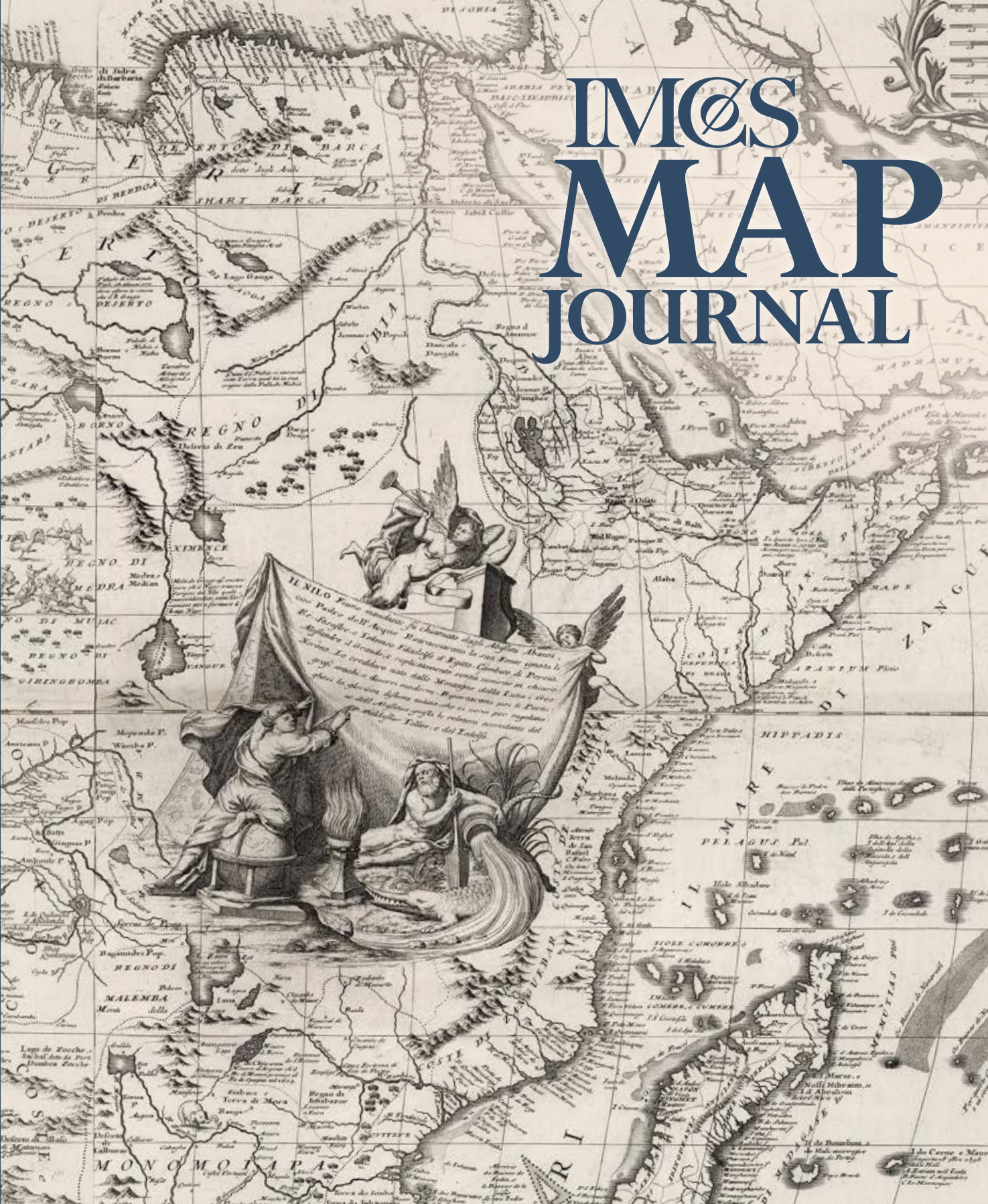


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Herman Moll's monumental wall map of South East Asia published circa 1726

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JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL MAP COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

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Front cover Vincenzo Coronelli, detail of 'Map of Africa' in *Atlante Veneto, Nel quale si contiene la Descrittione Geografica, Storica, Sacra, Profana, e Politica, Degl'Impery, Regni, Provincie, e Stati, Dell'Universo ... Accresciuto di molte Tavole Geografiche*, 1693. David Rumsey Map Collection.

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Joseph Schirò

When I arrived in London for the Annual General Meeting on 6 June, I was welcomed with great warmth and affection by the members of the Board and the other members attending the meeting. Many of them I had first met during the IMCoS /Malta Symposium in 2011, while others I came to know at the more recent IMCoS Malta Symposium in 2024. A particularly welcome reunion was with our former longest-serving Chairman, Hans Kok, who very kindly introduced me to many map dealers at the London Map Fair.

While touring the fair with Hans, barely an hour after I had been appointed, Cinzia, our Treasurer, reported enthusiastically that IMCoS had just enrolled its youngest member ever, 14-year-old Finlay Wilks. I thought that the occasion merited a commemorative photo as I saw in him the future of IMCoS and why not, even himself, as the Chair. You can see our photo together on our Facebook page.

Perhaps this is an appropriate point to introduce myself. By profession, I am a book and paper conservator. Before entering the conservation profession, I worked as a teacher and later studied librarianship at Aberystwyth in Wales. Following my studies in conservation at the Istituto di Patologia del libro in Rome, I began my career as a book conservator at the National Library of Malta. It was there that I first met Dr Albert Ganado, a distinguished and dedicated cartographic scholar, who was later awarded the IMCoS/Helen Wallis Award in 2011.

In 2009 Dr Ganado founded the Malta Map Society. Under his guidance, vision and encouragement, the Society flourished. Then, on 9 March 2021, his ninety-seventh birthday, he decided to step down as President. In recognition of his outstanding leadership and dedication, he was immediately appointed Honorary Life Founder President. I was deeply honoured to succeed him as President of the Society.

Fast forward to 2026, and I could never have imagined that I would be honoured by being appointed Chair of IMCoS. In my remarks at the AGM, I admitted that I felt somewhat daunted at the prospect of taking this role given the collective expertise and experience of the Society's members. I am acutely aware of the high standards expected of the Chair, and I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Board and to the membership for the trust and confidence placed in me.

One of the Committee's immediate priorities is the review and updating of our website. I firmly believe in a bottom-up approach to administration and encourage all our members to share their ideas and suggestions. If you have any proposals for improvements or new features that you believe should be incorporated into the website, please email anyone in the Committee. Their email addresses are found opposite. Your feedback will be greatly appreciated and carefully considered.

BEFORE THE PYRAMIDS, BEFORE ÇATALHÖYÜK:

*A geographic petroglyph from
Ratnagiri, Maharashtra,
India, c. 12,000 BCE*

**GemsOfINDOLOGY | ORCID:
0009-0008-5130-3614**

On a laterite plateau near Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, a petroglyph measures 14 metres east–west by 12 metres north–south. The animal form is an elephant. The convergence of evidence from five independent lines of enquiry – proportional, faunal, orographic, ecological, and demographic – makes a case that the Ratnagiri elephant petroglyph is the oldest known geographic representation of a landmass in the archaeological record, predating the Çatalhöyük wall painting (c. 6,200 BCE) by six millennia.

The site: A laterite plateau above the Konkan Coast

The Ratnagiri petroglyph corpus occupies a series of laterite plateaus along the Konkan coast of Maharashtra, between approximately 16° and 17°N, stretching between the Terekhol River in the south and the Daman Ganga River in the north. The plateaus are composed of iron-rich rock that bakes red in the summer and pools monsoon water in the wet season.

The Konkan coast of Maharashtra is one of the most remarkable and least-studied prehistoric sites in the world. Along the laterite plateaus that rise above the coast more than 1,500 petroglyphs have been documented across approximately 70 sites in the Ratnagiri and Rajapur districts, with individual petroglyphs ranging from under a metre to the 14-metre elephant in size. Seven sites are on UNESCO's tentative World Heritage list. The Maharashtra government designated the sites as protected monuments in 2024.



Fig. 1 The Ratnagiri elephant petroglyph on the laterite surface with chalk tracing added. This is a documentation technique that renders the incised lines legible in photographic reproduction and does not alter the substrate.
Photograph: Amar Reddy.

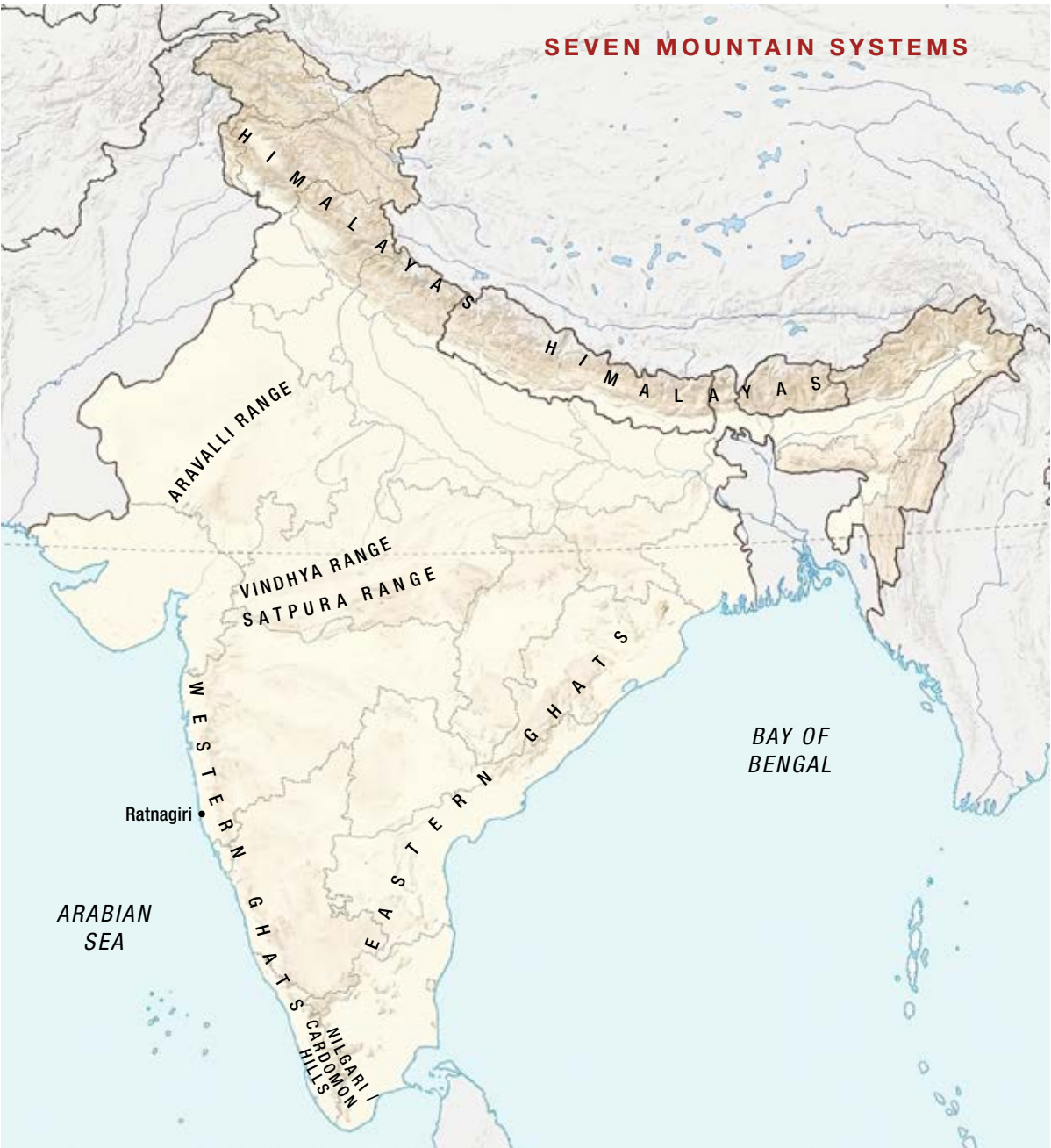


Fig. 2 Ratnagiri on the Konkan coast of Maharashtra. The seven mountain systems correspond to ridge forms visible within the elephant petroglyph (see Table 3).

The carvings are executed on horizontal, sky-facing surfaces – not cave walls, not cliff faces, but the open plateau surface itself, lying between the earth and the sky. They depict animals, humans, geometric forms, and complex multi-element compositions that range from simple outlines to layered cosmographic diagrams. Dating estimates

range from 10,000 to 30,000 years before the present, with the bulk of the corpus placed between 10,000 and 12,000 BCE. The plateau surface is characterised by seasonal inundation during the monsoon and rapid drainage in the dry season, which has served to both protect the incised lines from erosion and to deposit

manganese-rich coatings that have assisted OSL and IRSL dating attempts at comparable sites.¹ The laterite substrate is geologically stable over the millennial timescales relevant here. The elephant petroglyph² occupies a gently inclined surface facing approximately east. The incision is consistent in depth and technique with other petroglyphs in the corpus that have been attributed to the pre-Holocene boundary. The form is produced by continuous pecking along an outline. The interior detail is rendered using the same technique.

The corpus was first described in systematic form by the Archaeological Survey of India in 2018, when ground-level photographic documentation of scale was made available. Subsequent analysis by the present author, drawing on both the ground-level and aerial photographic record and on on-site measurement data, produced the five-line cartographic argument set out in this article.

The cartographic claim: Proportional correspondence to the known world

The cartographic argument begins with a measurement and a correction. Its panel dimensions, established by on-site measurement, are 14 metres east-west by 12 metres north-south. The width-to-height ratio is 1.167. The aerial photograph (Fig. 1) was taken from above the elephant’s feet rather than its centre, introducing perspective distortion. Corrected, the carving measures approximately 14 metres east-west and 12 metres north-south – a width-to-height ratio of 1.167.



Fig. 3 Sundaland at the Last Glacial Maximum with modern distribution of land in darker shading. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sundaland>

Modern India’s width-to-height ratio is approximately 1.04. The petroglyph’s 1.167 does not match it – and this apparent discrepancy is, on inspection, the strongest evidence of all. The carvers were not mapping modern India. At 12,000 BCE, sea levels stood some 120 metres lower and the Sunda Shelf was exposed: the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java, and Borneo were joined to the Asian mainland as continuous land. The eastern edge of the reachable world lay far beyond today’s coastline, while the Himalayan north and the peninsular south were unchanged.

If the 1.167 ratio encodes the proportions of that known world, and the north-south extent was about 27.6 degrees of latitude, then the east-west extent is $1.167 \times 27.6 =$ about 32.2 degrees of longitude. Measured eastward from the Konkan coast (c. 68.7

TABLE 1. PROPORTIONAL CORRESPONDENCE: THREE SCENARIOS COMPARED

Scenario	Width/height ratio	Eastern boundary
Modern political India	1.04	c. 97°E (Bangladesh–Mizoram)
Full Sundaland to Borneo	c. 1.82	c. 118°E
Ratnagiri elephant petroglyph (corrected)	1.167	c. 100.9°E = Malay Peninsula
Known world at 12,000 BCE (Sunda Shelf exposed)	1.167	c. 100.9°E = natural eastern limit of continuous landmass

Ratnagiri petroglyph ratio matches the known world at 12,000 BCE, not modern India and not full Sundaland.

degrees E), this places the map’s eastern boundary at approximately 100.9 degrees E – the eastern shore of the Malay Peninsula, at the edge of the Gulf of Thailand. This was, at 12,000 BCE, the limit of the continuous landmass a coastal people could reach. The ratio corresponds neither to modern India (1.04) nor to the whole of Sundaland out to Borneo (c. 1.82), but precisely to the eastern shore of the known, walkable world. For a cartographic historian, this is the heart of the matter: a freehand outline carved into laterite, when measured and reverse-solved against the geography of the last Ice Age, returns the coastline of its own era.³

Inside the map: Species at geographically correct positions

A geographic map produced by a pre-literate tradition would not be expected to carry written place-names. It would be expected to carry the cognitive geography of its makers: the animals they knew, placed where those animals lived. The Ratnagiri elephant petroglyph carries precisely that record.

The interior of the elephant outline contains a series of smaller figures. Systematic examination of the aerial and ground photographs, combined with comparison against species distribution data for the late Pleistocene and early Holocene Indian subcontinent, reveals the following correspondences.

