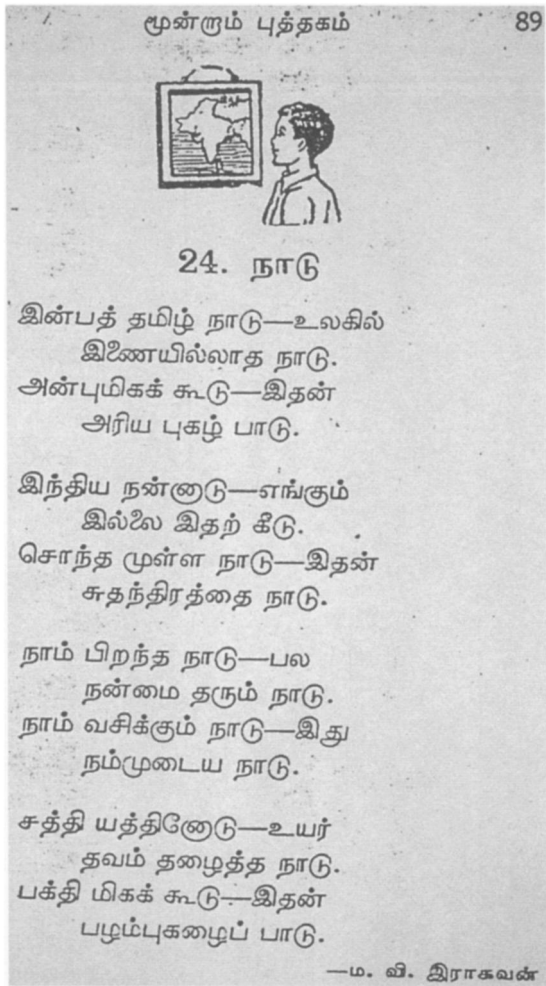


Fig. 2. Nadu [Nation]. From S. Nagarajan, *Kovai Tamil Vaacakam*, 5th rev. ed (Erode, Standard Textbook Company, 1955), 89. (Reproduced courtesy of Tamil Nadu State Archives Library, Chennai.)

Even the most basic questions relating to maps and modernity in India remain unexplored, as do questions relating to the use of maps by its nationalists.²⁷ Although there is little convincing evidence from the sub-continent that the map-as-*logo* had 'penetrated deep into the popular imagination, forming a powerful emblem for the anti-colonial nationalisms being born', scattered traces of the popular deployment of the *logo* map of India—outlining the shape of the emergent nation-space—may be found on letterheads and banners of nationalist organizations and on the coverpages of nationalist journals and newspapers, from the early years of the twentieth century.²⁸

Why is map-mindedness important for a modern citizenry? It has been suggested that the map allows 'citizens to see in a way never before possible the

country . . . to which they belonged'.²⁹ Thongchai has argued that

our conception of the nation with its finely demarcated body comes from nowhere else than the political map . . . [Without a map] no one can see the [nation's] geographical body. . . . A modern nation-state *must* be imaginable in mapped form; otherwise the geographical discourse of a nation would not work.³⁰

In other words, the modern map is a necessary tool with which the citizenry visualizes the nation's territory—its spread, its size (especially relative to other nations), and its contours. Most crucially, it is through the map that the boundaries of the nation-space come to be visualized. If it were not for the map, the nation-space would remain an abstraction, leaving its citizen-subjects without any substantial—and visual—sense of how and where they are spatially located in the world. In other words, it is with and through the map that citizen-subjects are expected to develop a visual attachment to the territory that constitutes the nation.

So, for example, a poem published on 'our nation' in a Tamil textbook a few years after Indian independence includes a framed map of India along with the picture of a young boy gazing at it (Fig. 2).³¹ The map confirms the empiricity of India as a clearly bounded entity with a particular form and shape—its 'geo-body'.³² The map also naturalizes India as a 'real' entity that exists in nature, along with the oceans that bound it to the south. But above all, the map visually delivers India not only to the young boy in the picture who looks at it, but also to the school children who read the textbook. The citizen-subject stands outside the nation-space, taking stock of it as a whole.

Following this line of reasoning, it is possible to agree with Helgerson, Thongchai and others that the map helps to bring into visual reality the *geo-body* of the nation, allowing citizens to take 'effective visual and conceptual *possession*' of the national territory which they inhabit.³³ Yet how does the scientific map with its representation of 'India' as abstract, empty and dead social space foster the sentiment of belonging and possession which is so crucial to the imagined community of the nation?³⁴ How is it possible for the citizen-subject who obviously stands abstracted from the nation-space, viewing it from a point *outside*, to come to see this space as his 'homeland', *inside* which he belongs. To invoke Tagore again, how can the citizen-subject feel moved enough to give up his life for a map? To answer this question, I turn to the



Fig. 3. The United States of India. From Graham Shaw and Mary Lloyd, eds, *Publications Proscribed by the Government of India: A Catalogue of the Collections in the India Office Library and Records and the Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books*, British Library Reference Division (London, The British Library, 1985), facing p. 23. (Reproduced with permission from The British Library.)

other tradition of imagining India, which I have identified as somatic.

Nation-Space as Mother/Goddess

'Have I not told you that in you, I visualize the *Shakti* [the female principle] of our country?' By the time Rabindranath Tagore wrote these lines in 1915–1916, the practice of imagining India as a female entity, the goddess Bharat Mata, 'Mother India', had become a habit among patriotic Indians. While scholars have analyzed literary and visual representations of the goddess in colonial India, her association with the map of India has scarcely been noted.³⁵ Lise McKean observes that at the turn of this century, Sarala Devi (a niece of Tagore)

'organized a group of young Bengali men who pledged to [Mother India] in front of a map of India that they would sacrifice their lives fighting for independence from British rule'.³⁶ Similarly, the logo of the so-called 'Anti-Circular Society', started in November 1905 in Calcutta, was a circle incorporating a map of India around which are inscribed the phrases, 'For God and Motherland', 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' and, most strikingly, 'Vande Mataram' [Homage to the Mother], the opening phrase of the signature poem of the Mother India phenomenon.³⁷

We also learn that around 1909 in the course of fierce nationalist protests in northern India, 'cartographic representations of [Mother India] were