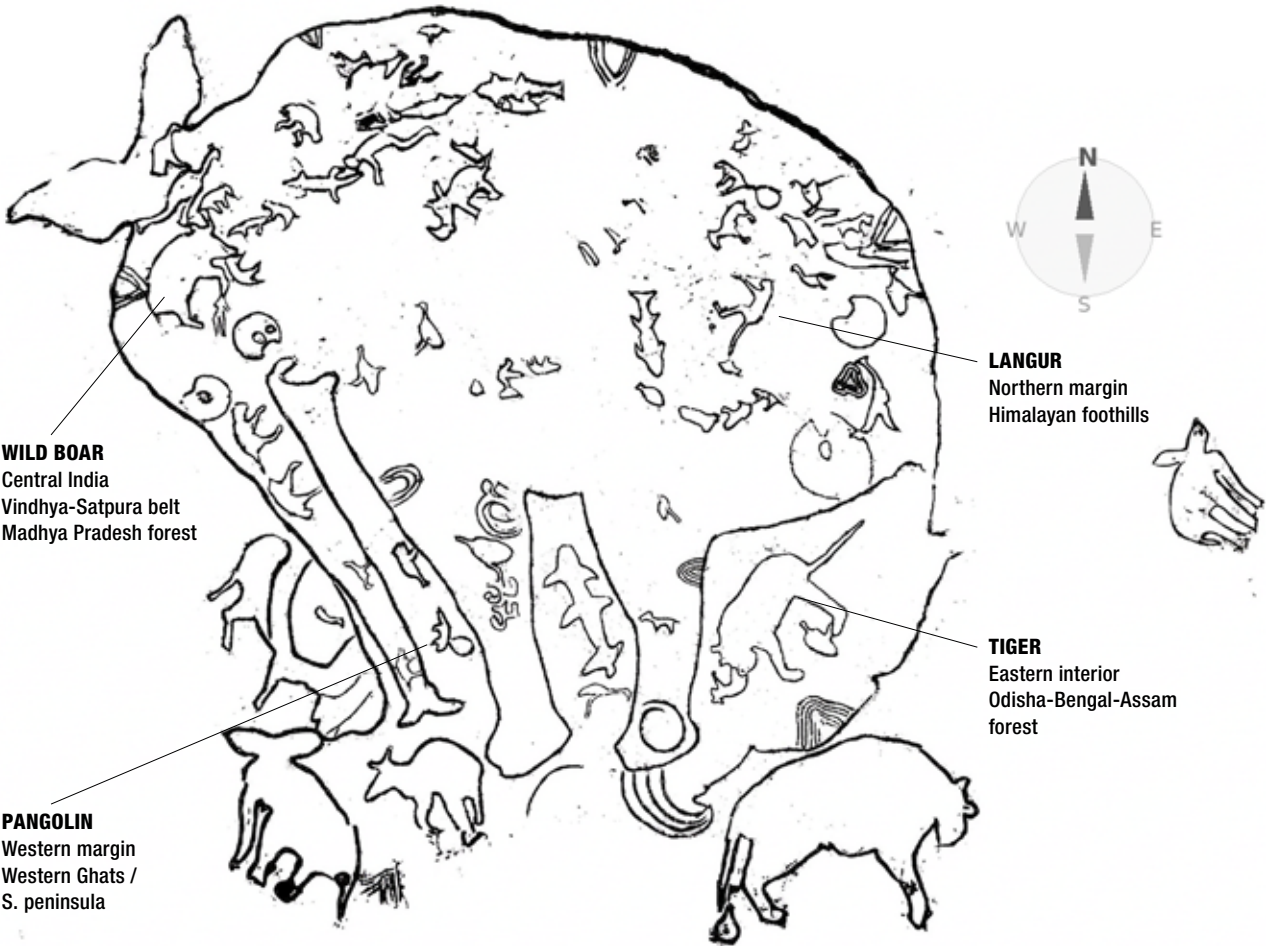


Fig. 4. Four species annotated: Boar (Madhya Pradesh), Langur (Himalayan region), Tiger (east India), Pangolin (south). Each animal is placed where that species actually lives.

TABLE 2. FAUNAL FIGURES WITHIN THE PETROGLYPH: SPECIES AND GEOGRAPHIC POSITIONS

Species	Position in petroglyph	Modern range / ecology	Geographic correspondence
Wild boar	Central-west interior	Vindhya–Satpura belt, Madhya Pradesh deciduous forest	Correct: boar absent from northwest arid zone; present in central forested belt
Langur	Northern margin	Himalayan foothills; sub-montane forest	Correct: species distribution tracks the Himalayan foothills precisely
Tiger	Eastern interior	Dense forest belt: Odisha, Bengal, Assam corridor	Correct: absent from west and south arid zones; placed in forested east
Pangolin	Southern margin	Southern peninsula, Western Ghats understorey	Correct: scale-bearing mammal; southward distribution matches peninsular India
Elephant	Whole-body form of petroglyph	Riverine and savanna corridors; post-glacial range covered most of India	The cartographer’s animal: the species that knew the subcontinent’s extent
Rhinoceros	Northern interior	Gangetic plain, Brahmaputra valley – now contracted north-east	Placed at Ganga–Yamuna doab: correct for Pleistocene–Holocene range

Species identifications from aerial photograph analysis and comparison with zoological reference imagery.

Six species, six geographic positions, six correct correspondences. The probability that six species would each be placed in their ecologically and geographically appropriate quadrant by chance absent of any cartographic intent – is low. A Monte Carlo test could formalise this: randomly redistribute the six species across the outline ten thousand times and calculate what fraction of random distributions match the real one in all six assignments. Preliminary estimation suggests fewer than one in a thousand.

The most analytically significant placement is the rhinoceros. The Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is today confined to small protected areas in Assam and Nepal. At 12,000 BCE its range extended across the Gangetic plain and into the western subcontinent. The petroglyph places a rhinoceros figure at a position corresponding to the Ganga–Yamuna doab – the precise centre of its

Pleistocene range. A maker without geographic intent who chose to include a rhinoceros would have no reason to position it there rather than anywhere else in the outline.

The orographic evidence: Seven mountain systems

Seven distinct ridge forms are visible within and along the borders of the elephant petroglyph outline and indicated by seven triangular or peaked forms. The forms vary in length, orientation, and position. When mapped against the principal mountain systems of the Indian subcontinent, the correspondences are systematic.

The mountain names that appear in Table 3 are not drawn from later Hindu literature for convenience – they are present in the earliest available textual strata. The *Mahābhārata*’s geographic cantos (the *Bhīṣma Parva* in particular) name Himavat as the great northern

TABLE 3. SEVEN RIDGE FORMS: PETROGLYPH IDENTIFICATIONS AND MODERN CORRESPONDENCES

ID	Petroglyph form	Modern range	Textual parallel
M1	Dominant ridge, north, the highest elevation Upper northern spine (elephant back arc)	Himalayas	<i>Mahābhārata</i> : Himavat; Purāṇic Uttara
M2	Secondary ridge, NW quadrant Upper north-west (elephant neck/shoulder)	Aravallis	Oldest folded range; <i>R̥gvedic</i> western horizon
M3	East–west ridge, central	Vindhya	<i>Rāmāyaṇa</i> boundary: divides Āryāvarta from Dakṣiṇāpatha
M4	Parallel ridge south of M3; Narmada River between M3 and M4	Satpuras	Narmada corridor confirmed by river placement
M5	Continuous spine, western margin M5 West flank, lower body	Western Ghats	Sahyādri in <i>Mahābhārata</i> ; rainfall shadow west face
M6	Discontinuous chain, eastern margin East flank, lower body	Eastern Ghats	Mahendra, Malaya in <i>Mahābhārata</i> ; coastal pass system
M7	Southern tip cluster, an exact terminus match (elephant leg convergence)	Nilgiris / Cardamom Hills	<i>Mahābhārata</i> ’s Malaya, an exact southern-tip match

range (Himalaya), identify the Sahyādri as the spine of the western coast, and place Malaya at the peninsula’s southern terminus – the same position as M7 in Table 3. In the Hindu epic *Kiṣkindhā Kāṇḍa* King Sugriva despatches his forces in the four cardinal directions and names the ranges they will cross: Vindhya, Sahya, Malaya. The *Vishnu Purana*, a sacred Hindu text dealing with cosmology and royal genealogy, names the seven mountain ranges (kulaparvatāḥ) of Bharatavarsha (land of India) and lists them in an order that corresponds to M1–M7 in the Table 3. These texts codified their geography

between the 4th century BCE and the early centuries CE. The Ratnagiri petroglyph precedes them by approximately ten millennia. The convergence is not transmission from the text to the carving; it runs the other direction. The texts preserve, in codified form, a geographic vocabulary whose visual expression was already ancient when the first Sanskrit syllable was written down.

The M7 identification is the most precisely testable. In the *Mahābhārata* the Malaya range is consistently placed at the southernmost tip of the peninsula. The petroglyph’s southern ridge cluster

occupies the position of the Nilgiris and Cardamom Hills – the exact match. If M7 were a decorative elaboration of the elephant’s southern leg, one would expect it at the lateral extremity of the limb, not at the precise southern terminus of the peninsula.

The Narmada River placement between M3 and M4 provides a second testable claim. It runs east – west between the Vindhya range to the north and the Satpura range to the south – one of the clearest geographic signatures of peninsular India. A river form between the two central parallel ridges, in a petroglyph of this scale, is not a coincidence of incision.

The elephant as cartographer: Corridors, savannah, and geographic memory

The identification of India’s landmass with an elephant is not unique to this carving. The Puranic geographic tradition – the body of Sanskrit cosmographic literature that crystallised in roughly the first millennium CE, but drew on much older material – describes Bharatavarsha as elephant-shaped (gaja-samsthana). This description is preserved in the *Vishnu Purana* and other texts, identified in Table 3.

The Ratnagiri carving predates these texts by approximately 10,000 years. Two possibilities present themselves: either the elephant-India metaphor was independently arrived at twice, separated by ten millennia, because the subcontinent’s shape genuinely resembles a large animal facing west (which it does, viewed from the relevant cognitive angle); or the Puranic texts preserve a cultural memory of geographic conceptualisation that originated in the Mesolithic, transmitted across hundreds of generations in oral and visual tradition before finally being codified in Sanskrit.

For a readership familiar with the long transmission histories of cartographic knowledge – with the way that coastal outlines, mountain names, and geographic orientations persist in maps long after their original context is forgotten – the second possibility will not seem far-fetched. Maps, and the geographic knowledge they encode, are among the most durable of human cultural products.

The site context is not incidental to the cartographic argument – it is part of it. The Ratnagiri corpus sits on laterite plateaus that in the early Holocene would have been surrounded by forest and savannah transition zones. The Konkan coast at 12,000 BCE was the edge of a continuous

western seaboard, with the Western Ghats rising immediately to the east. The plateau surface on which the petroglyph was incised commands views across the coastal plain to the sea – a horizon-line that its makers inhabited and navigated.

The elephant is the cartographer for a specific ecological reason. *Elephas maximus* at the post-glacial climatic optimum occupied a range covering most of the Indian subcontinent, following river corridors and the savannah belt that extended from the northwest to the northeast. The modern Wildlife Institute of India has documented 88 elephant corridors that trace this same east–west and north–south connectivity. A maker seeking an animal form whose body could encode the subcontinent would have found no better template: the elephant’s range, in the period of the petroglyph’s production, was the subcontinent’s range.

Why an elephant? Not because elephants are sacred – that is an interpretation projected backwards from later Hindu iconography – but because the elephant was the animal that knew the land. The carvers chose the body that mirrored the territory they were mapping.

The wider corpus: What the elephant map sits within

The cartographic claim for the elephant petroglyph is stronger, not weaker, when it is read within the full Ratnagiri corpus. A single anomalous figure could be coincidental. A single figure that emerges from a corpus containing multiple independent analytical registers is a different matter.

Forty of the petroglyphs documented in the Archaeological Survey of India were analysed in depth by the author.⁴ The analysis identified five independent registers across the corpus:

1. Astronomical encoding

There are two independent Pisces vernal equinox markers, independently placing the equinox observation at approximately 10,000 BCE by precession calculation; a 13–unit lunisolar count appears in four independent instances, consistent with a lunisolar calendar reconciliation record; and a probable nakshatra (a lunar mansion in Hindu and Buddhist astrology) observation register predating the Vedic textual record.

2. Cosmographic modelling

The Rundhe Tali petroglyph constitutes the earliest

known mandala or yantra structure in the archaeological record – a concentric multi-register cosmographic design predating comparable forms in any other tradition by several millennia.

3. Proto-notation

Systematic tally marks, consistent groupings, and probable early writing precursors across multiple panels. The notation corpus cannot currently be decoded but exhibits structural regularities inconsistent with decoration.

4. Iconographic continuity

The Aaragaon site contains the earliest known Pashupati or axis-figure iconography – a figure seated in a posture consistent with later Indus Valley and post-Vedic representations, surrounded by animals in the ‘Master of Animals’⁵ compositional grammar. The trishula form appears independently at Ratnagiri approximately eight millennia before its classical attestation.

5. Daily life and portraiture

Multiple panels record hunting scenes, domesticated animal interactions, and human figures of sufficient detail to constitute portraiture at the individual level.

The elephant petroglyph is the cartographic register of a corpus that is simultaneously astronomical, cosmographic, notational, iconographic, and documentary. Each register is independent. The cartographic argument does not depend on the astronomical argument being valid, and vice versa. The independence of the five registers from one another, and their convergence on the same site, makes coincidence progressively harder to sustain.

Contextualising the claim: Known early maps

The existing record of early cartographic representation provides three comparators relevant to the Ratnagiri claim:

1. Çatalhöyük wall painting, Anatolia (c. 6,200 BCE)

This wall painting is the most commonly cited candidate for the world’s oldest map. A wall painting at Çatalhöyük, Turkey, has been interpreted as a plan-view of the settlement with a volcanic eruption behind it.⁶ The interpretation remains contested: some scholars read it as a leopard-skin pattern rather

than a settlement map.⁷ Even granting the cartographic interpretation, the Çatalhöyük painting is approximately 6,200 years old. The Ratnagiri petroglyph predates it by approximately six millennia.

2. Bedolina map, Val Camonica, northern Italy (c. 3,000–1,000 BCE)

A rock engraving depicting field systems, paths, and settlements. Widely accepted as cartographic intent. Substantially later than Ratnagiri on any dating estimate.



Fig. 5 Bedolina map detail. R.1, Parco di Seradina e Bedolina. Capo di Ponte, Italy. Luca Giarelli. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Composizione_geometrica_chiamata_mappa_di_Bedolina

3. Ptolemy’s Geography (c. 150 CE)

Ptolemy’s Geography is the classical benchmark for systematic geographic representation. The Ratnagiri petroglyph predates Ptolemy by approximately twelve millennia.

The Ratnagiri petroglyph does not merely predate these examples by six millennia. It makes a categorically different kind of claim. The Çatalhöyük painting, if it is a map, depicts a settlement and its immediate surroundings – a local, bounded representation. The Bedolina engraving depicts field systems. These are maps of the known near. The Ratnagiri petroglyph, if the five-line argument holds, encodes a subcontinent as a known world – a

representation of geographic extent at a scale no other candidate in the prehistoric record approaches. It is not only older. It is operating at a different order of geographic cognition entirely.

Conservation

If the cartographic claim survives peer scrutiny, the Ratnagiri corpus becomes the most significant archaeological site for the history of human geographic knowledge in the world.

The laterite plateau corpus sits on land without formal archaeological protection status under the Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (1958) as of the time of writing. Seasonal farming activity, laterite quarrying operations in adjacent areas, and unregulated visitor access following the 2018 ASI publication have placed the corpus at risk. The largest panel – the elephant – has no physical barrier, no signage, and no active monitoring.

The present author has contacted the Bradshaw Foundation for inclusion in their global rock art database. A submission to Rock Art Research (IFRAO) has been made. These are first steps. The Ratnagiri petroglyphs are at risk and require the attention of rock art and international cartographic history communities.

Photogrammetric 3D documentation of the elephant petroglyph before the next monsoon is urgent. Each monsoon season deposits sediment and removes surface material from the incised lines. The proportional measurement that drives the cartographic argument was derived from existing documentation – a new monsoon without documentation is data lost permanently.

Further needs are a formal zoological species identification of the internal faunal figures; cartographic overlay analysis comparing the composition’s internal proportions with known geographic and faunal distribution data for the subcontinent at 12,000 BCE; and archaeoastronomical dating of the astronomical exhibits in the wider corpus, which could date specific carvings to within a century of their creation using precession-corrected star mapping software.

The surface is eroding. The study is overdue. The international cartographic community is, arguably, well placed to provide the impetus for formal study – because the claim this carving makes is not a claim about Indian history alone. It is a claim about the history of human geographic cognition. And that belongs to everyone.

Notes

- 1 OSL and IRSL Optically/Infrared Stimulated Luminescence dating is a technique which determines when sediment grains were last exposed to sunlight.
- 2 Designated Exhibit 40 in the GemsOfINDOLOGY corpus documentation. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20646185>.
- 3 K. Lambeck, et al., ‘Sea level and global ice volumes from the Last Glacial Maximum to the Holocene’, *PNAS* 111 (43), 2014, 15296–15303.
- 4 <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20516459>, June 2026.
- 5 Ancient motif depicting a human figure or deity symmetrically grasping two animals.
- 6 J. Mellaart, ‘Excavations at Çatal Hüyük, 1963: third preliminary report. *Anatolian Studies* 14: pp. 39–119.
- 7 S. Meece, ‘A Bird’s-eye View – of a Leopard’s Spots’. The Çatalhöyük “map” and the development of cartographic representation in prehistory’, *Anatolian Studies*, vol. 56, 2006, pp. 1–16.

References and further reading

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IN THE NAME OF TRADE

Daniel Defoe maps a route through Africa's interior in 1720

Ljiljana Ortolja-Baird

In 1720, a year after the run-away success of *Robinson Crusoe*, Daniel Defoe (1660–1731), published *The Life, Adventures, and Pyracies, of the Famous Captain Singleton* (Fig. 2). In this adventure-travel novel he dispatched his new hero, Bob Singleton, on a hitherto, never-made journey across the African interior, from Quiloa on the coast of Mozambique to an unnamed Dutch factory on the Gold Coast. Singleton was a slave on a Portuguese galleon who, with twenty-six fellow mutineers, was abandoned off the west coast of Madagascar. Without a vessel suitable to take them to the Cape of Good Hope, from where they might find a passage back to Europe, they heroically chose to traverse the great unknown continent. Equipped with a 'map of the world', 'a small brass pocket compass' and forestaff, the party navigated their way across Africa's heartland.

At the time of writing *Captain Singleton*, the seaboard of Africa had been well charted by the Portuguese. Printed and manuscript maps and charts served the English boats that plied the lucrative three-way trade route in human cargo from Guinea to the plantations of the West Indies and Virginia and back to furnish the home tables with sugar, tobacco and other luxuries.

With the commercial promise offered by America and the West Indies, the plentiful supply of slaves negotiated from the seaboard and with the decline of gold supplies from Africa, there were few incentives to penetrate inland. Overseas exploration generally in the first decades of the eighteenth century was in a lull; the zeal of the Elizabethan Age for new discoveries would not resurface until later in the century with the voyages of George Anson and James Cook.

In contrast, travel publishing was buoyant and map publishing 'was at one of its most prolific periods'.¹ Voyage accounts were plentiful and enjoyed by eighteenth-century readers. Augmenting library shelves, were translations, of which 'there was no end' and 'native accounts of actual voyages poured from the press in prodigious in quantities'.² As a genre, it was second in popularity to theology. The Earl of Shaftesbury was not alone in his opinion when commenting on its appeal in 1710: [they] 'are the chief materials to furnish out a library'.³

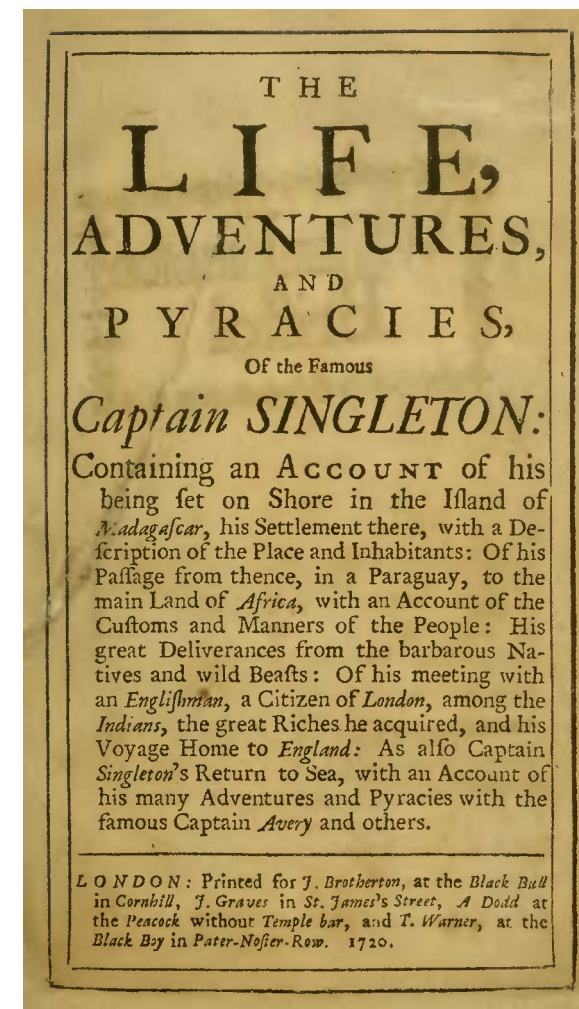


Fig. 1 Michael Van der Gucht, Portrait of Daniel Defoe (1663–1731). M0012948. Public Domain Mark. Wellcome Collection. <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/xjy8tk7x>

Fig. 2 Title page of *Captain Singleton* from the 1720 edition, printed for publishers/ booksellers J. Brotherton, J. Graves, A. Dodd and T. Warner. <https://dn760005.eu.archive.org/0/items/lifeadventurespy00defo/lifeadventurespy00defo.pdf>

Despite this active market, there was little first-hand information about the African interior. It was in exploratory neglect and new geographical texts and maps were largely reformulations of Ptolemy's Geographia. Mapmakers continued to fill in unknown areas with descriptive annotations, decorative cartouches, illustrations of mountain ranges and rivers, and other circumstantial material. Describing Africa then, R.V. Tooley wrote: 'The wealth of Africa lay dormant in the ground and her geography languished'.⁴

Defoe recognised Africa's potential wealth and tried to demonstrate that there were no Pillars of Hercules preventing entry into its heartland. Journalist, spy and agent, Dissenter and passionate proponent of global trade, Defoe used Captain Singleton's march across the continent as a dramatisation of his ideas on the imperatives of trade with Africa to England's advantage.

What was known of the interior in 1720?

Public consciousness of Africa at the time of *Captain Singleton* was sluggish and interest concentrated mainly on the west coast. Formal English presence had been established in 1672 with the Royal African Company but penetration of western Africa was limited to just a few miles inland from the coast. Trade was negotiated by African merchants on board visiting vessels, or at the European factories and settlements on the coast. African traders were anxious to keep secret their inland trading routes and the locations of gold mines. Richard Miles, twice governor of the Cape Coast Castle, who 'spoke the language of the local Fante people perfectly told the 1790 enquiry into the slave trade that, except once when he went twenty miles inland he had never been more than five miles from the sea'.⁵ Describing what was known of the African interior, official geographer to Louis XIV, Nicholas De Fer (1646–1720) wrote:

the inward Parts of Africa have been very slowly penetrated; the Ancients knew but a small part of them. Most believ'd the Countries under the Torrid Zone, were uninhabitable for their great Heat. But tho' our knowledge does not yet reach very far within Africa, we know however, that it is inhabited, and even that it has several plentiful Countries.⁶

In the absence of fact, the unknown was fictionalised, even mythologised as in the legends

of the fantastic lands of Prester John and the kingdoms of Kongo and Monomatapi. Maps revealed imaginary mountain ranges and rivers flowing from paradisiacal inland lakes, reflecting a cartographic tradition more akin to the medieval imagination. They also depicted a landmass populated by elephants, lions and 'other wild and cruel Beasts'. The monopeds, Cyclopes, sirens and troglodytes described by Pliny and Solinus were in retreat, but had not disappeared entirely. In the absence of new facts, Africa's interior continued to inspire imaginative conjecture. Defoe was writing within an intellectual environment in which fact and fiction were comfortable bedfellows.

Sources available to Defoe

General geographies were numerous with three times as many containing information on Africa as in the preceding century.⁸ Barbara McCorkle identified thirty-six published between 1700 and 1720.⁹ The most comprehensive account of Africa available to Defoe was John Ogilby's *Africa Being an Accurate Description of...* (1670), a translation of Olfert Dapper's *Naukeurige Beshryvinge der Afrikaensche gewesten*, (1668), a compilation of information of 'ancient and modern' writers, organised into categories of topography, customs and manners, trade, governance, trade, 'plants, beasts, and Serpents'.¹⁰

In addition, there were published accounts of past explorations Defoe could draw on: Fillippo Pigafetta's, *A Report of the Kingdom of Congo, and of the Surrounding Countries, Drawn Out of the Writings and Discourses of the Portuguese, Duarte Lopez* (1591) and Jan Huygen van Linschoten's *Discours of Voyages unto ye East and West Indies* (1598), both which appear in Richard Hakluyt's collection of *Voyages*. J. Richard Jobson described his 1629 expedition along the River Gambia in *The Golden Trade or a Discovery of the River Gamba and the Golden Trade of the Aethiopians* (1623). Samuel Purchas added to his collection of travel stories *Purchas his Pilgrimes: A Curious and Exact Account of a Voyage to Congo in the Years 1666, and 1667* by Capuchin missionaries, Fathers Michel Angelo of Gattina and Denis de Carli of Piacenza, *A Voyage to Congo and Several other Countries. Chiefly in Southern-Africk* by Father Girolamo Merolla da Sorrento, and *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell*, a prisoner of the Portuguese in Angola.

These accounts were written a century and more before *Captain Singleton* was published, and with no new information available, authors of voyage literature

and geographies recycled old material, adding 'latest' and 'newest' to their title pages to convince readers otherwise. Contemporary geographer and editor of *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels*, John Green (d. 1757) described the state of voyage literature and geographies as: 'vamp'd-up descriptions of nothing but what has been described before with a few incredible stories to amuse the people'.¹¹

Maps available to Defoe

The mapping of Africa at the latter part of the seventeenth century and during the first decades of the eighteenth century was in transition, reflecting a reluctance to let go of the past. While the African coastline had been accurately mapped and improved by constant traffic, the truth of Africa's interior geography was largely unknown. It is not surprising

that the four lines – 'So Geographers in *Afric*- Maps / With Savage-Pictures fill their gaps; / And o'er uninhabitable Downs / Place Elephants for want of Towns' – snatched from Jonathan Swift's long poem *On Poetry: A Rhapsody*, were appropriated as a summation of mapmaking in the seventeenth century.¹²

Anna Seile's 1663 map of Africa closely shadows Blaeu's 'Africae Nova Descriptio', (1630) (**Figs. 3 & 4**). Though less decorative than Blaeu's, Seile's map is similarly busy, dense with typonyms, lakes, rivers and mountain ranges. Animals roam the map's emptier areas and discursive designations identify locations of goldmines and settlements. Both maps follow Ptolemy's lakes-and-mountains layout with the Nile issuing from the Mountains of the Moon. Seile's 1663 map signals a continent explored and known.



Fig. 3 Joan Blaeu, Detail of 'Africae nova descriptio' 1665. 41 x 56 cm. This map was first printed in 1630 and appeared in his second volume of *Le Théâtre du monde ou Nouvel Atlas*. Courtesy David Rumsey Map Collection. <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~282835~90054342:Africae-nova-descriptio#>



Fig. 4 (opposite top) Anna Seile, Detail of 'Africae Nova Descriptio', 1663 in Peter Heylyn's 1667 edition of *Cosmographie in four books: containing the chorographie and historie of the whole world, and all the principall kingdomes, provinces, seas and isles thereof*. Image permitted by Afriterrra Foundation, www.afriterrra.org

Fig. 5 (opposite bottom) Anna Seile, Detail of 'Africa', 1703. Image permitted by Afriterrra Foundation, www.afriterrra.org

Fig. 6 (above) Guillaume Delisle, Detail of 'L'Afrique dressée sur les observations de l'Academie Royale des Sciences, et quelques autres, et sur les memoires les plus recens', Paris, 1700. UTA Libraries Special Collections, Gift of Dr. Jack Franke. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Delisle_L%27Afrique_1700_UTA.jpg

By contrast her 1703 map of the continent is stripped of illustrations and annotations, acknowledging the limited European understanding of the continent (Fig. 5). Her map expresses an enlightened aesthetic but she had yet to fully embrace the emerging discourse on Africa's hydrology that is circulating among geographers and mapmakers at the time. She marks the Nile's source at Tzana in Abyssinia but retains Lakes Zafflan and Zaire and the Mountains of the Moon.

Guillaume Delisle's landmark map of 1700 reflects the shift in the mapping of the continent.

Enlightenment ideas were bearing pressure to remove the 'fictitious' ¹³ (Fig. 6). He rejected two persistent features of contemporary understanding of Africa: that Lakes Zafflan and Zaire / Zembra and the Mountains of the Moon were the source of the Nile. Delisle has left that area noticeably empty with the Nile issuing from Lake Dembea in Abyssinia. Where information was doubtful, areas were left blank or marked 'unknown'.

John Senex on his 1725 map of Africa dispenses with the Ptolemaic lake-mountain system, though somewhat hesitantly (Fig. 7). An annotation beside the outline of a lake where Lake Zafflan would be found expresses his uncertainty – 'This great lake is placed here by report of Negros' – placing responsibility for the accuracy of the information on Indigenous knowledge. Similarly, a note about Lake Zambra (not depicted), obtained from 'Negros', concludes with 'but this is uncertain'. His disquiet in abandoning the established thinking is evident in the references to 'Anthrophages or man-eaters' in the area of the Ptolemaic lakes.

Ptolemy's two-lake system on an east-west axis was challenged as early as 1591 with the publication of the Filippo Pigafetta map based on the travel accounts of

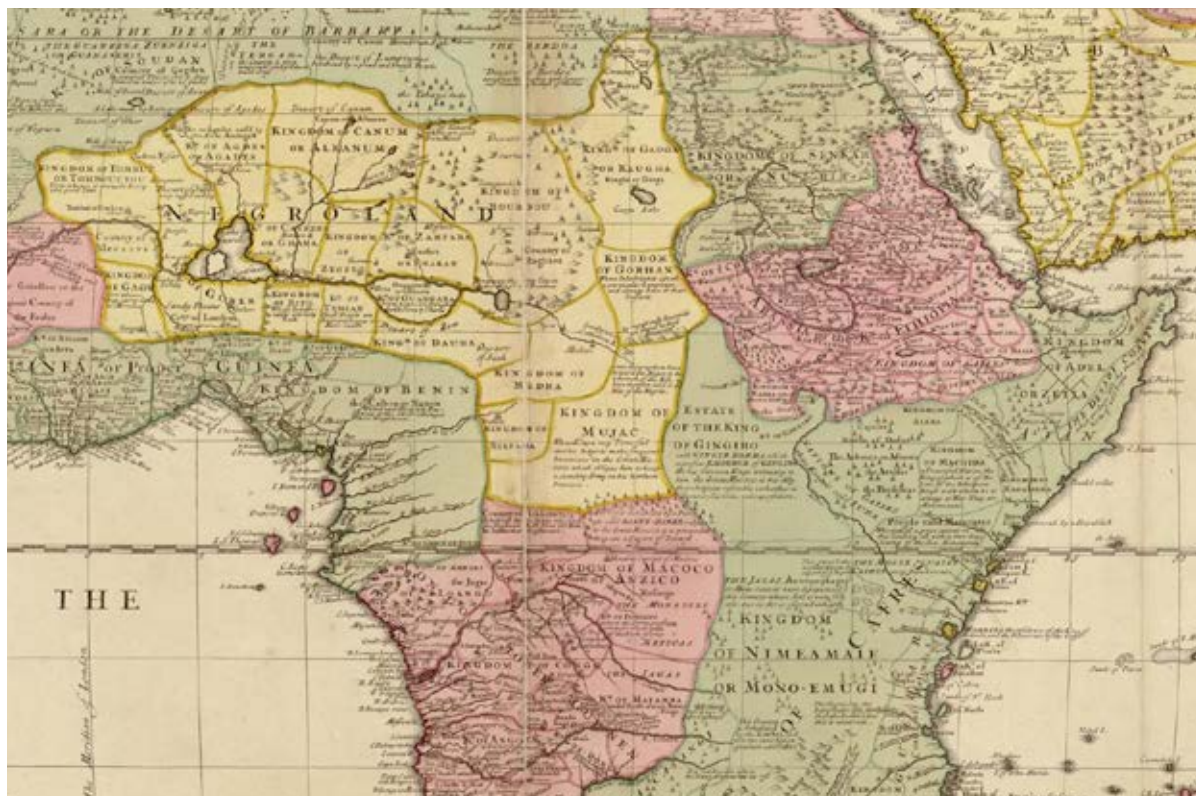


Fig. 7 John Senex, Detail of 'Africa: corrected from the observations of the Royal Society at London and Paris'. London: 1740, [first published 1725]. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <www.loc.gov/item/2005625330/>

Portuguese explorer Duarte Lopes between 1578 and 1584 (**Fig. 8**). Pigafetta rejected the Ptolemaic claim that the Mountains of the Moon were the source of the Nile as he rejected the Nile as flowing north from two parallel lakes in the centre of Africa. Pigafetta's map reveals two lakes in central Africa on a north-south axis. The lower lake feeds the Rio de Manhic e Zambezi and the Lorenzo Marches (Limpopo), and the northern one feeds the Nile, with a river connecting the two lakes. Also, the northern lake is placed above the Equator. Pigafetta located another lake to the west as a source for the Congo. According to Francesc Relaño this view of the interior 'made little impression' on contemporary cartographers who, he argues, 'remained firmly wedded to the the Alexandrian principle of two large central lakes at the heart of Africa'.¹⁴

Late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century mapmakers nervously challenged the two-lake theory. Vincenzo Coronelli charily screened out the lakes with a cartouche (**see front cover**). The lower half of Lake Zaire is left just visible as if Coronelli was not

completely certain of relinquishing Ptolemy's authority. In the cartouche, he pays homage to Hiob Ludolf whose map of Abyssinia in *Historia Aethiopia* of 1681 helped to disprove Ptolemy's view that the Nile began in the Mountains of the Moon.

Herman Moll, in his 1710 map of Africa, compromises – he retains the lakes, but turns them into bogs and morasses and disassociates them from the Nile, which he depicts as rising on Lake Tzana in Abyssinia (**Fig. 9**). John Senex removed the lakes from his 1711 map of Africa but reinstated them in his 1721 map dedicated to the Marquis of Annandale. He deleted them a year later in his map for Gordon's *Geography Anatomized*. And to truly confuse the eighteenth-century reader, the world map included in same book features Ptolemy's two-central-lakes model!