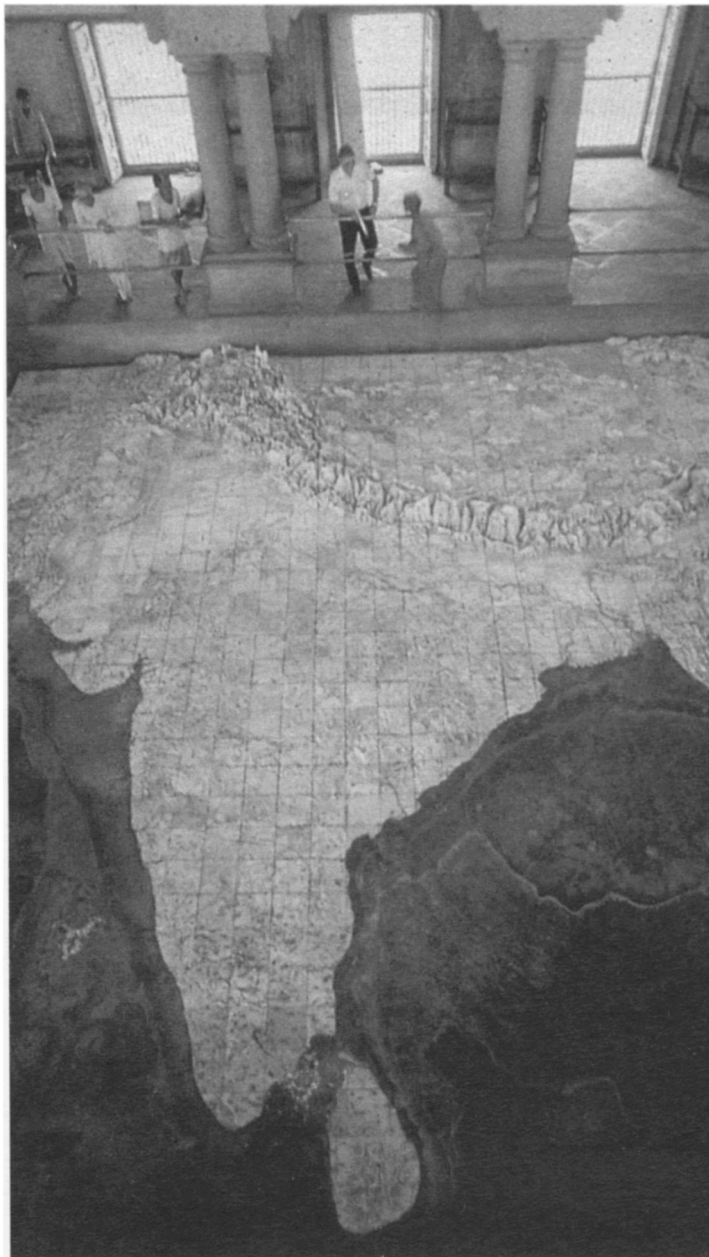


Fig. 4. Map of India. Bharat Mata Mandir, Banaras, contemporary picture postcard.

placed on a platform and paraded through the streets accompanied by shouts of *Vande Mataram* [Homage to the Mother] and *Bharat Mata Ki Jai* [Long Live Mother India].³⁸ In 1914–1916, Punjabi patriotic poetry published by the San Francisco-based Ghadar Party included on their coverpages maps of British India occupied by Mother India, her faced turned towards the west, wielding a sword, a lion in the background.³⁹ Other English-language publications of the Ghadar Party from the early 1920s showed Mother India—dressed in a sari

which, along with her flowing tresses, maps out the cartographical contours of India—rising out of a globe on which the outline of India can be discerned (Fig. 3).⁴⁰ By the 1920s and 1930s, through the various visual paraphernalia of nationalism, the association between the map and the mother had become so intimate that when the first temple to Mother India in the Hindu pilgrimage city of Banaras opened in 1936, it housed not so much an image of the goddess, but a giant marble relief map of undivided India (Fig. 4).⁴¹

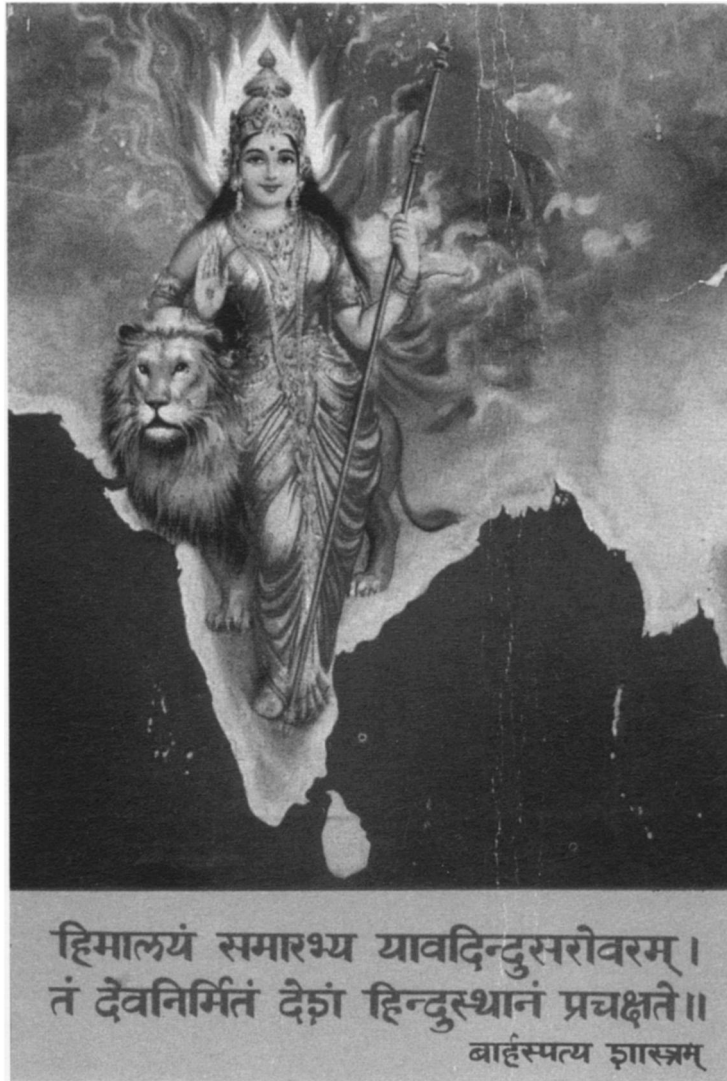


Fig. 5. Mother India. Contemporary picture postcard, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Karnatak.

The map of India becomes a regular feature of Mother India's iconography from the 1920s because it facilitates her presentation to the viewing public as a goddess of territory and polity. It also helps to set her apart from the innumerable other Hindu goddesses—Durga, Lakshmi and others—with whom she could otherwise be confused. It is because Mother India was constituted through the course of the twentieth century as a territorial deity, presiding over the national space of 'India', that she has become such a popular fetish-object in the present-day Hindu nationalist movement where her image proliferates on postcards, stickers, banners, posters, book covers and other visual paraphernalia (Fig. 5).⁴² The circulation of such bodyscapes of Mother India enables Hindu nation-

alist parties to make specific claims regarding ownership of land, the exercise of sovereignty over it, and legitimacy of rule—claims that maps have enabled everywhere in the modern world.

Turning to Tamil India, the focus of this paper, the earliest example I have encountered of a bodyscape of Mother India is a 1909 sketch entitled 'Bharat Mata', advertising the publication of a new Tamil newspaper called *Vijaya*. It shows the figure of Mother India occupying the cartographical space of 'India' whose borders, however, are undone by the spread of her body. In her arms she holds four babies, two of whom she is suckling at her visibly exposed breasts. Her head lies in Kashmir, her feet rest in the south (Fig. 6). This picture of Mother India appeared in *Intiya*, the fiery Tamil weekly 103



Fig. 6. Mother India, *Intiya* 1909. Reproduced from R. A. Padmanabhan, *Cittira Bharati* (Madras, Bharatiyar Sangam, 1982), 60.

edited by the poet and journalist, Subramania Bharati (1882–1921), whose many songs popularized the goddess in southern India by the 1920s.⁴³ In the pictures of Mother India as she appeared on mastheads of nationalist journals, covers of pamphlets of nationalist songs and the occasional textbook that have survived from the 1930s, she is generally shown occupying a map of India.⁴⁴ Indeed, so familiar does this bodyscape become that Mother India is seldom named, as Bharati had felt compelled to in 1909, when he visually introduced the goddess to the Tamil reading public.