At the time writing *Captain Singleton* three interrelated models in European mapping of Africa

Fig. 8 Filippo Pigafetta, 'Africa', 1591. Image permitted by Afriterrra Foundation, www.afriterrra.org



Fig. 8 Filippo Pigafetta, 'Africa', 1591. Image permitted by Afriterrra Foundation, www.afriterrra.org

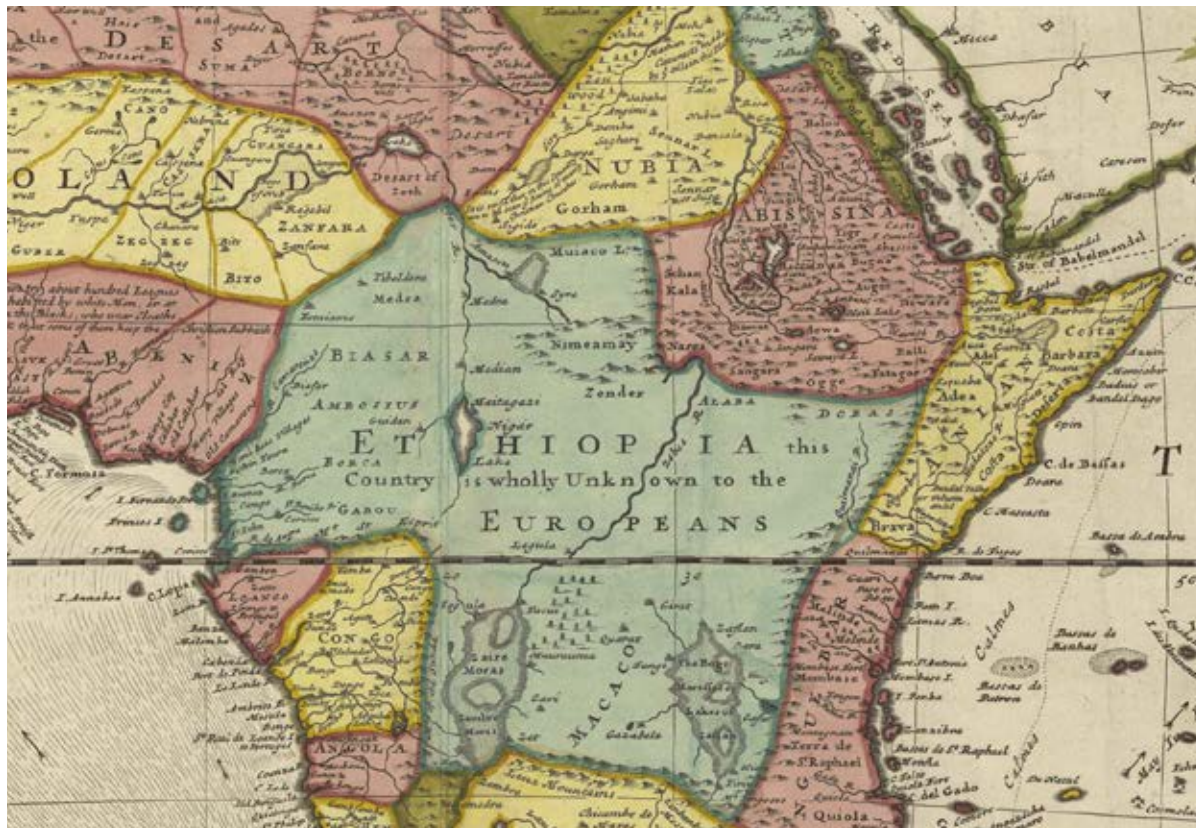


Fig. 9 Herman Moll, Detail of 'Africa According to the Newest and most exact Observations' (1710), dedicated to Charles Earl of Peterborough (Peterborough). 56 x 94 cm. Princeton Historic Map Collection. https://static-prod.lib.princeton.edu/visual_materials/maps/websites

co-existed – 'the Hondius-Blaeu delineation, the ethnographically influenced depiction associated with Delisle and the emergence of the blank space model'.¹⁵

With this range of options, Defoe could pick and choose. Despite featuring a world map with a lakeless Africa and the source of the Nile in an unnamed lake at approximately 12 degrees north of the Equator in the map accompanying *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719) (Fig. 10), a year later he sent Captain Singleton and his party across a Ptolemaic Africa. With no one truth to adhere to, he could map Africa to suit his intention.

Contributing to the instability of maps of Africa in the first half of the eighteenth century were commercial considerations. Many publishers and printers were reluctant to commit to the expense of engraving new plates, and out-of-date maps and books circulated in abundance. *The English Pilot, The Fifth Book Africa* was first published in 1701, with some charts pre-dating that publication date. It continued largely unchanged through multiple printings until its final printing in 1792.¹⁶

Additionally, bringing new travel accounts into print was a slow process. Jean Barbot's *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea*, describing the two voyages he made to Guinea between 1678 and 1682, was not available until 1732, when it appeared in A. and J. Churchill's *Collection of Voyages and Travels*, Vol. 5. The 'new' material was more than fifty years old before it reached the English reader.

Semblance of authenticity

Though Defoe never set foot in Africa, his description of it in *Captain Singleton* achieved such a semblance of authenticity that readers were persuaded that the mutineer's journey did in fact take place. In 1863 Dr D. G. Birdwood presented a paper before the Royal Geographical Society – 'A recent discovery in eastern Africa and the adventures of Captain Singleton' – in which he claimed that Defoe's insights to those regions had been remarkable.¹⁷ A year later, geographer James MacQueen, commenting on what would have been the first European account of a successful trek across Africa's heartland, claimed that

the author must 'have written it with some knowledge of this portion of the country'.¹⁸ In 1849 Charles Lamb observed with enthusiasm on what he perceived as Defoe's geographical prescience:

'I have traced this route on the map of Africa, in Wyld's great Atlas of 1849; and where I find the map *carte blanche* for more than a thousand miles, Defoe's Captain Singleton, of 1729 has guided me along the shores of mighty lakes... through dreary deserts, and across primeval mountains... This knowledge of the interior of Africa appears more amazing since the recent researches of Livingstone, Baker, Grant, and other explorers, have confirmed what our author has so long before stated.'¹⁹

Defoe's vanity would have been fanned by Lamb's praise. He described himself as a 'master of geography'²⁰ able to articulate on 'the most distant countries with inimitable Exactness'.²¹ His geographic knowledge was not confined to supporting only his novels. He provided text for geographies and atlases. Robert Harley, Lord High Treasurer and Queen Anne's chief minister, called on him to provide geographical information as it related to trade. In 1719 he was contracted by William Taylor, publisher of *Robinson Crusoe*, to write the text for *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis*. It was a lavish new folio edition atlas which sold for £3.18, with pre-sales to 435

subscribers.²¹ It included fifty-four new charts, drawn to the 'new globular projection' by Herman Moll. Astronomer Royal, Edmund Halley provided the preface, revised the charts and certified the whole work. Defoe wrote the text – 631 pages – which covers the history, geography and commerce of the four quarters of the world. Together with Moll and Halley, who had become 'Great Britain's most celebrated geographer and mapmaker of the first half of the eighteenth century', Defoe was in very respectable geographic company.²²

So convincing was Defoe's description of Africa's interior, that writers, William Minto and George Saintsbury, believed that he was in receipt of notes of an actual journey made by an unknown Portuguese adventurer,²³ or that he had received information from an English trader in Guinea. An account of the latter, describing how the trader was found by an Englishman and a party of Portuguese who had made an overland crossing, is included in *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis*.²⁴

Singleton's itinerary finds an intriguing parallel in an expedition undertaken by Francisco José Maria de Lacerda e Almeida in 1797. The Portuguese never abandoned the idea of a 'viagem à contracosta'. A seasoned explorer, Lacerda proposed, in a detailed memorandum to D. Roderigo de Sousa Coutinho (State Secretary for Naval Affairs and Overseas Dominions), his intention to establish a 'land-transit between The Eastern and the Western Coasts of Africa', beginning at Mozambique and ending in Angola (Fig. 11).²⁵ His endeavour, viewed as the first scientific expedition of Central Africa, was generously supported by Queen Maria I. Unlike Singleton, Lacerda did not achieve his ambition, he died some 1,300 km into the journey.

Singleton's route

With no accompanying map showing Captain Singleton's journey, establishing his route is tricky. The novel is poor in detail and Defoe is parsimonious with identifiable toponyms. Angola, Congo, Guinea, the Gold Coast; the rivers Nile, Rio Grande, Niger and Quiloa are mentioned. The rest of the journey is identified with a few latitude readings, descriptions of geographical features and by the number of days travelled.

On arriving on the African mainland from Madagascar, Singleton recorded the party's geographical reading as '12 degrees 35 minutes south of the line'.²⁶ On their map, they drew a straight line to the west coast of Angola, rejecting an alternative north-west route to the river Niger and the coast of

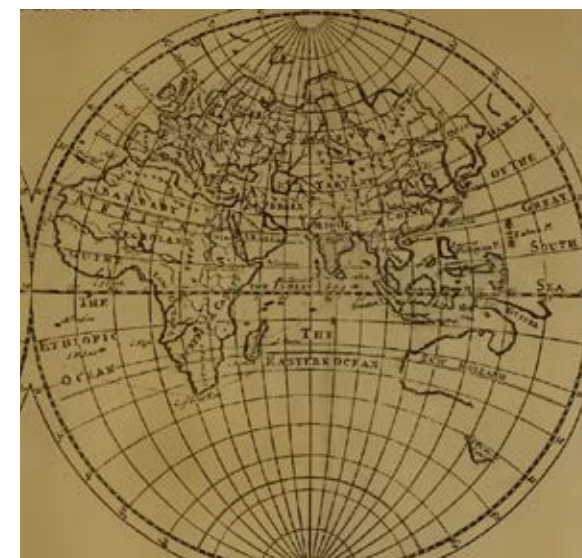


Fig. 10 Eastern hemisphere of the double hemisphere World map that accompanied *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), printed for bookseller W.Taylor. <https://archive.org/details/fartheradventure00defo/page/n9/mode/2up>

which to influence eighteenth-century views of Africa.³⁵

Defoe’s hero, Bob Singleton described himself as of the ‘meaner sort’. He represented the swarms of poor and dispossessed that crowded Britain’s cities who Defoe was anxious to see in gainful employment. He believed such people had raw energy and native wit to deal with obstacles and hardships of settlement. If Singleton and his group could complete the 2000-mile journey without any deaths and additionally, pick up en route enough gold and ivory to ensure the future well-being of all twenty-seven members, then Africa offered hope for the labouring people who depended on their hands, such as weavers, butchers, carpenters, shoe-makers, etc. including apprentices, servants of all sorts, with vagabonds, loiterers and unaccountable people.³⁶

To this end, Defoe, not wishing to alarm potential interest, constructed an Africa tempered by a modern outlook, its savagery tamed by rational enterprise, ingenuity and the courage of an Englishman. It was an Africa in which Indigenous people were, for the most part compliant, their nakedness providing a new outlet for Britain’s ailing wool industry; the landscape never so overwhelming, or the climate so unbearable or the beasts so ferocious to cause loss of life. And to this picture of a rational, sanitised and manageable continent, Defoe added the allure of riches.

There is not a river but runs gold, not a desert but, without ploughing, bears a crop of ivory. What mines of gold, what immense stores of gold those mountains may contain, from whence these rivers come ... we know not, but may imagine that they must be inconceivably rich, seeing so much is washed down the stream by the water washing the sides of the land that the quantity suffices all the traders which the European world send thither.³⁷

This was Defoe’s call for the settlement of Africa which, in his view, translated into wealth for Britain. He held firm to this opinion and nine years later made a plea for the colonisation of Africa.

In attempting to make credible Singleton’s route across the African continent, Defoe was advantaged on all fronts: much of what was known was conjecture; he was working in culture in which the boundaries between fact and fiction were permeable and the demand of Enlightenment science for

empirical observation was only slowly bearing influence on authors and publishers of popular geography; literacy was expanding across society and the demand for travel literature in book and magazine format was growing and publishers were eager to capitalise on that demand. Furthermore, *Robinson Crusoe* had reached readers across the social spectrum. Defoe was therefore well-positioned to convince readers of the credibility of Singleton’s journey and to demonstrate that Africa’s interior was not impenetrable but rather a land of opportunity. In Harleian rhetoric, *The Life, Adventures, and Pyracies, of the Famous Captain Singleton* was ‘a purposeful fiction’ designed to influence political economy.³⁸

Notes

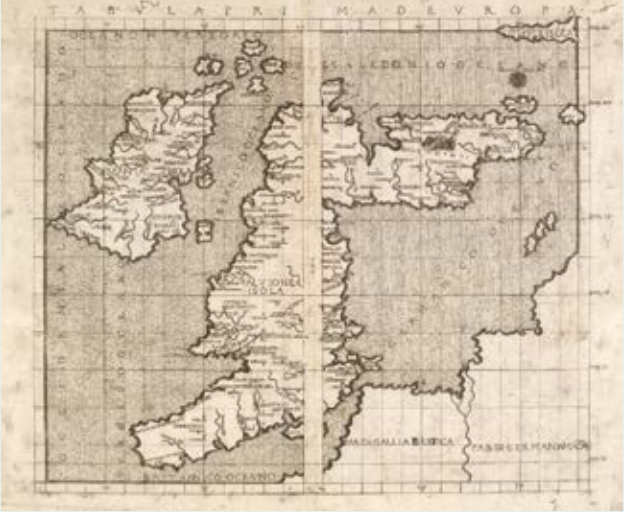
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Claudius Ptolemy – Francesco Berlinghieri. Untitled map of the British Isles published in ‘Geographia di Francesco Berlinghieri Fiorentino in terza rima...’. Florence 1482.

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A query concerning a 1575 Latin edition of Ortelius' map of Europe

Dear Ljiljana,

I am writing as a private collector based in Romania, in the hope that fellow members may be able to assist with an identification I have been unable to complete through institutional channels alone.

I am in possession of a single leaf from Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*: the Europe plate (Europae, Van den Broecke, Ort. 4). Using Van den Broecke's catalogue and orteliushmaps.com, I have identified it with reasonable confidence as belonging to the 1575 Latin edition (1575L5, state 4.2), printed in Antwerp by Aegidius Radeus, on the basis of five converging criteria: the toponym 'C. de S. Tincente' in southwestern Spain; upright Roman capitals for AFRICAE on the lower margin; a small page number '5' on the verso (7 mm, consistent with 1575L rather than the 11 mm of 1574L); the verso text reading *inscribitur: 'De Regimine iter agentium'*. (with colon, in cursive); and plate dimensions of 342 × 466 mm. The leaf is on laid paper bearing a Flèches Croisées watermark, with original hand-colouring and conservation backing in Japanese tissue. The 1575 Latin edition, printed by Aegidius Radeus, is among the rarest of the *Theatrum* sequence, with a documented print run of approximately 100 copies – a figure that goes some way to explaining the absence of a complete digitised exemplar in any public repository I have been able to identify.

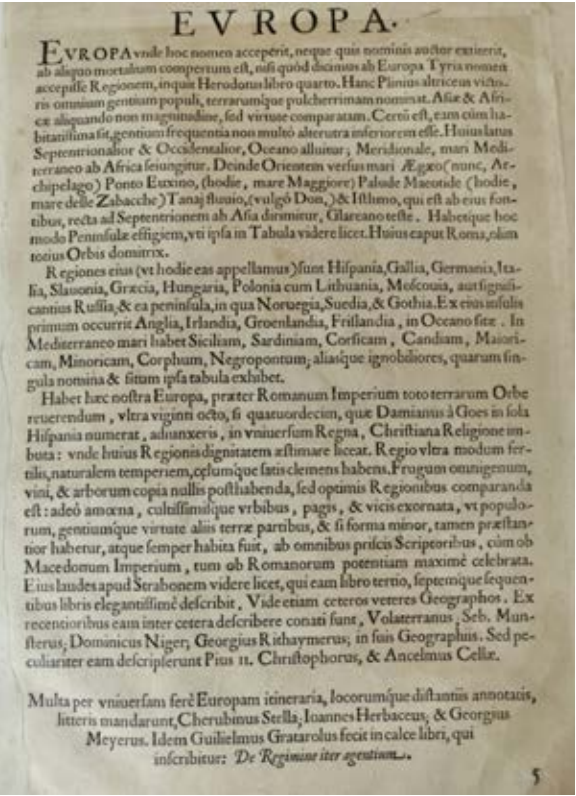
Two institutions have offered partial corroboration. The Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel (shelfmark Cb gr.-2° 91) confirmed that one of their copies, dated 1572, bears the identical Flèches Croisées watermark. Christ Church, Oxford – whose own 1575 *Theatrum* was recently conserved – confirmed that their Europae plate agrees with mine on every comparable point, though their copy's watermark and page number could not be verified owing to past damage and repair.

Fig. 1 Abraham Ortelius, 'Europae', 1575 in *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*. Author's collection.



Fig. 2 Detail showing the intersecting arrows watermark (Flèches Croisées).

Fig. 3 (above right) Description of Europe on the verso of the map.



What I have not been able to locate is a digitised exemplar of the 1575 Latin edition – or specifically of its Europe plate – that would allow direct visual comparison. I have searched the principal online repositories without success, and neither of the institutions above was able to provide images suitable for plate-state comparison.

I would therefore be most grateful if any member could point me towards a digitised 1575L exemplar, or towards a collection where the Europe plate from this edition might be consulted directly. High-resolution images and comprehensive macro-photographs of the plate characteristics, watermark, and verso typography are readily available for any member who might find them useful for comparison or for their own records.

With thanks and kind regards,

Dan Nicolaescu

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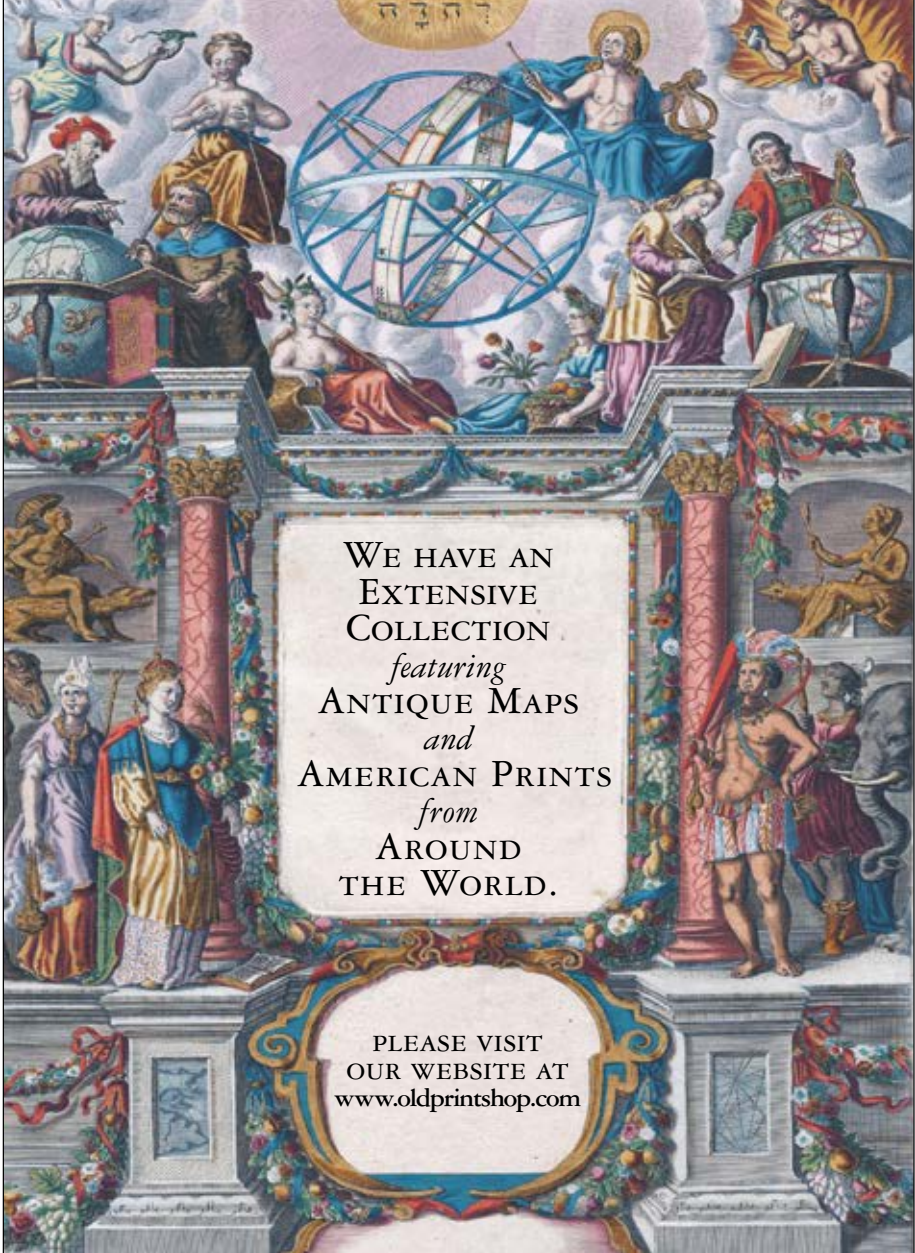
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IMCoS MATTERS

IMCoS/Helen Wallis Award

In the June issue of the journal we announced the winner of the 2026 IMCoS/Helen Wallis award. The presentation was made to David Rumsey on the 20

June at the Rumsey Map Centre at Stanford by Wes Brown, IMCoS International Chair. The award citation was prepared by Peter Barber and can be read in the last issue of the journal.



Wes Brown presenting the IMCoS/Helen Wallis award to David Rumsey, the 2026 winner. The silver salver is engraved with the names of all past winners. Photo: Tom Paper.

Nominations for the IMCoS/Helen Wallis Award, 2027

The IMCoS/Helen Wallis Award goes to an individual who in the opinion of the selection sub-committee has been responsible for cartographic contributions of great merit and wide interest to map collectors worldwide. You can nominate a collector, dealer, librarian, independent researcher or academic. Though the award is intended to recognise individual merit, in special circumstances a group of people or an organisation could be considered. The nominee should demonstrate their enthusiasm by actively

promoting the history of cartography, be that through study, publications, assistance to other categories (for example as benefactors) or in the field of organising societies, visits, symposia, exhibitions, talks, internet activities or the like. Past winners can be viewed on the IMCoS website (www.imcos.org). Please send your nominations to the Chairman of the Committee Peter Barber (peter_barber@me.com) or the Editor (ljljana.editor@gmail.com) by no later than 15 February 2027.

New Chair for IMCoS

Joseph Schirò is a longtime member of IMCoS and is known to many as the organiser par excellence of the 42nd International Symposium that took place in Malta in 2024. He introduced us to the mapping treasures of Malta and, more generally, to the island's rich history. Like our previous-but-one Chair, Joseph is not based in the UK. His home is in Valletta, Malta, but with the advent of Zoom, membership to the Executive Committee is no longer limited to UK-based members. Today, five committee members live abroad. Joseph assumed the position on approval of the members at the Annual General Meeting held on 6 June 2026. You can learn more about him in his introductory Letter on page 3 of this issue.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Afternoon visit to the Geological Society of London (GSL)
When: Tuesday 15 September 2026 at 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm
Where: Geological Society of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 9EJ. It is a short walk from Piccadilly Circus or Green Park Underground stations.
Who: IMCoS members and their guests
What's on: An afternoon hosted by John Henry, IMCoS member and Fellow of the GSL and Caroline Lam (Archivist) and Paul Johnson (Map Librarian) at GSL. The visit will begin with a talk by John Henry (*see note overleaf*) about the creation of two of the earliest



Members of the IMCoS Executive committee who were able to attend the Annual General Meeting in person. From left to right: Amy Herr, Joseph Schirò, Ljljana Ortolja-Baird, Jenny Harvey, Cinzia Viviani, and Mark Clark.

geological maps of the UK – William Smith's famous 'Delineation of the Strata of England and Wales' (1815) and George Bellas Greenough's 'Geological map of England & Wales' (1820).

The group will then be shown a small selection of historical maps in the Society's Upper Library. Amongst these will be examples of late eighteenth-century petrographical/mineralogical maps which pre-date modern geological mapping, as well as examples of other mapping works showing why the British Isles was central to the beginnings of modern geological science.

The visit will finish with a rare visit to the Geological Society's Map Room. It holds approximately 40,000 modern maps which are the most heavily used by the Society's Fellows. Paul Johnson, the map librarian will give an overview of the collection and show examples of the more interesting 20th-century maps.

Practicals: The GLS is in a heritage building with a lot of stairs, however there is a small lift. Seating is limited with a small number of folding seats which can be used in the hallway during John's talk. Chairs

are available in the Upper Library but there is no seating in the Map Room. Refreshments are not included but the Royal Academy Café and Fortnum and Masons, as well other eateries are close by.

Cost: There is a charge of £10.00 per person, to be paid in cash or by cheque on the day to Mark Clark, the event organiser.

Joining instructions will be given post application. Email your **application** to Mark Clark IMCoS UK Representative at markclark368@gmail.com. Please provide your name and email address in your application and a contact phone number. **There are only 15 places** so early application is advised. A waiting list will be maintained once there are 15 applicants.

Note: **John Henry** has published several articles in the *IMCoS Map Journal*, notably 'The First Geological Map of the Country: William Smith's 'A Delineation of the Strata of England and Wales'', in 'No 139, 2014, pp. 16–30 and 'John Phillips (1800–1874): The introduction of lithography in geological mapmaking in Great Britain', in No 157, 2019, pp.10–26.

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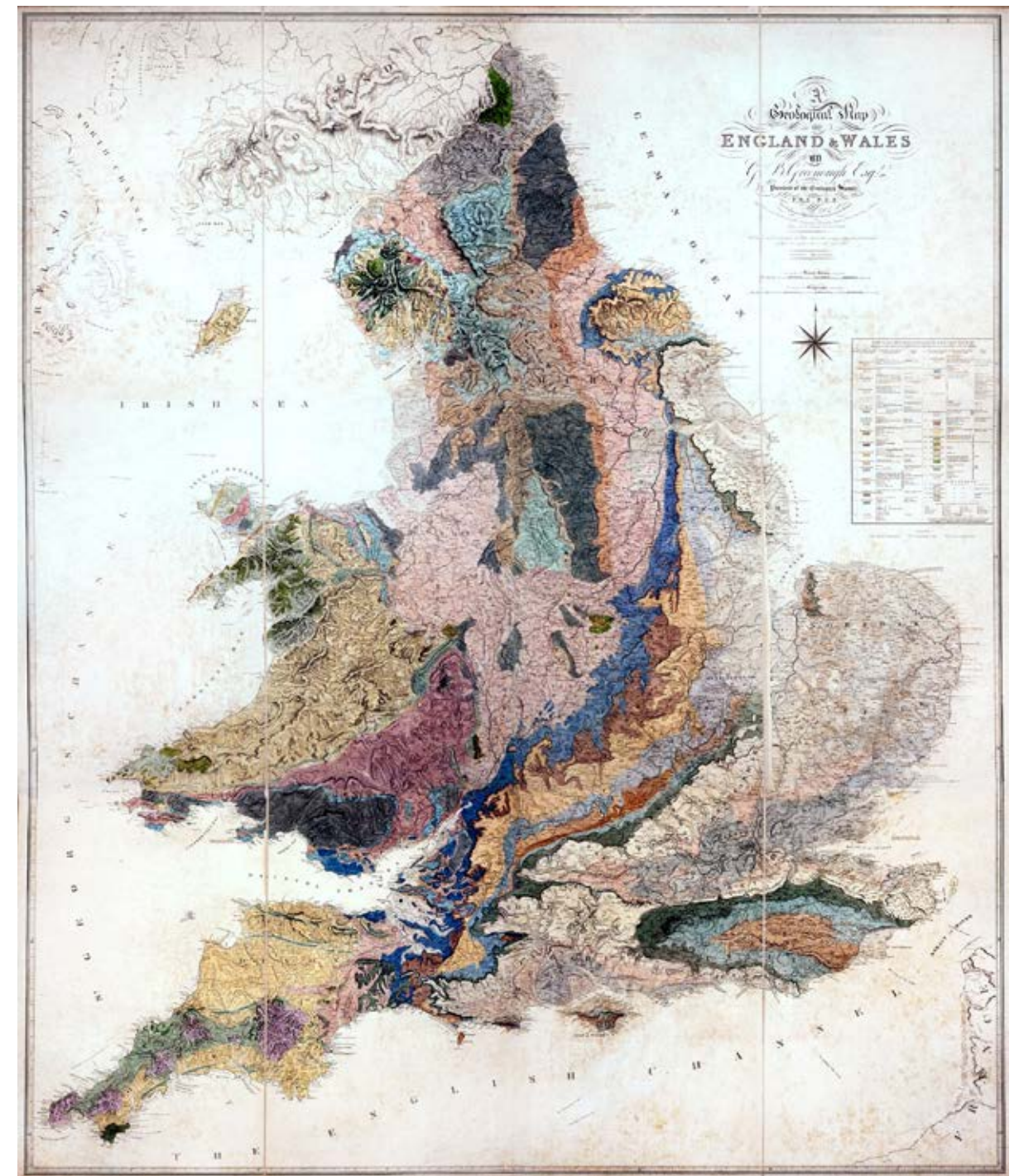
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Antonio de Herrera Y Tordesillas & Jacob Le Maire.
'Novus Orbis Sive Descriptio Indiae Occidentalis'.
1622. The title bears the first map of
California as an island







G.B. Greenough, 'Geological Map of England and Wales', dated as 1st November 1819 on the map, published 1st May, 1820.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Geological_Map_of_England_and_Wales_by_Greenough,_1820.jpg



IMCOS 43RD INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM TOKYO & KYOTO

9–13 November 2026

EARLY INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE WESTERN WORLD AND JAPAN SEEN THROUGH HISTORICAL MAPS

Japan Cartographers Association (JCA) and the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) will host the 2026 conference.

There will also be an optional one-day pre-symposium trip to Nikko, and an optional two-day post-symposium tour to Kyushu, including a stay at the Beppu hot springs.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

PLEASE NOTE THE NEW WEBSITE ADDRESS
www.imcosjapan2026.jp/english_index.html

PROGRAMME

(The programme is subject to change based on scheduling needs; the dates are fixed.)

Pre-symposium tour to Nikko (optional)

Sunday 8 November 2026

We will take a morning express train from Tokyo to Nikko (approximately 125 kilometres in the mountains north of Tokyo, a journey of less than 2 hours). We will visit the Kegon Waterfall, Chuzenji Lake, Tōshōgu Shrine (see photo overleaf), Rinnōji Temple, and Kanaya Museum.

Dinner on your own in Tokyo.

This tour is limited to the number of seats that can be reserved on the express train. Note that the visits to the shrines and temples will involve stairs.

Katsushika Hokusai, 'Torigoe no Fuji'. The shogunate astronomical observatory in Asakusa (1782–1869) with Mt Fuji in the background. From *One Hundred Views of Mt Fuji*. Wikimedia Commons.

Monday 9 November 2026 Tokyo

Monday's venue will be at the Nihon University, a 3-min walk from Suidobashi subway station and a 5-min walk from Jimbōchō subway station.

Opening and presentations

8:30 am Arrival and Coffee/Tea

9:15 am Opening by Tokyo Chair of JCA and a representative of IMCoS.

Presentations on Maps of Japan with a coffee break.

11:30 am Lunch on your own

12:30 – 4:30 pm Presentations about maps of China and their influence on Japanese mapmaking.

3.00 pm Coffee break

4:30 pm – 6:30 pm Jimbōchō on your own.

(This is Tokyo's centre for antique and vintage book stores, general antiques and curios and publishing houses.)

7.00 pm Welcome dinner (close to Jimbōchō)



View of Shinjuku skyscrapers and Mt Fuji in the background.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokyo#/media/File:Skyscrapers_of_Shinjuku_2009_January.jpg

Tuesday 10 November 2026

Map viewing and excursion to Sawara

8:45 am Arrival and Coffee/Tea at the Meiji University Library.

9:00 am Map viewing at Meiji University Library (Ashida Bunko Map Collection).

10:45 am – 1:00 pm Sawara tour by bus with preordered lunch box on the bus. Visit to the Inō Museum, Festival Float Museum, and Katri shrine. Canal boat trip.

Note: access to the boats is down six steep stone steps. If you are unable to use the stairs you will not be permitted to participate. In case of wet weather or abnormal canal water levels, the trip will be cancelled and the tickets refunded.

4:00 pm – 5:45 pm return to Tokyo by bus. Dinner on your own.
OPTIONAL: Performance of traditional Kabuki theatre at the Kabukiza Theatre. Details to follow.

Wednesday 11 November 2026

Travel day from Tokyo to Kyoto by Shinkansen (*Super express train*), 2 hrs 15 mins. *Individual travel, not included in the registration. Participants must make their own arrangements.*

Thursday 12 November 2026

Kyoto opening, presentations & map viewing
The Kyoto venue is the International Research Centre for Japanese Studies at the Nichibunken Hall. Private Shuttle bus to Nichibunken. It departs from Hankyu Rakusaiguchi Station at 8 am, 8:45 am, 9:30 am. Travel time is approximately 20 minutes.

8:45 am Arrival and Coffee/Tea
9:15 am Opening by Kyoto Chair
Presentations about cultural interactions between the East and West.
12:00 pm Lunch on your own
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Presentations addressing current studies of Japanese maps and world famous collections of historical Japanese maps.



The Yomeimon Gate at the Nikko Toshogu Shrine. Nikko City is famous for its shrines and temples, specifically a group of 103 shrines and temples of great artistic and historical value which, together with their natural surroundings, are registered as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikk%C5%8D_T%C5%8Dsh%C5%8D-g%C5%AB#/media/File:Nikko_Toshogu_Yomeimon_Gate_2024.jpg

Coffee break
3:10 pm – 4:10 pm Map viewing at Nichibunken Library with Prof. Frederik Cryns. Shuttle bus to Hankyu Rakusaiguchi Station, leaving at 4.20 pm and 5.00 pm.
5:30 pm Explore Kyoto and dinner on your own.
7:00 pm **OPTIONAL:** Dinner and performance of traditional music and dance by Maiko performers.