Soon after Indian independence, in the late 1940s and 1950s, Mother India bodyscapes boldly find a place in many more Tamil school-books, not in the geography texts which continued to promote the idea of 'India' as disenchanted geographical space but in Tamil-language readers which chose to introduce the 'nation' to the young citizen. Thus a 1948-Tamil textbook for grade three published a poem on Mother India beneath a bodyscape of the goddess in which she lays claim to all of pre-partition India; her flagpole reaches down and claims Sri Lanka as well.⁴⁵ Given the price of most textbooks, and the limited access to colour printing technologies, the bodyscapes they incorporate are generally black-and-white sketches and line drawings, but in 1958 a rare colour print of the goddess

appeared as a frontispiece to a third-grade Tamil schoolbook (Plate 4). The Mother India who figures here is more alluringly clad than in other similar bodyscapes. Her body suggestively curves towards West and East Pakistan, a part of which her green scarf covers. As in other bodyscapes, the northern, western and eastern borders of 'India' are blurred or hidden.⁴⁶

In contrast to such bodyscapes, where the figure of Mother India fills up the cartographical space of India, is the illustration that appeared in 1952 on the cover of a third-grade history textbook in Tamil entitled *History of the Motherland*. Here Mother India stands on a globe on which is etched the cartographical outlines of India (its northern, western and eastern boundaries typically blurred) on which her feet rest.⁴⁷ Published soon after Indian independence, this bodyscape appears to celebrate the triumph of the nation. Instead of concealing the territorial space of India with her body or laying claim to vast stretches of land with it, Mother India literally stands on top of the world, her head reaching into the very cosmos itself.⁴⁸ Similar bodyscapes showing Mother India seated on a globe appear in other parts of India as well (Fig. 7).⁴⁹

I close this discussion of Mother-India bodyscapes by considering another curious example that appeared in several Madras school books in the 1930s. In this, three male citizens are shown offering homage to a map of India which is occupied by Mother India.⁵⁰ As in the 1955 sketch of the young boy looking at a framed map of India (see Fig. 2), these citizens, too, gaze upon the map of India. But the presence of Mother India in the map visibly elicits from them a gesture of homage which does not happen in the other sketch. This is not the only bodyscape where we see citizen and map being cast in such reverential relationship. In a poster that was printed (most likely in northern India) soon after the Indo-China tensions of the early 1960s, Mother India occupies the map of India, her head (with its characteristic halo) covering the disputed territory of Kashmir (Fig. 8). A young man bows to this mapped image of Mother India and is shown offering her his severed head, from which blood drips on to the geo-body of the nation, a puddle forming at the goddess's feet. On closer inspection, it is clear that the head belongs to none other than Bhagat Singh, one of Mother India's most famous martyr-sons from the era of the anti-colonial struggle against the British. At the

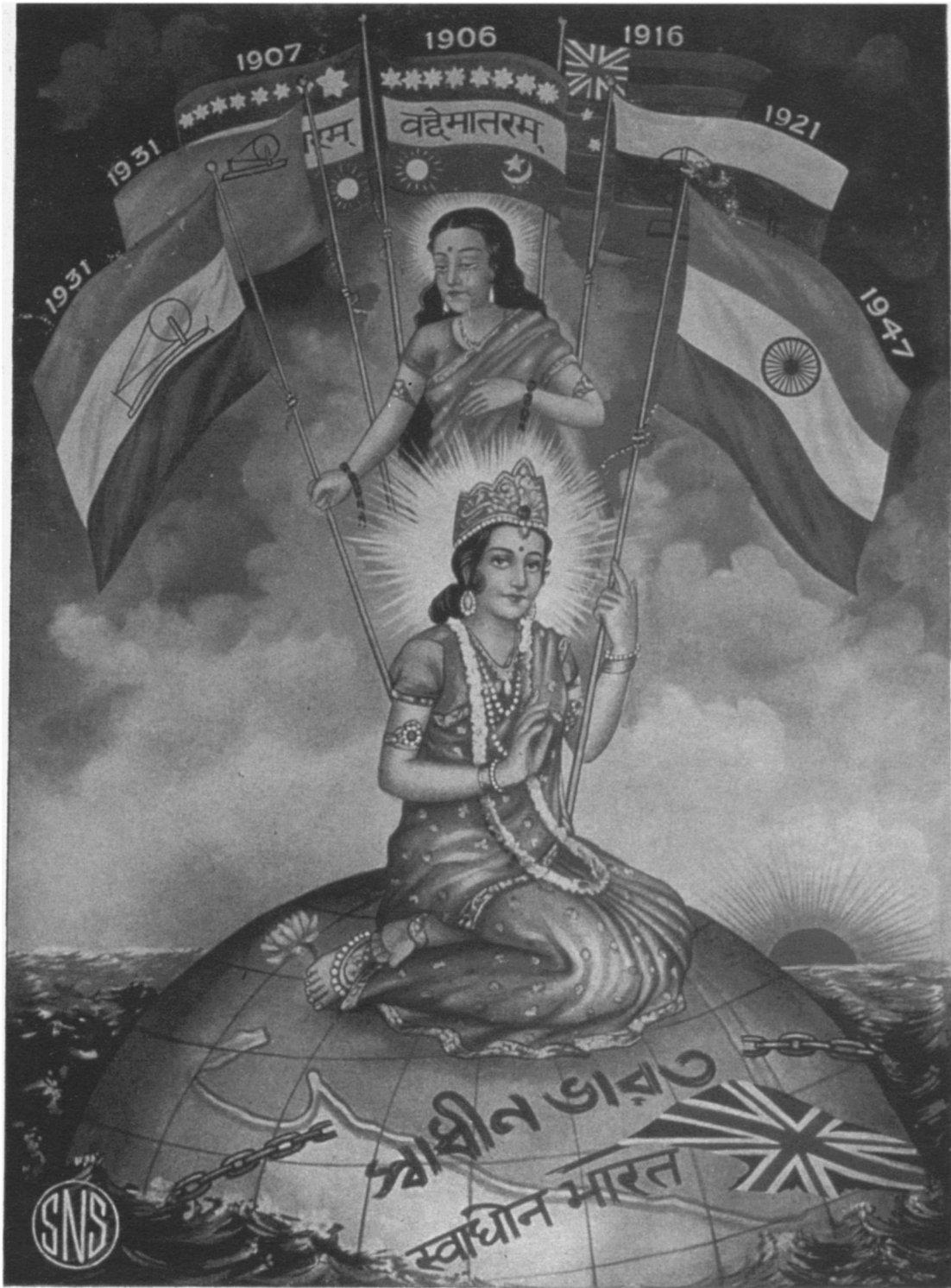


Fig. 7. Free India. Bengali poster, c.1947. Courtesy of Christopher Pinney.

bottom of the poster are shown armed young (wo)men in uniform, presumably marching off to fight the enemy on behalf of mother, nation and map, inspired by the image and memory of Bhagat Singh's well-known sacrifice.⁵¹

So, is this indeed one of the functions of these Mother India bodyscapes within the visual economy of the nation—to convert the citizen-subject from a neutral observer of the cartographical image of India into its devoted patriot? I 105



Fig. 8. The Call of the Mother, c.1966. (Reproduced with the permission of the Fukoka Asian Art Museum, Japan, from the J. P. S. Uberoi and Patricia Ubaeroi Collection.)

return to Tagore's novel to answer this question. Having declared that 'no one can give up his life for a map', Sandip goes on to tell his beloved that if he fell fighting,

it shall not be on the dust of some map-made land, but on a lovingly spread skirt—do you know what kind of skirt?—like that of the earthen-red sari you wore the other day, with a broad blood-red border. Can I ever forget it? Such are the visions which give vigour to life, and joy to death!⁵²

In almost all of the Mother India bodyscapes, her apparel, and especially her sari, plays a crucial role in producing and claiming national space. It invariably extends to cover the extent of pre-

partition India, even in the bodyscapes produced after 1947, and especially in recent years in Hindu nationalist cartography. Crucially, she generally wears red, the colour of auspiciousness in Hindu ritual symbolism. In a striking 1937 poster from Coimbatore, she appears clad in the Indian tricolour (Plate 5). The contours of her body echo the familiar cartographical outline of India, so much so that she no longer even needs the map as a prop to establish her identity, as her tricolour sari billows out laying claim to different regions of the emergent nation-space.⁵³

Recent studies have documented the centrality

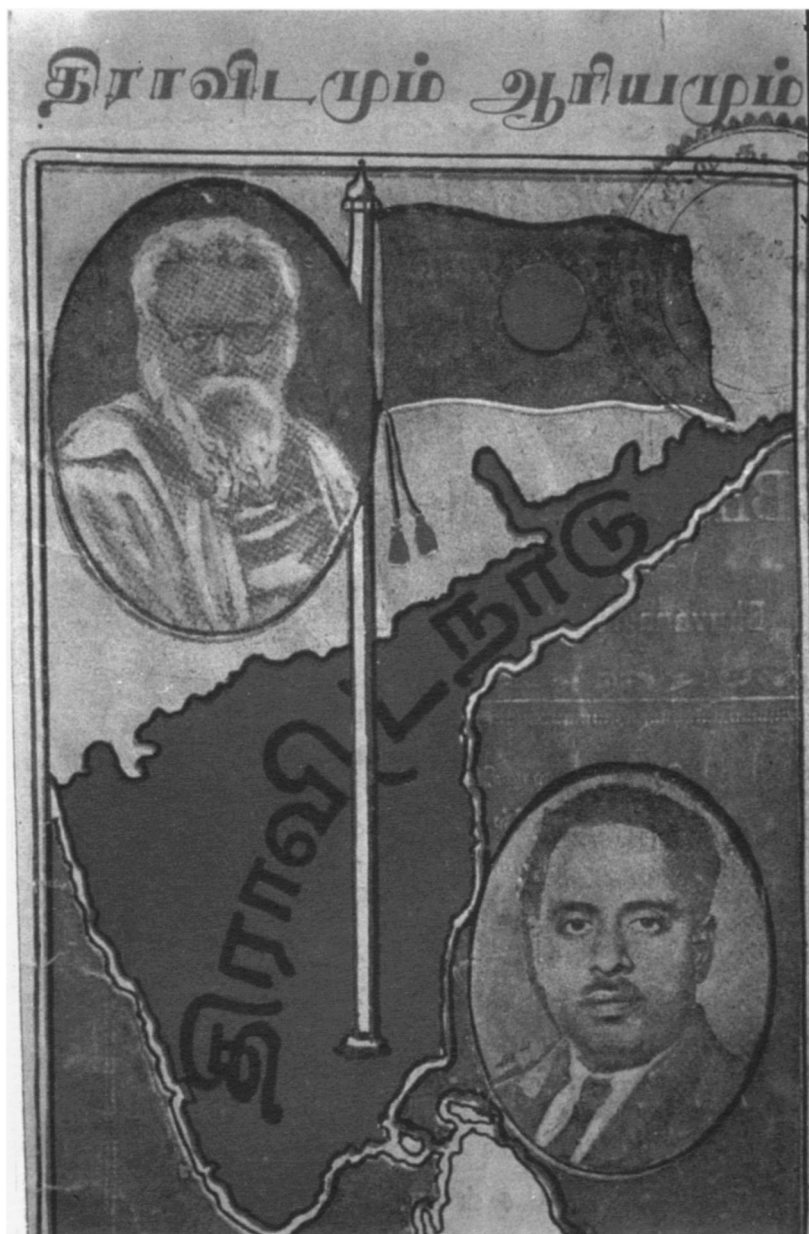


Fig. 9. Dravida Nadu [Dravidian Nation]. Cover page of Viveki, *Tiravitamum Ariyamum* [Dravidian and Aryan Nations] (Chennai, Dravida Kala Nilayam, 1946). Courtesy of Perasiriyar Research Library, Anna Arivalayam, Chennai.

of cloth to colonial politics and have analyzed the nationalizing of clothing choices made by Indians from the turn of the twentieth century.⁵⁴ The reformed sari in particular has emerged as the key sartorial marker of the Hindu Indian woman's difference, even as it indexes her appropriately authentic (and modest) femininity and her symbolic value as the repository of true 'Indian' tradition.⁵⁵ Not surprisingly, Mother India, the mother of them all, is generally shown modestly clad in a sari. Indeed, from early in this century,

nationalists in India repeatedly called upon their fellow citizens to join the anti-colonial struggle against the British by invoking Mother India's sari. British rule, with its attendant dumping of Manchester fabrics and Lancashire textiles, had disrobed and denuded Mother India, it was claimed. Now, Indians should band together and re-drape Mother India in her sari by being Indian and buying Indian. Rather than ephemeral to her iconography, Mother India's sari indexes this larger struggle between the colonial state and its colonized

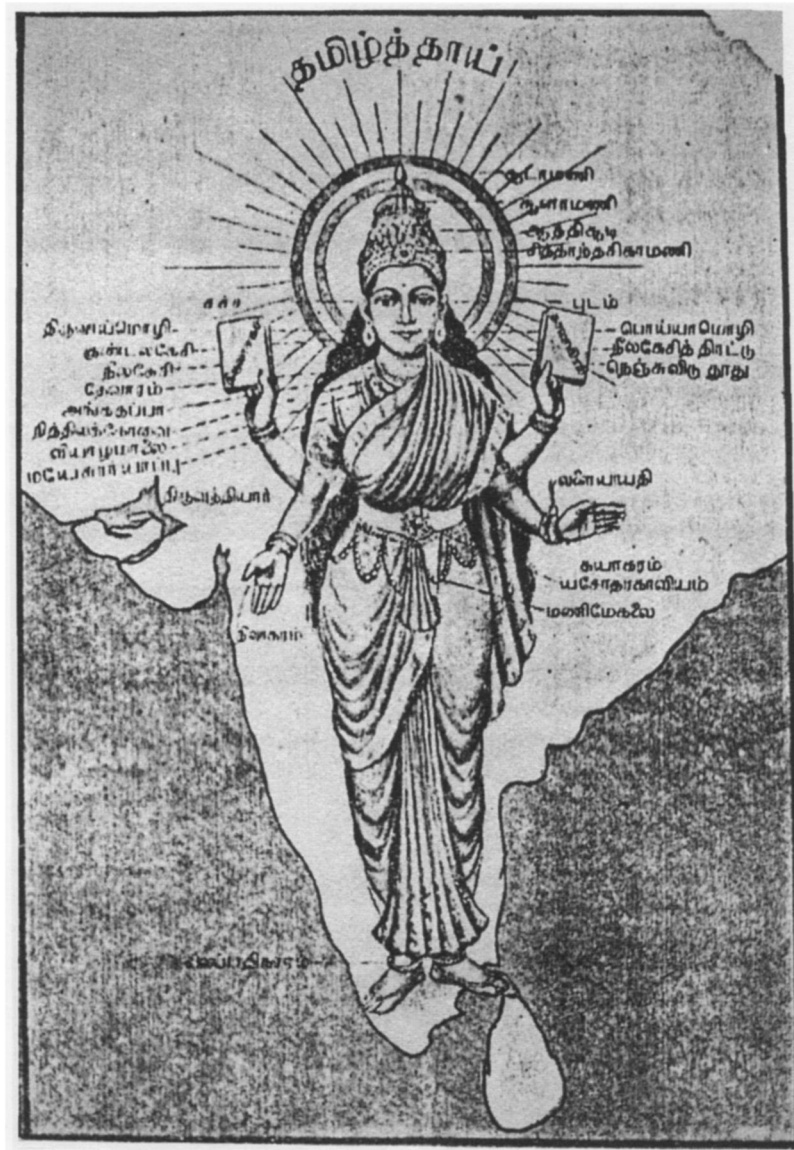


Fig. 10. Mother Tamil. Reproduced from P. Murugayyan, *Arulakat Tamil Paata Nool* (Madras, Arulagam, 1966). Courtesy of Tamil Nadu State Archives Library, Chennai.

subjects over the economic issues of the drain of wealth and the development of Indian industries, even as it helps transform the dead 'dust' of empty geographical space into a 'loving' homeland and motherland.