Friday 13 November 2026

Excursion to Unsōdō Publishing House, Nara and Tenri
9:00 am Bus departs from Kyoto Station and the Hotel Okura to visit Unsōdō which is famous for producing exquisite art books and wood block printing. You will be able to view their collection of old woodblocks and have time to explore the antique book and map shops in the immediate area.

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm Bus to Nara, a UNESCO World Heritage site with lunch on the bus.

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm Guided tour of Tōdaiji, the Buddhist temple complex.
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm Visit to Tenri Central Library and Sankōkan Museum.
Return to Kyoto
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm **OPTIONAL:** Kyoto Farewell Dinner at the Fortune Garden.

Saturday 14 November 2026

Post-Symposium Tour to Kyushu
7:30 am Meet at Kyoto Station
8:03 am – 10:30 am Sanyo Shinkansen express train to Kokura Station
10:30 am – 12 pm Visit to the Zenrin Museum which houses the Jason Hubbard Collection of maps of Japan.
12:30 pm Lunch
13:30 pm Kokura Castle visit
2:30 pm – 4:30 pm Bus to the seaside town of Beppu to overnight and dine at the Suginoi Hotel.

15 November 2026

8:30 am–10:45 am Tour of various hot springs
1:00 pm Individual departures from Hakata.
Express trains to Kyoto and Tokyo leave every hour and there is a direct flight from Fukuoka airport to Tokyo. The airport is a 5-minute subway ride from Hakata station. While in Kyushu, consider visiting Nagasaki. Hiroshima on Honshu can be reached from Hakata by train.

MORE INFORMATION ON ALL ASPECTS OF THE SYMPOSIUM ARE AVAILABLE AT www.imcosjapan2026.jp/english_index.html

Hotels in Tokyo

Hotels in the Kanda area are reasonably priced. You can stroll through the Jimbocho bookstores on foot from the hotels. **The Ueno, Asakusa, and Ryogoku areas** are ideal for experiencing Japanese history and culture. They offer a variety of museums and reasonably priced accommodation. Asakusa and Ueno are convenient for the early-morning tour of Nikko. The **area around Tokyo Station** offers excellent transportation access to Kyoto and other areas. The **Ginza and Nihonbashi areas** are convenient for shopping, but hotel prices are on the higher side. The **Akasaka-Roppongi and Nishi-Shinjuku areas** are home to many well-known, long-established hotels and newly built luxury hotels. **Chinzanso** is known for its beautiful gardens, but it's a bit far from the station. Hotels in the **Bay Area** are relatively affordable and of good quality, but travel times can be lengthy.

Everyone’s travel goals in Japan are different, so it’s difficult to recommend the best hotel. For those who want to attend the entire symposium programme at a reasonable price and enjoy visiting museums to experience Japanese culture, the Ueno, Asakusa, and Kanda areas are recommended. For those looking to enjoy a glamorous trip, we recommend areas like Ginza and Akasaka. Also, if you usually take the subway instead of taxis, hotels with direct transfers (marked ‘0Tr’) are convenient. Most of the hotels in Tokyo are modern and clean. If you would like to stay in a traditional Japanese room with tatami, check availability with the hotel.

For details on hotels in Kyoto visit:
www.imcosjapan2026.jp/english_index.html

Kanda Area Hotels



Hotels

	Price for 1 night	Grade	Distance (approx mins)
1. +Hotel Metropolitan Edmont Tokyo	35K-	4★	20
2. +Hotel Villa Fontaine Tokyo Kudanshita	30K-	2.5★	12
3. Sotetsu Fresa Inn Ochanomizu-Jimbocho	27K-	2★	5-10
4. Hotel Niwa Tokyo	40K-	3★	3-15
5. Tokyo Stay Suidobashi	30K-	2★	3-15
6. APA Hotel Kanda Jimbocho Ekihigashi	18K-(single)	2★	5-10
7. Tokyo Dome Hotel	75K-	4★	20
8. Tokyo Garden Palace	30K-	3★	15-25
9. Ochanomizu Conference Center	25K-	2.5★	3-12

+ Recommended
• Estimated for 2 adults 1 nights average of 11/-10 (not guaranteed; early 2026).
Prices vary on the days of the week, on when you search etc.
Please only use this as a reference when comparing hotels.

ANTICIPATED FEES FOR IMCOS JAPAN SYMPOSIUM 2026

Fees payable in Japanese Yen	Tentative fee Yen		USD/JPY est. at 155		November dates
	Regular	Student	Regular	Student	
Tokyo & Kyoto conference (all presentations & map viewing)	25,000	5,000	\$161	\$32	9, 10, 12
Welcome Dinner	10,000	7,000	\$65	\$45	9
Sawara excursion (Tokyo)	12,000	8,000	\$77	\$52	10
Nara-Tenri excursion (Kyoto)	16,000	9,000	\$103	\$58	13
Farewell dinner (Kyoto)	10,000	7,000	\$65	\$45	13
Complete Conference	73,000	36,000	\$471	\$232	9 thru 13
Pre-Nikko Tour (incudes transportation from and to Tokyo)	27,000		\$174		8
Post-Kyushu Tour (Includes hotel in Beppu & transportation from Kyoto to Beppu)	92,000		\$594		14, 15

Limited conference participation to presentations & map viewing only

Tokyo conference only	13,000	3,000	\$84	\$19	9, 10
Kyoto conference only	13,000	3,000	\$84	\$19	12



PRESENTATIONS				
TOKYO VENUE	Studies on maps of Japan	Maps published by Nagakubo Sekisui	EN	Toshikazu Kaida
		Bonin Islands in Western and Japanese maps	EN	Lutz Walter / Jonas Rüegg
		“Ryūkyūkoku no zu” and the Exchange of Surveying Techniques between Ryūkyū, China, and Japan	EN	Susumu Asato
	Studies on maps of Asia	The Chinese Influence on Japanese maps depicting China	EN	Akihiro Osawa
		Acceptance and Development: Alignment of islands between Kyushu and Taiwan in Kunyu Wanguo Quantu and its descendants	EN	Kimiaki Takahashi
	Panel: Remapping Chinese world maps in Japan	Umemura’s Commercial Reprint of Wang Junfu’s Map of China, the Dai Min kyūhen bankoku jinseki rotei zenzu	EN	Mario Cams
		From Fangyu shenglüe to Morokoshi kinnō zui: How world maps in Chinese books made it to the Japanese book market	EN	Elke Papelitzky
	Japanese Historical Map Collection in the World	Japanese Historical Maps Collection of the C. V. Starr East Asian Library, UC, Berkeley	EN/ JP	Toshie Marra
		MacLean collection (Chicago)	EN	Richard Pegg
	PR by IMCoS Hong Kong	Mapping Tartary – A Digital Exploration of European Cartography	EN	Marco Caboara
KYOTO VENUE	Cultural interaction between East and West	William Adams’ Lost World Map	EN	Frederik Cryns
		Isabella Bird’s Japan Journey and Brunton’s Map of Japan	EN	Kiyonori Kanasaka
		Making process of the “J.H.Klaproth: A Map of the isles of Japan” held in the British Library and significance of making maps of Japan in Europe	EN	Shigeru Kobayashi
	Studies on maps of Japan	Cartographic Defence and the Delimitation of Japan’s North	EN	Edward Boyle
		The Hubbard Collection of the Zenrin Museum	JP	Wataru Sato
	Japanese historical map collection in the World	Siebold as Map Collector and Cartographer: Insights from Leiden University Libraries	EN	Radu Leca
		Map Collection of the Kobe City Museum (Kobe, Japan)	JP	Kazuyuki Onoda

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C. Ptolemaeus, La geografia, Venice 1561



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MAPPING MATTERS

ONLINE RESOURCES

Virtual Exhibition

The Atlases of the Baltic Sea: Treasures from the John Nurminen Foundation's Collection

The John Nurminen Foundation's maritime collection contains almost one thousand old charts of the Baltic Sea and the North Sea, dating back to the fifteenth century. Notable in the collection are eight atlases, four of which are on display in this virtual exhibition, one Swedish, one Dutch, one Russian and one British. They are Peter Gedda's Baltic Sea atlas of 1695; Johannes van Keulen's *Nieuwe groote lichtende zee-fakkel* (New Shining Sea Torch) of 1788; Admiral Alexei Nagayev's 1795 *Atlas of the Baltic Sea*; and Laurie and Whittle's *A New and Enlarged Baltic Pilot* of 1809.

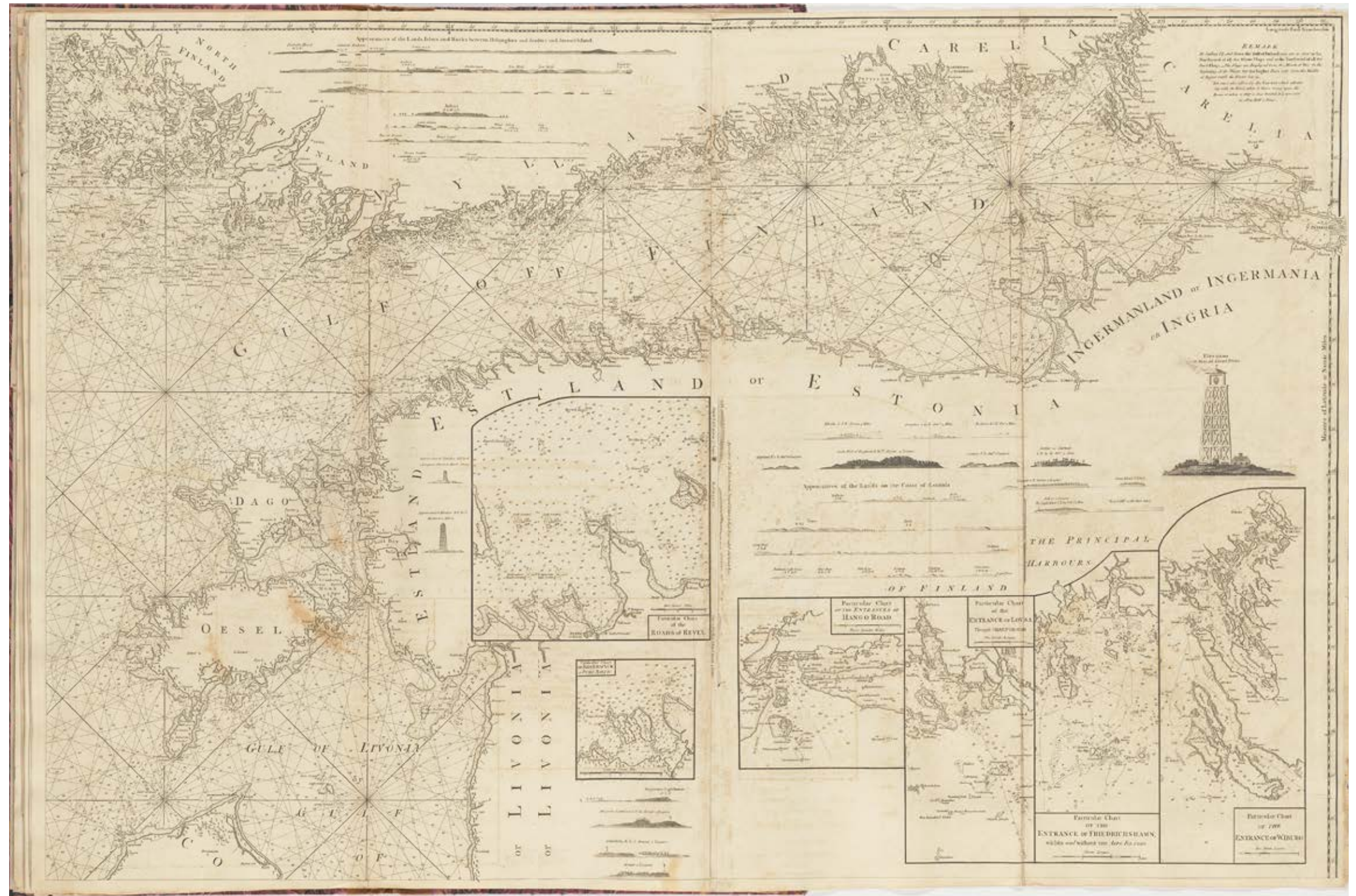
The Foundation's Publications and Collections Manager, Maria Erkheikki, describes the exhibition as demonstrating the immense strategic and military significance of old sea charts at a time when the sea was the fastest – and often the only – means of travel between major powers. The charts selected from the four atlases depict different parts of the Baltic and provide an insight into the shifting maritime power relations in the region.

The exhibition is free and available in three languages, Finnish, Swedish and English.

Link to the exhibition:

<https://merenkulkijankartastot.johnnurmisenasatio.fi/>

Robert Laurie & James Whittle. 'Gulf of Finland' from *A New and Enlarged Baltic Pilot*. London, 1809. John Nurminen Foundation Collection, Helsinki.



ONLINE BRITISH-INTEREST MAP COLLECTIONS:

A Vision of Britain

Provides historical boundary and topographic maps, historic maps, and 1930's land-use data maps covering Britain as well as a large collection of historical British travel writing including accounts by foreign visitors.
<https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/travellers/>

British Geological Survey

The BGS map portal provides access to over 45,000 high-resolution viewing images of almost all the small, medium and large-scale maps produced by the BGS since mapping started in 1832 right up to the most recent maps released in 2020. It incorporates all the earlier maps and history pages that were previously made available through the BGS 'Historical maps of the Geological Survey of Great Britain and Ireland' web resource.

<https://webapps.bgs.ac.uk/data/MapsPortal/>

Charles Booth's London

'Charles Booth's London' enables you to search the catalogue of over 450 original notebooks from the *Inquiry into Life and Labour in London* (1886-1903), view 41 digitised notebooks and explore the London poverty maps. The site is hosted by the London School of Economics, which holds the original archive. <https://booth.lse.ac.uk>

Coventry atlas: Mapping Coventry over time

Collection of historic maps, photographs, building plans and other resources, showing Coventry from Medieval times to 2021.

<https://www.coventryatlas.org>

Historic England: Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer

'Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer' is a tool that displays archaeology that has been identified, mapped and recorded using aerial photographs and other aerial sources across England. The results of over 30 years of aerial photograph mapping projects are freely available online. You can explore ancient settlements, secret Cold War military installations, complex archaeological landscapes of Hadrian's Wall, Stonehenge and so much more.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/aerial-archaeology-mapping-explorer/>

Historical maps of Norfolk

The site includes enclosure and tithe maps of Norwich, Great Yarmouth, Thetford and Kings Lynn held in the Norfolk Record Office.

<http://www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk/maps.aspx>

Layers of London

'Layers of London' is a map-based history website developed by the Institute of Historical Research. Users can access free historic maps of London and contribute stories, memories and histories to create a social history resource about their area.

<https://www.layersoflondon.org>

Welsh tithe maps

These maps were produced between 1838 and 1850 following the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. There are over a thousand examples and cover more than 95 percent of Wales. All tithe maps have associated apportionment documents which list the payable tithes, the names of the landowners and land occupiers, the land use, and in most cases the field names. Three copies of the tithe maps and apportionment documents were created. The main copy was held by the Tithe Commissioners, these are now kept at the The National Archives. A local copy, originally produced for the local church and a third copy was made for the diocesan registry and these are the copies held at the National Library of Wales.

<https://www.library.wales/discover-learn/digital-exhibitions/maps/welsh-tithe-maps>

William Smith's geological maps

An interactive database of digitised maps by William Smith. These include English county maps, geological sections, and versions of the map of England and Wales produced from 1815 onwards. It also contains information on William Smith, his maps, and the history of geological mapping.

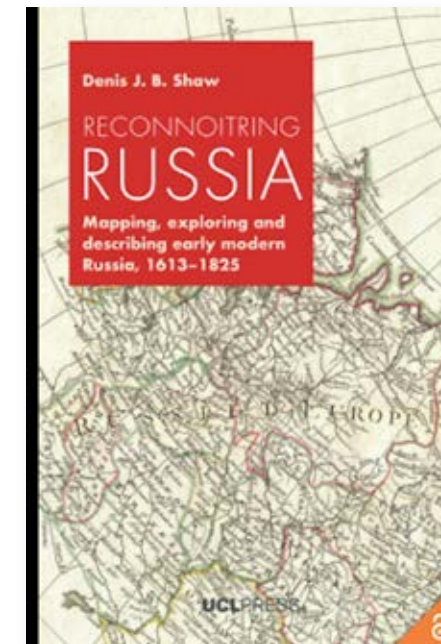
<http://www.strata-smith.com>

OPEN ACCESS BOOKS

Reconnoitring Russia: Mapping, exploring and describing early modern Russia, 1613-1825

by Denis J. B. Shaw. UCL Press, 2024.