From the 1890s, the claim of Mother India to the affections of her potential citizen-subjects was challenged in the Tamil-speaking parts of colonial India by another goddess of polity, Tamilttay (Mother Tamil), the Tamil language personified as goddess, mother and maiden.⁵⁶ She gained in popular visibility through the activities of the Dravidian movement which in turn was explicitly anti-Indian nationalist in the middle decades of the

twentieth century, even advocating separation from the emergent nation. The contest between the two nationalisms was also waged cartographically through maps and bodyscapes. During the 1940s and 1950s, maps of the imagined Dravidian nation (Dravida Nadu) were circulated through pamphlets, newspaper cartoons and posters (Fig. 9), and maps of 'India' with Dravida Nadu left out were burnt at the height of the movement's separatist phase. Bodyscapes of Mother Tamil have also been circulated through various Tamil nationalist publications since the mid-1930s and have been occasionally included in school textbooks as well. In a majority of cases, Mother Tamil carto-

graphically lays claim to the entire subcontinent as she occupies the map of India, challenging Mother India's hegemonic presence (Fig. 10). Occasionally, she appears perched on a globe, her legs demurely outlining the cartographical shape of India (Plate 6).

As with Mother India, the map of India serves to transform Mother Tamil in her bodyscapes from a goddess of language and learning into a mistress of territory and polity. Inevitably, the territory she claims with her body—either the 'Dravidian' part of the subcontinent or in many cases all of India, and indeed the whole wide world—far exceeds the contemporary geographical spread of Tamil speakers. Such bodyscapes of both Mother Tamil and Mother India are a useful reminder that like colonial cartography—in whose shadows it was often cast in opposition—nationalist cartography, too, can have imperialistic aspirations, underwriting political projects that are territorially ambitious in intent, even if they are not realizable in practice. They are also a reminder that 'as the physical map of India gains ubiquity as an iconic representation of the body politic, it becomes the terrain for competing efforts to define, and possess, the self'.⁵⁷ Dravidian nationalism might have cast itself in opposition to Indian nationalism, but cartographically, as indeed in other respects, it operated on a terrain, literally and metaphorically, already mapped out by the latter's hegemonic discourses.

Nation-Space as Bodyscape

What is the larger significance of the visualization of the nation as bodyscape, itself a complicated intersection of the geographical imagination of the nation-space as territory and of its somatic imagination as mother? It is clear that nationalists in the colonial world have had to battle to reclaim not just lost territories and spaces, but also the hearts and souls of the subject-citizenry. The scientific map in and of itself is not enough of a weapon in this battle, as both Aurobindo Ghosh and Rabindranath Tagore remind us, for all it does is to re-present the nation's territory as socially empty and dead, mere 'dust' in Sandip's words. In contrast, the bodyscapes of Mother India and Mother Tamil serve to enliven this dead space and transform it into an intensely human place, a homeland and motherland, as the poems frequently accompanying them emphasize. Moreover, at a time when the Indian and Dravidian nations appeared to be materially, discursively, and even cartographically unstable, the female body in

its apparent singularity conferred unity, wholeness and stability, even as it subversively un-did the borders and boundaries so carefully reinforced by state (colonial and post-colonial) cartography. The 'India' that emerges in these bodyscapes is not geographically specific, in direct contrast to the clearly delineated and enclosed geo-body produced by state-sponsored scientific cartography. Further, the female figures in these bodyscapes generally appear in archaic accoutrements, their clothing, their jewellery and their posture all suggesting distant antiquity and offering yet another instance of the 'subterfuges of antiquity' pursued by this very modern entity, the nation, in its quest to pass itself off as timeless and eternal.⁵⁸

In addition to enlivening the nation-space, corporealizing it and archaizing it, these bodyscapes gender it, frequently as female.⁵⁹ Feminist geographers have suggested that the conception of the nation as cartographically female enables a 'masculinist' relationship to place.⁶⁰ Such gendered bodyscapes, along with the poetry on these goddesses which frequently accompany them, encourage the male subject-citizen to view the national territory as a vulnerable woman who needs their protection and as a mother who had to be rescued through heroism and sacrifice. These gendered bodyscapes also enable the viewing of the nation's territory possessively, even pleasurably. So, even as the nation appears as the ground on which filial bonds between the citizenry and the territory are erected, it also emerges as a field for the play of erotic desire, as a regime for regulating pleasure.⁶¹ In Tagore's novel, in response to Sandip's declaration, this is how Bimala responds:

Sandip's eyes took fire as he went on, but whether it was the fire of worship, or of passion, I could not tell. . . . When, in Sandip's appeals, his worship of the country gets to be subtly interwoven with his worship of me, then does my blood dance. . . . I felt that my resplendent womanhood made me indeed a goddess.⁶²

The bodyscapes of Mother India (and Mother Tamil) erupt within the interstices of a nationalist discourse where the erotic, the patriotic and the cartographical converge in imagining the nation as an entity worth living, and dying, for.

In his provocative observations on modern nationalism, Benedict Anderson ruminates on what enables the nation to become an entity that causes so many millions of people, 'not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings'.⁶³ Such bodyscapes are one such visually

enabling device. They invite the citizen-subject who gazes upon them to relate to the nation not as some abstract, dead geographical space, but as a near-and-dear person, his personal goddess, his vulnerable mother, even a beloved lover. In this process, they facilitate the filial attachment of the citizen to national territory, producing sentiments of longing and belonging that a scientific map cannot possibly generate, for in the words of Tagore's Sandip, 'No one can give up his life for a map! When I see you before me, then only do I realize how lovely my country is . . . Such are the visions which give vigour to life, and joy to death'.⁶⁴

Post-Script

This is not the only narrative that can be written of woman, nation and map in modern India, as we are reminded by Mahasweta Devi's poignant story from the 1980s, 'Douloti the Bountiful'. Feminist writers like Mahesweta use the female body to question the nation cartographically, associating it with deprivation, disease and death, instead of taking on the mantle of an idealized figure of plenitude and motherhood. In Mahesweta's story, Douloti, the daughter of a bonded labourer, is forced to become a prostitute to pay off family debts. Towards the end of the story, her body racked with venereal disease and without adequate medical treatment, she lies down to die on the bare earth. Her body is discovered next morning, spreadeagled on a map of India that had been drawn on the ground by a local schoolmaster to celebrate India's Independence Day. Mahesweta concludes her story thus on a powerful note:

Filling the entire Indian peninsula from the oceans to the Himalayas, here lies *bonded* labor spreadeagled, kamiya-whore Douloti Nagesia's tormented corpse, putrefied with venereal disease, having vomited up all the blood in its desiccated lungs. Today, on the fifteenth of August [India's Independence Day], Douloti has left no room at all in the India of people like Mohan [the schoolmaster] for planting the standard of the Independence flag. What will Mohan do now? Douloti is all over India.⁶⁵

Gayatri Spivak has noted that Mahasweta Devi's conclusion demonstrates the re-inscription of 'the official map of the nation by the zoograph of the unaccommodated female body restored to the economy of nature'.⁶⁶ I want to suggest that in Douloti's dying gesture, Mahesweta's story mocks a century of popular cartographical practice in which the female body has been used to produce a possessive 'male-centered sense of territory';⁶⁷ and

in which while the male citizen is interpellated as the active subject of the body politic, the female citizen is virtually erased as an active subject to be replaced by the idealized, stylized and ultimately passive figure of Mother India propped up by a map of the nation.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. I am adapting this question from Timothy Brennan's essay on the novel's 'nation-forming role' to underscore the role maps have played in bestowing a 'form' upon the nation (see Timothy Brennan, 'The national longing for form', in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi Bhabha (London, Routledge, 1990), 44–70).

2. J. H. Dave et al., *Munshi: His Art and Work, Volume 1* (Bombay, Shri Munshi Seventieth Birthday Citizens' Celebration Committee, n.d.), 38. I am indebted to Richard Davis for this reference.

3. Rabindranath Tagore, *The Home and the World*, transl. Surendranath Tagore, reprint ed. (Madras, Macmillan, 1985), 90–91 (original English edition, 1919). This was not the only occasion on which Tagore expressed anti-geography sentiments. In a 1912–1913 essay, he noted, 'I love India, not because I cultivate the *idolatry* of geography'. In a 1904 public lecture which was published in 1925, Tagore declared, 'The geography of a country no doubt helps to build bodies, but character develops by the inspiration one derives from the world of human aspirations' (Amiya Chakravarty, ed. *A Tagore Reader* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1961), 196–97, emphasis mine). I thank Lee Schlesinger for bringing these to my attention.

4. Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 149.

5. Here I have found particularly useful John Pickles' suggestion that maps ought to be seen as 'discursive tools by which to persuade others' (John Pickles, 'Texts, hermeneutics and propaganda maps', in *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*, ed. Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan (London, Routledge, 1992), 194).

6. In this essay, I do not consider those bodyscapes in which the male body—typically, the head or torso of a famous nationalist leader—occupies the map of India, of which there are also several examples. See also note 59.

7. My understanding of the concept of 'bodyscape' has been informed by J. Douglas Porteous, 'Bodyscape: the

body-landscape metaphor', *Canadian Geographer* 30:1 (1986): 2–12. My usage differs from the art historian Nicholas Mirzoeff who employs the term to analyse representations of the modern body in Western art forms (Nicholas Mirzoeff, *Bodyscape: Art, Modernity and the Ideal Figure* (London, Routledge, 1995). My usage also differs from the feminist philosopher Elizabeth Grosz's use of a similar concept, 'body-maps', to consider the many ways in which the human body has emerged in modernity as a site of corporeal inscription (Elizabeth Grosz, 'Inscriptions and body-maps: representations and the corporeal', in *Feminine, Masculine, and Representation*, ed. Terry Threadgold and Anne Cranny-Francis (Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1990), 62–74). My analysis focuses instead on the cartographical deployments of the female body to claim and map national territory. As Valerie Traub notes, 'none of the new work within the history of cartography on the semiotics of maps has concerned itself with the representation of bodies' (Valerie Traub, 'Mapping the global body', in *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, Empire in Renaissance England*, ed. Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, in press). Traub's essay on early modern cartography addresses this problem in Europe, and my project attempts the same in colonial and postcolonial India.

8. My use of the term 'nation-space' has been informed by Manu Goswami's discussion of the discursive production of 'national space' in the writings of key Indian nationalists (see her 'The Production of India: Colonialism, Nationalism, and Territorial Nativism' (doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, 1998)).

9. J. B. Harley, 'Meaning and ambiguity in Tudor cartography', in *English Map-Making 1500–1650*, ed. Sarah Tyacke (London, The British Library, 1983), 23.

10. J. B. Harley, 'Maps, knowledge, and power', in *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays in the Symbolic Representation, Design, and Use of Past Environments*, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988), 303; J. B. Harley, 'Silences and secrecy: the hidden agenda of cartography in early modern Europe', *Imago Mundi* 40 (1988), 66.

11. Here, I subscribe to a revisionist understanding of maps as 'graphic representations that facilitate a spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes or events in the human world . . . Maps are artifacts that store, communicate, and promote spatial understanding' (J. B. Harley and David Woodward, 'Preface', in *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, ed. J. B. Harley and David Woodward (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1987), xvi). Certainly, in contrast to bodyscapes, the scientific map purports to be 'a scaled representation of the real' (Pickles, 'Texts, hermeneutics and propaganda maps' (see note 5), 194). None the less, to the extent that both the scientific map and the bodyscape are graphic representations of national territory, I consider them maps. In this connection, I have also found useful the following distinction between scientific maps and allegorical maps. 'In scientific maps, . . . the landscape or the world is understood as essentially meaningless, without significance; it holds no meaning, signifies nothing. It stands as desacralized matter, natural phenomena'. Allegorical maps, on the other hand, 'understand the world as already imbued with meaning' (Howard Marchitello, 'Political maps: the production of cartography and chorography in early modern England', in *Cultural Artifacts and the Production of Meaning: the Page, the Image, and the Body*, ed. Margaret J.

M. Ezell and Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1994), 18). If we follow this suggestion, bodyscapes are akin to allegorical, rather than scientific, maps.

12. Harley, 'Maps, knowledge, and power' (see note 10), 301; see also 283–84.

13. For a thoughtful critique, based on 17th-century local Russian property-litigation maps, of 'the general view of map making as a tool of centralizing power', see Valerie A. Kivelson, 'Cartography, autocracy and state powerlessness: the uses of maps in early modern Russia', *Imago Mundi* 51 (1999): 83–105.

14. Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

15. Traub, 'Mapping the global body' (see note 7).

16. Gillian Hill, *Cartographical Curiosities* (London, The British Library, 1978). For other discussions of European anthropomorphic maps, see Claude Gandelman, 'Bodies, maps, texts', in *Reading Pictures, Viewing Texts* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1991), 81–93; John Goss, 'Curiosa', in *The Mapmaker's Art: A History of Cartography* (London, Studio Editions, 1993), 329–42; Carmela Venti, 'Maps, metaphor, and memory: anthropomorphic cartography', *Mercator's World* 2:4 (1997): 50–53; Darby Lewes, 'The female landscape', *Mercator's World* 4:1 (1999): 35–41.

17. Ida Blom et al, eds., *Gendered Nations: Nationalisms and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, Berg, 2000).

18. Matthew H. Edney, *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1843* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1997); Goswami, 'The Production of India' (see note 8).

19. Anne Godlewska and Neil Smith, eds., *Geography and Empire* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1994). See also David N. Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of a Contested Enterprise* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1992), 216–59.

20. C. A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780–1870* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), 300–14. As Edney notes, the belief was that 'once the mysticism and irrationality of the Indians was swept away by the incontrovertible proof that Hindu geographical and other physical conceptions were wrong, then those Indians would be open to conversion' (Edney, *Mapping an Empire* (see note 18), 312; see also 308–11, 317–18).

21. Edney, *Mapping an Empire* (see note 18). Susan Gole observes that the peninsular shape of India appeared for the first time in European maps in 1502, soon after Vasco de Gama's 1498 landing in Calicut. Through the course of the 16th and 17th centuries, India's peninsular form varied in shape as well as extant in European world maps, several of which continued to revert to the Ptolemaic non-peninsular form till as late as 1710 (Susan Gole, *Early Maps of India* (New Delhi, Sanskriti in association with Arnold Heinemann, 1976), 20–43). Gole also notes that prior to these European maps, a 14th-century Persian world map and a 1364-map from Japan bestow a somewhat peninsular shape on the subcontinent (Susan Gole, *India within the Ganges* (New Delhi, Jayaprints, 1983), 15–21). See also P. L. Madan, *Indian Cartography: A Historical Perspective (3,000 B.C. to Mid-Twentieth Century)* (Delhi, Manohar, 1997), 81.

22. Matthew Edney, 'The patronage of science and the creation of imperial space: the British mapping of India, 1799–1843', *Cartographica* 30:1 (1993): 61–67.

23. Quoted in John Murdoch, *The Indian Teacher's Manual with Hints on the Management of Vernacular Schools* (Madras, The Christian Vernacular Education Society, 1885), 151.

24. John Murdoch, *Hints on Education in India with Special Reference to Vernacular Schools*, 2nd ed. (Madras, The Christian Vernacular Education Society, 1871), 114.