Download free PDF online at <https://uclpress.co.uk/book/reconnoitring-russia>

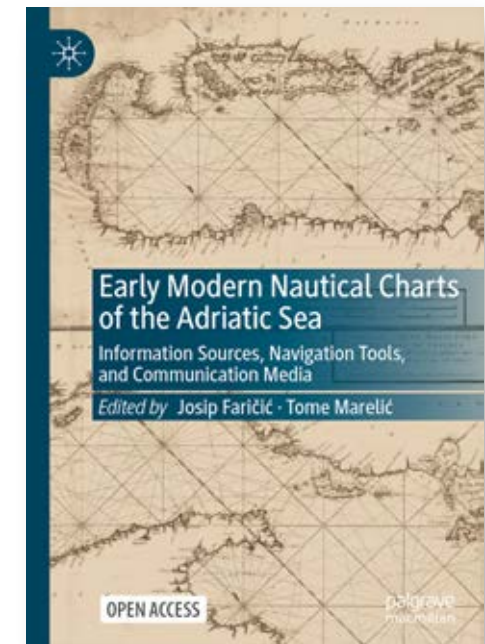


Like many European countries during the Great Age of Discovery and Exploration, Russia embarked on policies of state building, exploration and imperial expansion. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, the territory under Moscow's control was about 20,000 square kilometres. By 1800, it had expanded to some eighteen million square kilometres, becoming one of the world's greatest empires. By focusing on the geographical practices of exploring, observing, describing and mapping, *Reconnoitring Russia* seeks to explain how Russia's rulers and its educated public came to know and understand the territory of their expanding state and empire. It places the Russian experience into a comparative context, showing how it compares with those of other European countries over the same period. The book adopts a broad chronological framework, exploring the age between 1613 when the Romanov dynasty assumed power and 1825, the conclusion of Alexander I's reign.

(Text courtesy of the publisher)

Early Modern Nautical Charts of the Adriatic Sea: Information sources, navigation tools, and communication media

by Josip Faričić and Tome Marelič. Palgrave Macmillan Singapore, 2025. A PDF is available at <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-981-96-8046-7>



This book provides a comprehensive and multi-layered understanding of the development of Adriatic Sea nautical cartography from its beginnings in the late Middle Ages to the implementation of geodetic and hydrographic surveys in the early nineteenth century. During the early modern period, the importance of nautical charts exceeded mere navigational purpose as they also became a medium for conveying an extensive array of socioeconomic information and messages. The authors examine how the geographical characteristics and social elements of the Adriatic Sea and its surroundings were observed, understood, and cartographically represented in accordance with contemporary scientific, technological, socioeconomic, cultural, or political frameworks. Since the Adriatic Sea has historically functioned as a smaller-scale version of the Mediterranean, its contents transcend its geographical boundaries and are also broadly applicable to other Mediterranean regions.

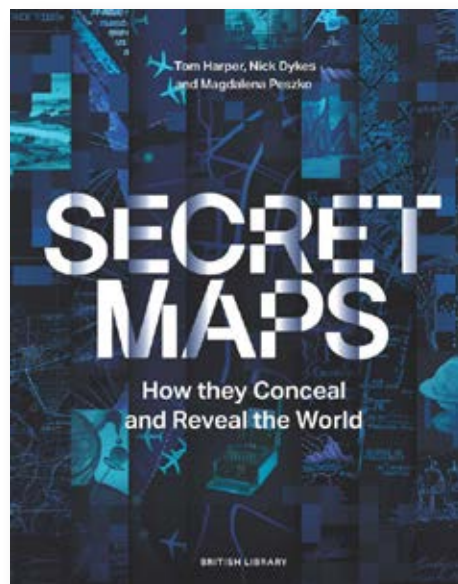
(Text courtesy of the publisher)

BOOKS

A Look at Recent Publications

Secret Maps: How they Conceal and Reveal the World

by Tom Harper, Nick Dykes and Magdalena Peszko.
London: The British Library, 2025. ISBN 97807123
55643. HB with dust jacket, 288 pp, around 200 maps and
images in full colour. £40 STG.



Secret Maps was published in conjunction with the exhibition with the same name held at the British Library in London from October 2025 to January 2026 and curated by the authors: Tom Harper, Lead Curator of Antiquarian Mapping, Nick Dykes, Curator of Modern Mapping, and Magdalena Peszko, Curator of Map Collections. The exhibition was reviewed in the *IMCoS Map Journal* Issue No. 183.

The Introduction analyses the association between maps, secrecy and clandestine activity ‘mostly in Western culture’, from the European Middle Ages to the present day. Maps can be images showing secret information, or secret objects to be hidden, or a way of conveying secret meanings, and the book discusses these different aspects of ‘secrecy’. The Introduction is followed by a short section on ‘Medieval and Early Modern Secrecy and Maps’ in which the c. 1325 world map by Pietro Vesconte is presented, and Robert Dudley’s 1646 book and sea atlas *Dell’Arcano del Mare* is discussed.

The book is then divided into four chapters, each with its own short introduction followed by individual sections each covering a map or group of maps. Chapter 1 ‘Secrets of Empire’ examines the role of secret maps in the imperial context, especially in discovering the secrets of rival powers. Tactics involved limiting access to confidential charts, falsifying maps by removing sensitive details, or concealing the presence of Indigenous peoples.

Maps shown in detail and described in this chapter include the c.1525 Salviati Planisphere by Nuño García de Torenó; maps of Africa by Diogo Homem, Solomon Boulton and David Livingstone; secret Aztec spy maps; the c. 1547 Dauphin or Harleian world map from the Dieppe chartmaking school that shows the southern landmass named ‘Java la Grande’; and the 1815–16 ‘Map of the Province of Chittagong’ by John Cheape of the East India Company that had been extensively restored for the exhibition.

Chapter 2 ‘Secrets of the State’ covers secrets and maps as integral to official power domestically. In Europe from the sixteenth century to the present day, maps played a wide role in the management of secret state information. Elizabeth I’s secret service collected and produced maps for surveillance and defence, as did cartographers in France, Italy and (later) Germany. The ‘Long View’ of the south coast of England, drawn for Henry VIII in 1539–40, shows details of harbours from Land’s End to Exmouth to be protected in case of a hostile invasion.

Accurate plans of fortifications and enemy defences were much prized, including those of Cremona and Luxembourg. During World War I the Ordnance Survey produced detailed maps of the trenches along the Western Front, and T.E. Lawrence (of Arabia) corrected or sketched maps of Medina, Mecca and the Hejaz Railway. Highly secret maps of Normandy were made ahead of the D-Day landings in June 1944, as were ‘bogus’ maps of the coast produced to train Allied troops without disclosing the true location of the terrain surveyed. In the 1990s Ordnance Survey maps of Northern Ireland omitted the locations of British Army watchtowers.

The focus of Chapter 3 ‘Secrets in Societies’ is on the role of secret maps in unofficial settings. Some maps demonstrate the open secrets and prejudices of

their creators, both through what is included and in what is left out – such as Black townships in apartheid-era South Africa. At times the map trade was rife with plagiarism, with copies of published maps made by secret mapmakers. In 2020 the artist Bobby C. Martin publicised maps that erased the presence of Indigenous tribes in the Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory of the United States prior to their statehood in 1907. Pre-Columbian Andean societies used a system of colour-coded and knotted cords called *quipus* to record secret sites and ritual practices. In 1997 Terasawa Kazumi and Hiroaki Kani produced a ‘Grand Panorama of the Kowloon Walled City’ in Hong Kong as a record prior to its demolition. Other sections in this chapter display the Wandsworth Prison Quilt, Charles II’s hiding place in an oak at Boscobel House, the dark side of the moon, and the secrets of the Egyptian pyramids.

The final chapter, ‘Privacy’ examines the historical relationship between maps and locational or territorial privacy. Maps have long been used for the purpose of surveillance, and for recording the boundaries and details of private property. The ‘Descriptive map of London poverty’ made by Charles Booth is remarkably detailed, with not only streets but individual buildings colour-coded according to the residents’ socio-economic conditions. At the turn of the nineteenth century Jeremy Bentham introduced the concept of the panopticon as an early way to view the architecture of prisons and their inmates, technology that has now been replaced by CCTV cameras, facial recognition software and other forms of open-source intelligence. Today locational privacy is largely impossible to secure.

Although principally a catalogue of the Secret Maps exhibition, the book also contains several maps that could not be displayed because of their large size. These include the (1560) 1795 cordiform world map in Ottoman Turkic script by Hacı Ahmed; the (1747) 1755 map of London, Westminster and Southwark by Jean Roque; and a c.1850 manuscript map of Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi) by an unrecorded Indian draughtsman. Somewhat surprisingly, the dimensions of the maps in the book are not given, although the sizes of the largest ones are indicated by small pictograms displayed next to the relevant captions.

A meme that runs throughout the text is the emphasis placed by the authors on aspects of cartography that are of widespread interest and concern in the twenty-first century, but have been largely ignored in earlier publications. For example,

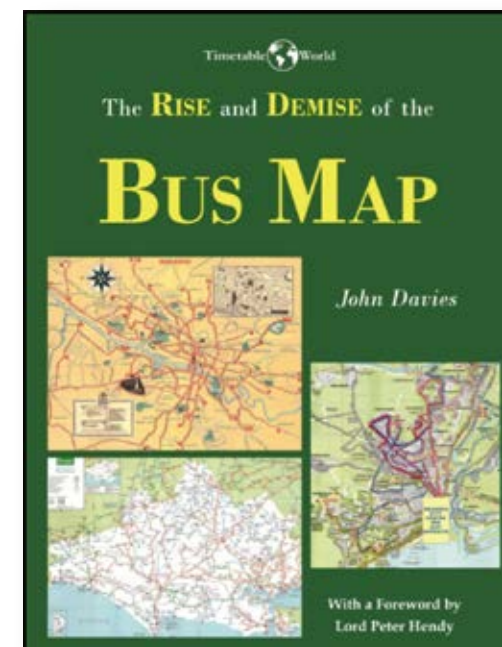
‘the trade in enslaved people was evident in maps, but the attendant suffering and subjugation are visible only by reading between the lines’. Other topics include the removal of maps of or made by Indigenous communities, the marginalisation of female mapmakers, and the attempts made to remove or disguise the information now available from Global Positioning Systems, phone-tracking and the like.

As we have come to expect from books on cartography from The British Library, *Secret Maps* is another exceptionally attractive and informative publication. Measuring 29 x 23 cm, the book is lavishly illustrated with images of over 90 maps and nearly 70 prints, paintings, globes, photographs, screenshots and objects, all in colour. The graphics are enhanced by 35 full-page enlargements of details from the maps and prints. With its display of many maps that are not to be found elsewhere, and erudite discussion of contemporary topics as well as the history of secret maps in all their diversity, this is a book that deserves a place in every cartophile’s library.

Peter Geldart, Manila

The Rise and Demise of the Bus Map

by John Davies, with a Foreword by Lord Peter Henty.
Maidenhead: Timetable World, 2026. ISBN
9781739672164. HB, 327 pp, illus. £40 STG.



‘This book is a love letter to the lost art of the fold-out bus map and its endangered cousin the tabular timetable, victims of the ever-present online geospatial real-time information systems.’ So opens this excellent, colourful, volume.

Maps for users of public transport have been a subject of study and collecting for some time, but hitherto it has been descriptions of rail rather than of road that have been favoured by publishers. *The Rise and Demise of the Bus Map* is a timely counterbalance to this, and is a complement to older studies such as Ken Garland’s *Mr Beck’s Underground Map* (1994) and David Leboff and Tim Demuth’s *No need to ask! Early maps of London’s Underground Railways* (1999). The essence of such books is that the emphasis should be on the illustrations at least as much as the text, and high production values are necessary. An advantage that was not available in the 1990s is that it is possible to display maps on the internet, and most of the maps illustrated in this *Bus Map* volume can be viewed on the Timetable World website (<https://timetableworld.com/find>). This circumvents the problem that most of these maps are too large to be displayed at the original scale on a single page, so that either they must be reduced, or else the reader must be satisfied with an extract. It also compensates for my regular *bête noire*, the problem of detail being lost in the gutter of double-page spreads.

John Davies will be known to some readers as co-author with Alex Kent of *The Red Atlas* (Chicago University Press, 2017), and as a past editor of and contributor to *Sheetlines*, the journal of the Charles Close Society for the Study of Ordnance Survey Maps. As the author details on the last page indicate, his interest in bus maps goes back eighty years, so he can certainly claim experience. He provides a useful summary of bus company ownership in the United Kingdom, which has been subject to considerable change over the past century, and often reflects as much political imperatives as the convenience of the user. This is summarized in the main section titles: ‘The Early Years’, ‘Peak Bus Era’, ‘Rationalisation’, ‘Deregulation and Privatisation’ (by far the longest chapter: well over a third of the book), and ‘The Digital Age’. The ‘Deregulation’ chapter has the advantage, from the point of view of variety, of numerous local networks, several firms specializing in producing bus maps, and a growing interest in collecting them, so that more survive. Some maps combine all public transport networks: more recently

this has meant including railway systems, but combined bus and tram maps were needed in some cities up to 1962. A few maps exclusively concerned with tramways were illustrated: though trams are rail-guided, they are largely competitors rather than complementary to railway systems: they came later and went earlier.

Variety of ownership is reflected in variety of cartographic style, some of which, particularly in the first sixty-odd years of the century, tends to the minimal rather than to the ornamental, with monochrome production on, at most, tinted paper. A few are distinctly decorative, for example the Sheffield Corporation map of the later 1920s, illustrated on page 30, with its hill-shading and vignettes of notable buildings. The nearly contemporary map of buses around Luton on page 33 is distinctly more functional, to the extent of lacking route numbers, but then it was the centre-spread in a comprehensive timetable booklet. A common characteristic was for ornamental covers, often including municipal coats of arms, to be in inverse ratio to the map inside.

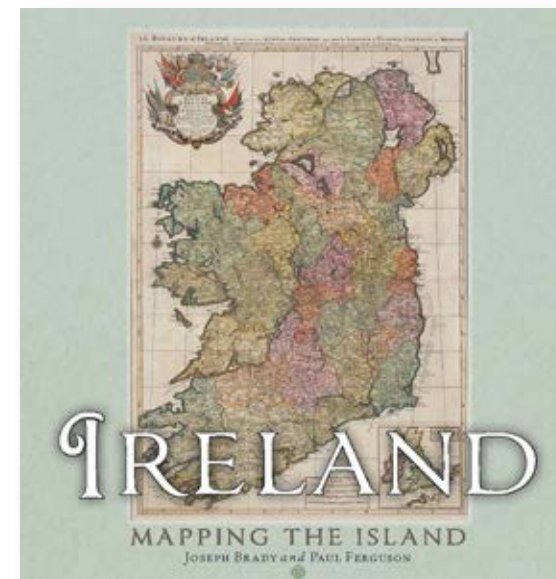
It is appropriate that most of the maps in the book come from the author’s own collection. These maps have suffered the fate of many that were produced in huge quantity and were either sold at nominal prices or, more often, given away: they have been little regarded and readily discarded when no longer needed, so that survivors are a tiny proportion of those that were printed – and the older the map, the more severe has been the attrition of time. These maps have not, by and large, been the subject of legal deposit under the Copyright Acts and are not found in the many local studies libraries in the United Kingdom: their preservation has largely been due to individual initiative. This volume is a worthy introduction to the field.

Richard Oliver, Exeter, UK

Publisher’s reduction until 31 December 2026
To get a 20 % reduction on the normal book price go to
<https://timetableworld.com/>
and use the coupon code uxw33m8b at the checkout.

Ireland. Mapping the Island

by Joseph Brady and Paul Ferguson. Edinburgh: Birlinn Ltd, 2025. ISBN 9781780279840. HB, 262 pp, 254 illus. £30 STG.



In 2013 the Edinburgh publishing house Birlinn released an impressive cartographic tome entitled *Scotland. Mapping the Nation*. Successful in the marketplace, it was reprinted in 2021. It was followed in a similar format by *Scotland. Mapping the Islands* (2016) and in 2023 both *Edinburgh. Mapping the City* and *Dublin. Mapping the City*. The latest addition to this growing list is *Ireland. Mapping the Island*, effectively a companion to that first volume.

Like its predecessors, *Ireland* is presented in a large, square format, as ideal as anything for maps of different shapes and sizes, if unavoidably a little on the bulky side. The paper quality is first-rate and the map reproduction excellent. The texts are comprehensive and informative but not littered with footnotes and citations, interrupting the flow; rather there is a two-and-a-half-page section on ‘Further Reading’ at the end.