25. Pioneering work on pre-colonial mapping in the subcontinent has been done by Susan Gole and Joseph Schwartzberg; see especially Susan Gole, *Indian Maps and Plans: From Earliest Times to the Advent of European Surveys* (New Delhi, Manohar Publications, 1989), and Joseph E. Schwartzberg, 'South Asian cartography', in *Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies*, ed. J. B. Harley and David Woodward (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1992), 295–509. While they do consider the continuation of non-modern cartographical practices into the present (such as the production of cosmographies and pilgrimage maps), they do not detail the dissemination of scientific cartographical habits among modern Indians. Similarly, while Matthew Edney's important study of the colonial mapping of India occasionally alludes to the reliance on Indian assistants and draftsman by British surveyors, this suggestion has not been pushed any further to offer general insights about the spread of a modern cartographical culture among Indians (Edney, *Mapping an Empire* (see note 18), especially 304–9). Madan offers a tantalizing but all-too-brief discussion of the 'dawn of geographical curiosity' and modern map-awareness among educated Indians from the early years of the nineteenth century (Madan, *Indian Cartography* (see note 20), 134–42).

26. P. D. A. Harvey, *Maps in Tudor England* (London, Public Record Office and The British Library; Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1993), 17.

27. For some recent essays that begin to consider the spread of modern mapping habits among Indians, see Keya Dasgupta, 'A city away from home: the mapping of Calcutta', in *Texts of Power: Emerging Disciplines in Colonial Bengal*, ed. Partha Chatterjee (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 145–66; Sankaran Krishna, 'Cartographic anxiety: mapping the body politic in India', *Alternatives* 19 (1994): 507–21; and Sumathi Ramaswamy, 'Catastrophic cartographies: mapping the lost continent of Lemuria', *Representations* 67 (1999): 92–129.

28. The quotation is from Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London, Verso, 1991), 175.

29. Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1992), 108, 114.

30. Thongchai Winichakul, 'Maps and the formation of the geo-body of Siam', in *Asian Forms of the Nation*, ed. Hans Antlov and Stein Tonnesson (London, Curzon Press, 1996), 76.

31. S. Nagarajan, *Kovai Tamil Vaacakam*, 5th rev. ed. (Erode, Standard Textbook Company, 1955), 89. It is telling that the map depicts Indian territory prior to its partition in 1947, although it was published well after that event.

32. Thongchai, *Siam Mapped* (see note 14).

33. Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood* (see note 29), 107, emphasis mine.

34. Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (see note 28).

35. See, for example, Tanika Sarkar, 'Nationalist iconography: image of women in 19th century Bengali literature', *Economic and Political Weekly* 22:47 (1987): 2011–15;

Jasodhara Bagchi, 'Representing nationalism: ideology of motherhood in colonial Bengal', *Economic and Political Weekly (Review of Women's Studies)* 24:42–43 (1990): WS 65–71; Patricia Uberoi, 'Feminine identity and national ethos in Indian calendar art', *Economic and Political Weekly (Review of Women's Studies)* 25:17 (1990): WS 41–48; Indira Chowdhury-Sengupta, 'Mother India and Mother Victoria: motherhood and nationalism in nineteenth-century Bengal', *South Asia Research* 12:1 (1992): 20–37; Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *The Making of a New 'Indian' Art: Artists, Aesthetics and Nationalism in Bengal, c. 1850–1920* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992), 90–92, 255, 258–59; and Partha Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1850–1922: Occidental Orientations* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994), 295–96. For a nuanced analysis of the place of posters, chromolithographs and other visual artifacts of popular nationalism in late colonial India, see Christopher Pinney, 'The nation (un)pictured: chromolithography and 'popular' politics in India', *Critical Inquiry* 23:3 (1997): 834–67.

36. Lise McKean, 'Bharat Mata: Mother India and her militant patriots', in *Devi: Goddesses of India*, ed. John Stratton Hawley and Donna Marie Wulff (Berkeley University of California Press, 1996), 252–53.

37. Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903–1908* (New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1973), 307–8.

38. Goswami, 'The Production of India' (see note 8), 438.

39. For reproductions of these, see Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organisation and Strategy*, 2nd ed. (Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University, 1993). I thank Allen Thrasher for drawing my attention to these.

40. Graham Shaw and Mary Lloyd, eds., *Publications Proscribed by the Government of India: A Catalogue of the Collections in the India Office Library and Records and the Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books, British Library Reference Division* (London, The British Library, 1985), nos. 101, 652, etc. For a more extended analysis of Figure 3, see Sumathi Ramaswamy, 'Visualizing the nation-space of "India": maps, globes, bodyscapes', *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (n.s.) 36:122 (2002), forthcoming.

41. Diana Eck, *Banaras: City of Light* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1982), 38–39. See also *The Hindu*, 5 March 1993, 21. In 1921, Subramania Siva unsuccessfully sought to build a temple to Mother India in southern India. It is not clear from the information we have whether he planned to install a map of India there (P. S. Mani, *Veeramuracu Subramania Siva* (Madras, New Century Book House, 1984), 188–98). In 1983, under the auspices of the VHP, a Hindu nationalist organization, another multi-storey temple to Mother India was opened in the Himalayan pilgrimage town of Hardwar. The ground floor of the shrine includes both a statue of Mother India and a large map of India on which are marked 'mountains and rivers, major centers of Hindu pilgrimage, and "all important centers of culture"' (McKean, 'Bharat Mata' (see note 36), 269, who cites *Bharat Mata Mandir: Candid Appraisal* (Hardwar, Samanvaya Publication, 1986)). In the past few years, other similar temples and shrines have appeared across the Indian nation-space.

42. Christiane Brosius, 'Mapping the nation', in *Mappings: Shared Histories . . . A Fragile Self*, ed. Pooja Sood (New Delhi, Eicher Gallery, 1997), 15–19; Christiane Brosius, 'Motherland in Hindutva iconography', *The India Magazine of Her People and Culture* 17:12 (1997): 22–28.

43. Two years earlier in April 1907, the same newspaper

carried another pictorial sketch in which an unidentified woman (presumably Mother India) receives obeisance from an assortment of male citizens. The woman is shown clad in a sari and seated, her arm resting on a globe which prominently displays the cartographical logo of India (reprinted in A. R. Venkatachalapathy, *Bharatiyin Karuttu Patankal: Intiya, 1906–1910* (Madras, [Narmada], 1995), 45). The occasion for the cartoon was the celebration of the Tamil New Year's Day. Interestingly, in the numerous other cartoons featuring Mother India that appeared in the short-lived span of this nationalist newspaper from the opening decade of the 20th century, she is not shown associated with the map or globe.

44. See, for example, the illustration on the cover page of A. D. Mayandi Pillai, *Bharata Desiya Gitam (Part I)* (Virudhunagar, Sacchitanandam Press, 1931). See also Government of Madras Order No. 348 (Public Confidential) of 29 February 1932; Order No. 1601 (Public Confidential), 12 December 1932, etc. The cover page of a short-lived journal called *Intiyattay* [Mother India] published in the early 1930s features a bodyscape of Mother India. Typically in these publications, Mother India appears as a four-armed goddess carrying the tricolour flag and the spinning wheel; the northern borders of the map are blurred by the spread of her body.

45. K. R. Kuppusamy Das, *Malai Tamil Vaacakam (Moonravatu Puttakam)* (Madras, C. Coomaraswamy Naidu & Sons, 1948), 20. See also V. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar, *Centamil Vaacakam: Moonraam Puttakam*, 10th ed. (Pudukottai, Srinivas & Co., 1949), 2. For an earlier example from northern India, see Shaw and Lloyd, *Publications Proscribed by the Government of India* (note 40), no. 512.

46. V. Lakshmanan, *Putiya Aarampakalvi Tamil (Moonraam Puttakam)* (Mannargudi, Shri Shanmugha Publishing House, 1958).

47. This bodyscape is reminiscent of the so-called Ditchley portrait of Elizabeth I from 1592 in which the English monarch is shown standing on a globe with the map of England sketched on it: Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London, Thames and Hudson, 1987). For a similar association of maps and human bodies in early 17th-century Mughal miniatures, where the emperors Jahangir and Shahjahan are shown standing on globes, see Milo Cleveland Beach, *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court* (Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1981).

48. G. Arogiaswamy, *Taay Naattu Varalaaru: Moonraam Puttakam* (Tiruchirapalli, Murugan Press, 1952).

49. I thank Christopher Pinney for sharing this print with me. It is interesting to note that the national flag is displayed more prominently here than the map. Indeed, the flag frequently rivals the map as an object of adulation and veneration in the patriotic visual practices of colonial and post-colonial India.

50. Anon., *Baala Bodini: Aintaam Pustakam* (Kumbakonam, V. S. Venkataraman and Co., 1930), 76. See also P. T. Sreenivasa Aiyangar, *Gokhale Irantaam Vaacakam* (Kumbakonam, V. S. Venkataraman, 1933), 69.

51. I thank Patricia Uberoi for discussing this poster with me. Indeed, this bodyscape echoes other posters of Mother India which were proscribed during the 1930s, soon after Bhagat Singh's execution by the British colonial regime. These show him handing over his severed head on a platter to his 'mother', India, seated on her throne (see British Library, India Office Library, PP Hin F 66 and PP Hin F 69). Elsewhere, I have explored the proliferation of such somatic images in nationalist discourses in colonial and post-colonial India and argued that they are impor-

tant technologies of nation-building in the subcontinent (Sumathi Ramaswamy, 'Body language: the somatics of nationalism in Tamil India', *Gender and History* 10:1 (1998): 78–109).

52. Tagore, *The Home and the World* (see note 3), 91.

53. American Committee for South Asian Art, No. 5266. I thank Sandria Freitag for alerting me to this. There are other examples of this strategy in bodyscapes from Bengal as well as northern India from the 1920s (Shaw and Lloyd, *Publications Proscribed by the Government of India* (see note 40), nos. 101, 250, 353, and 640).

54. See especially C. A. Bayly, 'The origins of swadeshi (home industry): cloth and Indian society, 1700–1930', in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986), 285–322, and Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996).

55. Meredith Borthwick, *The Changing Role of Women in Bengal, 1849–1905* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984), 243–56; Dulali Nag, 'Fashion, gender and the Bengali middle class', *Public Culture* 3:2 (1991): 93–112. For a thoughtful critique of the modern visual presentation of the Hindu goddess as a fully clothed and sari-clad body, see Tapati Guha-Thakurtha, 'Clothing the goddess: the modern contest over representations of Devi', in *Devi, The Great Goddess: Female Divinity in South Asian Art*, ed. Vidya Dahejia (Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Institution, 1999), 157–79.

56. Sumathi Ramaswamy, *Passions of the Tongue: Language Devotion in Tamil India, 1891–1970* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1997).

57. Krishna, 'Cartographic anxiety' (see note 27), 510.

58. Sudipto Kaviraj, 'The imaginary institution of India', in *Subaltern Studies VII: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Partha Chatterjee and Ranajit Guha (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1993), 13.

59. As I noted earlier, bodyscapes which show the map of India occupied by, or in association with, male bodies, especially those of prominent nationalist leaders like Gandhi, Nehru and Bose, are also popular. I want to suggest that even these examples are a reflection of the gendering of national territory as female for these male nationalists are themselves seen as patriotic sons of 'the motherland' or Mother India.

60. Catherine Nash, 'Remapping and renaming: new cartographies of identity, gender and landscape in Ireland', *Feminist Review* 44 (1993): 39–51; Gillian Rose, *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1993); Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose, eds., *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies* (New York, Guilford Press, 1994).

61. Sumathi Ramaswamy, 'Virgin mother, beloved other: the erotics of Tamil nationalism in colonial and post-colonial India', in *Signposts: Gender Issues in Post-Independence India*, ed. Rajeswari Sundar Rajan (New Delhi, Kali for Women, 1999), 17–56; Afsaneh Najmabadi, 'The erotic vatan [homeland] as beloved and mother: to love, to possess, and to protect', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 39:3 (1997): 442–67.

62. Tagore, *The Home and the World* (see note 3), 91–92.

63. Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (see note 28), 16.

64. Tagore, *The Home and the World* (see note 3), 91.

65. Mahasweta Devi, 'Douloti the Bountiful', in *Imaginary Maps: Three Stories by Mahasweta Devi (Translated and Introduced by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak)* (New York, Routledge, 1995), 93, emphasis in original.

66. Gayatri Spivak, 'Woman in difference: Mahasweta Devi's "Douloti the Beautiful"', in *Nationalisms and Sexualities*, ed. Andrew Parker et al. (New York, Routledge, 1992), 112.

67. Lydia Liu, 'The female body and nationalist discourse:

The Field of Life and Death revisited', in *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*, ed. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 58.

Cartes et déesses mères dans l'Inde moderne

Pour J.B. Harley, 'les cartes comme mode de connaissance impersonnel tendent à "désocialiser" le territoire qu'elles représentent; elles entretiennent l'idée d'un espace socialement vide'. En prenant l'Inde moderne comme objet d'étude, cet article examine une tradition alternative de cartographie du territoire dans laquelle la nation est représentée non comme un 'espace social vide', mais comme la 'Mère Inde', la nation indienne imaginée comme une femme, une mère, une déesse. A travers l'analyse de tels 'paysages anthropomorphes' de la Mère Inde, on peut se demander ce qui est en jeu dans la superposition du corps féminin à la carte du territoire national. Et d'examiner comment de tels paysages anthropomorphes, tout en généralisant une vision particulière de l'Inde, renforcent l'idée de la nation comme 'matrice'/mère patrie.

Karten und Muttergottheiten im modernen Indien

J. B. Harley stellt fest, dass 'Karten als eine entpersönlichte Form von Wissen das dargestellte Gebiet potentiell "entsozialisieren"'. Sie fördern die Vorstellung von einem gesellschaftlich leeren Raum'. Dieser Beitrag stellt anhand von Karten Indiens aus dem 20. Jahrhundert eine alternative Tradition der Territorialdarstellung vor, bei der die Nation ihren Bürgern kartographisch nicht als 'gesellschaftlich leerer Raum' präsentiert wird, sondern als 'Mutter Indien' und damit imaginär als Frau, Mutter und Gottheit. Durch eine Analyse derartiger 'körperbetonter' Darstellungen der 'Mutter Indien', wird untersucht, was die repräsentative Verwendung des weiblichen Körpers bei der Kartierung eines Nationalstaates impliziert. Darüber hinaus wird abgewogen, wie solche Figurenkarten, in gleicher Weise wie sie ein spezifisches Bild von Indien prägen, auch die Idee der Nation als 'Mutterland' verstärken können.



Plate 4. Mother India. Frontispiece to V. Lakshmanan, *Putiya Aarampakalvi Tamil (Moonraam Puttakam)* (Mannargudi, Shri Shanmugha Publishing House, 1958). (Reproduced with permission from Tamil Nadu State Archives Library, Chennai.) (See p. 104.)



Plate 5. *Vandē Mataram* ('Homage to Mother'), Coimbatore, 1937. (Reproduced with permission from Robert J. Del Bonta.) (See p. 106.)



Plate 6. Tamilttay (Mother Tamil), c.1941. (Reproduced with permission from Kamban Kazhagam, Karaikkudi.) (See p. 109.)