The authorship is commanding: Joseph Brady is a former lecturer in geography at University College, Dublin while Paul Ferguson is Map Librarian at Trinity College in the same city, the same academic combination who produced the earlier Dublin volume. Like its predecessors, this is not a classic ‘coffee-table’ offering, heavy on images but brief on the narrative texts supporting them, though one could

perhaps skip through the volume simply looking at the maps and be satisfied with the very brief captions. What the authors have done is identify particular themes and topics and for each develop a text around the relevant maps. Some of these themes are drawn from the regular cartographic canon. Unsurprisingly the opening chapter – ‘The Shape of Ireland’ – reflects on how the country has been depicted with increasing accuracy over time, from the thirteenth to fourteenth-century Hereford Mappa Mundi, through Mercator, Speed and the slightly later William Petty to more accurate nineteenth-century depictions. ‘Towns and Cities in Maps’ commences with John Speed’s published Dublin, digresses to two earlier manuscript maps of Cork from 1602 in the Hardiman Atlas, moves through a mix of published and manuscript maps to John Rocque in the middle of the eighteenth century and then to the following century with the Ordnance Survey and the Goad Fire Insurance plans, finishing with representations of the new towns of the twentieth century. ‘Roads, Railways and Tourists’ traces the improvement of Irish road mapping, starting with Thomas Jeffreys’ map of Ireland from 1759, put together without the need for its creator even to visit the country. John Rocque’s map followed a year later: he at least had previously done some fieldwork in Ireland. Daniel Beaufort’s map in 1792 signalled an advance in accuracy, others such as Aaron Arrowsmith’s (1811) less so. Travelogues and tourist accounts occasionally incorporated published maps, but there were also maps specifically designed for the traveller with Taylor and Skinner producing a pocket-sized volume in 1777, the roads shown in the strip map form that had been popularised by John Ogilby a century earlier. Rail maps starting in the 1830s and tourist maps from the 1840s carry the story of increasing access to the Irish countryside in the nineteenth century.

Other chapters are cognisant of matters more specific to Ireland, the authors’ debt to the research of the late John Andrews being regularly acknowledged. Thus the broad and ever-present topics of the landscape’s appearance and land ownership are covered in two separate chapters: ‘Conquest and Colonisation’ defines the plantations and colonisation of areas of the country in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including William Petty’s surveys from the Cromwellian era, while ‘Writing the Landscape – the Ordnance Survey’ focuses on land mapping in the nineteenth century, and sets out the administrative background

and practical approach adopted by the government's surveyors. Another chapter, 'The Importance of Boundaries', highlights an issue sporadically critical in Ireland's history while 'Bogs, Coal and Geology' isolates, at least in its first named element, a landform that is particularly prominent in the Irish landscape.

The book also throws up more than its fair share of the unexpected. The chapter on roads abandons maps at one point, digressing to look at large colour posters prepared by both rail companies and the Irish Tourist Association that advertised access to all parts of Ireland, excellently illustrated by nearly a dozen posters from a private collection. And the last chapter on 'As Others Saw Us' focuses briefly on the cards in packs of cigarettes such as those from the Wills manufactory who issued sets of cards on Irish Holiday Resorts and on Irish Beauty Spots in the 1920s.

One of the features of *Ireland* is the range of repositories and archives that have been tapped for illustrations. *Scotland* utilised the collections of the National Library of Scotland extensively. *Ireland* in contrast calls on material from amongst others the Library of Congress, the University of California Berkeley, the University of Utrecht, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the Geological Society of London, and Lambeth Palace Library. It pulls in material which I imagine the average reader will probably be unaware of, and it is too a quiet reflection on the expertise of the authors.

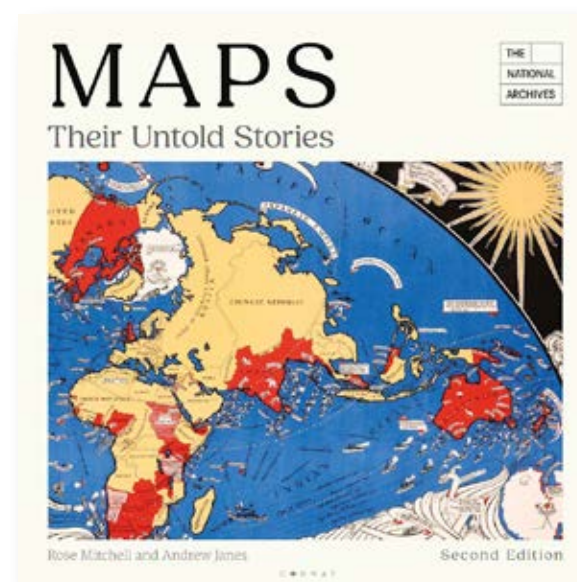
The texts lacking references are pleasant to read yet irritating in equal measure. *Ireland* is one of those books that forced me to resort to the internet to learn more. So it was with Robert Twiss whose published account of his travels in 1775 caused disquiet in the country and led to the manufacture of chamber pots with his image imprinted on the base, and with the surveyor Richard Bartlett, reputedly from Norfolk, who fell foul of suspicious locals in Donegal in 1603 and was beheaded. Several chapters make good use of superb sixteenth and seventeenth-century manuscript maps taken from the so-called Hardiman Atlas held by Trinity College, but it was the internet that provided me with the background information required to appreciate it.

All in all, *Ireland* is an excellent production, authoritatively written, attractively packaged and well worth the £30 price tag.

Bob Silvester, Meifod, Powys, Wales

Maps: Their Untold Stories. 2nd edition

by Rose Mitchell and Andrew Janes. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2026. ISBN 9781844867462. PB, 288 pp, 110 maps. £25 STG paperback, £20 STG Ebook.



In the Spring 2025 issue (No 140) of this journal, reviewer Richard Oliver concluded his appraisal of the first edition of *Maps: Their Untold Stories* with 'Further volumes of this sort would be welcome'.

The authors have heeded his words, not with a new book but by updating and augmenting their first, adding a further fifty pages, several reflecting new insights into the maps from research and methods of analysis that have taken place in the intervening twelve years between editions. New maps have been peppered throughout the original eight thematic chapters – 'Early Maps', 'Mapping the Metropolis', 'The Countryside: Landscape in Time', 'Theatres of War: Military Maps', 'Charting the Seas', 'New Worlds: Exploration and Empire', 'Maps that Witnessed History', and 'Worlds of Imagination' – however, the most significant change is the addition of a ninth chapter.

'Building Through Time: The Official Architect' is the new entrant and fits in neatly to the book's thematic approach of showcasing the many contexts for which maps are produced. The authors have selected thirteen plans from the Archive's collection of records that spans 'six centuries of government interest in buildings and their designers, in Britain and around the world' (p. 76). They range from a

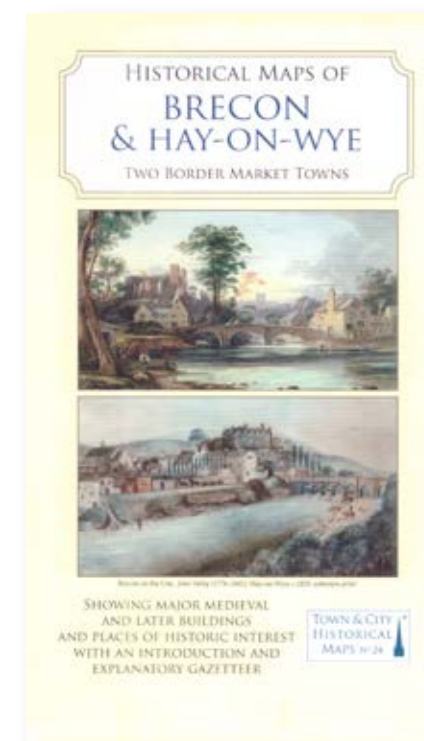
drawing of Tickell Castle in Yorkshire (1561), possibly made by Sir Ambrose Cave as part of his inspection of Elizabeth I's castles in the north in preparation of potential attack from Scotland to Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant, Governor of Malta's vision for a 'palatial poor house' in Valletta and plans for a purpose-built housing complex designed for the Metropolitan Police in Finsbury, London in 1927.

The diversity of the maps and their stories is key to the enjoyment of this book and will, as our previous reviewer concluded, 'make an excellent present'. Christmas is not far off.

Ljiljana Ortolja-Baird, Quendon, UK

Historical Maps of Brecon & Hay-on-Wye, Two Border Market Towns. Town & City Historical Maps No 24.

Oxford: Historic Towns Trust, 2026. ISBN 9781068709142. £11.99 STG.



Two Welsh market towns, Brecon, and Hay-on-Wye are the subjects of the Historic Towns Trust's recent addition to their Historical Maps series. Brecon, just inside the Brecon Beacon National Park and Hay-on-

Wye on the Hereford border were important Norman settlements, traces of which are visible today.

This publication is the twenty-fourth in the series and follows an established template – a very large, double-sided, foldout map (in this instance two maps, a map for each town) with an introduction to the featured town's history and development, and an extensive gazetteer which, in the case of No 24, includes the following headings: 'Castles & Town Walls', 'Public Buildings', 'Places of Worship', 'Hotels, Inns and Pubs', 'Schools and Colleges', 'Houses' and 'Industry and Commerce'.

The maps are modern, not reproductions of an old map as one might expect from the title of the series. They are carefully prepared, printed in full colour, at a scale of 1:2500 (about 25 inches to the mile) and in this instance, based on the Ordnance Survey published in 1904. The maps show the historical layers – Norman, medieval, Georgian and Victorian – of Brecon and Hay-on-Wye up to 1904. The buildings are colour-coded according to function and period in which they were built. Different lettering styles are used to distinguish landscape features.

No 24 is dense with information and the maps clearly set out the towns' development over the centuries, making it a useful guide for visitors. Both towns are thriving tourist destinations, particularly Hay-on-Wye which has, over the last several decades, become known as 'The Town of Books' with its dozens of book shops and annual literary festival that attracts over 100,000 visitors, many who would enjoy this publication. However, its size makes it a challenging travel companion. When unfolded, it measures 90 x 111 cm, making consulting on the move difficult, but spread across a table it offers a wonderful introduction into the history of these two popular market towns.

This publication was edited by Helen Fulton. The introductions to Brecon and Hay-on-Wye were written by Nigel Clubb and Dr C. Robert Anthony respectively. The full list of publications in this series can be found on the HTT's website <https://www.historictownstrust.uk/maps>

Ljiljana Ortolja-Baird, Quendon, UK

CARTOGRAPHY CALENDAR

Lectures & Conferences

1–3 October 2026, Arlington, Texas

The 15th biennial *Virginia Garrett Lectures on the History of Cartography* will be conjoined with the Texas Map Society's annual meeting. Both events will take place in the Central Library at the University of Texas at Arlington. The lectures will take place on Thursday and Friday and will focus on the *Cartography of Antarctica: Frozen Frontiers: 500 Years of Mapping Antarctica*. The Texas Map Society's meeting will take place on Saturday. Additional details and registration at <https://libraries.uta.edu/news-events/annual/virginia-garrett-lectures>

3 October 2026, Stint-Niklaas, Belgium

Brussels Map Circle excursion to the Map-Mercator Museum. Information: www.bmc.org

7–10 October 2026, Denver

The Western Association of Map Libraries *annual conference* will be held at Denver Public Library. Information: www.waml.org

8 October 2026, Washington (Online)

Chris Lane (retired Philadelphia Print Shop West owner and appraiser Antique Road Show) will discuss *Mapping Philadelphia*. Hosted by the Washington Map Society, with the California, Chicago, New York, Philip Lee Phillips, Rocky Mountain, and Texas Map Societies. To participate RSVP to John Docktor at washmap@gmail.com in order to receive the meeting ID and passcode. Meeting starts at 7 pm ET, 6 pm CT, 5 pm MT, and 4 pm PT.

13 October 2026, Washington (Online)

The Geography & Map Division, Library of Congress, will have a *Geography & Map Virtual Orientation*:

GIS and Geospatial Resources from 3–4 pm. A virtual orientation that aims to provide an overview of the geospatial resources of the Geography & Map Division, including an introduction to geographic information systems (GIS), spatial data formats, and the geospatial activities of the Division. This session will be followed by a Q & A session with GIS specialists. To register: https://loc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/4117744633383/WN_ZBnDYqetRgqsYfiFP6Tlew

26 October 2026, National Library of Malta

First Dr Albert Ganado Annual Memorial Lecture

Following the death of the founder member and President of the Malta Map Society on 2 November 2025, the MMS Committee decided to establish an annual lecture in his memory. The inaugural lecture will be held at the National Library of Malta. The first lecture, entitled *Kâtip Çelebi's Cihannüma and the Valletta Manuscript: Text, Maps, and Transmission*, will be delivered by the international scholar Mr Abdullah Seçgin of the Manuscript Institute of Türkiye. This presentation introduces Kâtip Çelebi's *Cihannüma* as the first systematic geographical work written for an Ottoman readership and presents preliminary findings from the Valletta manuscript held at the National Library of Malta. It will examine how this manuscript relates to the two principal versions of the work and compare the Valletta copy with closely related manuscripts in Türkiye.

Thanks to the collaboration of the Turkish Embassy in Malta, a reception will follow the lecture, during which Turkish food and refreshments will be served. The aim is to make the occasion a celebration of Turkish culture and scholarship.

Information: www.maltamapsociety.mt

9–13 November 2026, Tokyo and Kyoto

The 43rd International Map Collectors' Society Symposium

takes place in Japan, split between Tokyo and Kyoto. A pre-symposium tour is planned for Nikko on the 8th of November and a post-symposium tour is scheduled for 14–15 September to Kyushu; Japan's most southerly island. Detailed information can be found on pp 36–41.

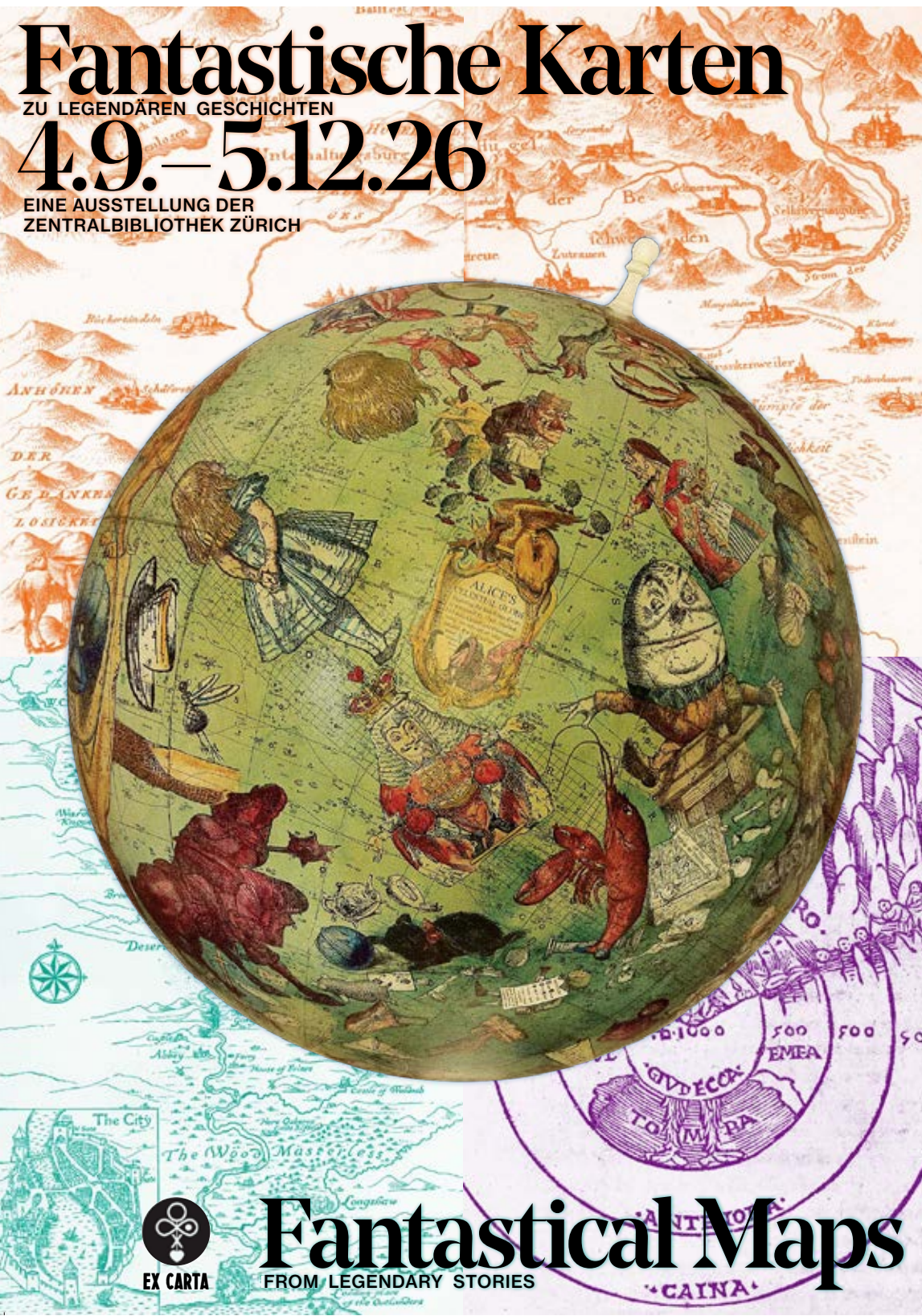
12 November 2026, Washington (Online)

Kory Olson's (Professor of French, Stockton University; Secretary and Vice Chair, The International Society of the History of the Map) forthcoming book will provide the basis for his presentation: *Motoring Africa: Michelin's Road Maps for an Exotic Continent*. He examines how the tyre company presented France's African colonial space as very drivable and French, prioritizing European-built infrastructure over Indigenous peoples and spaces. Hosted by the Washington Map Society, in partnership with the California, Chicago, New York, Philip Lee Phillips, Rocky Mountain, and Texas Map Societies. To participate RSVP to John Docktor at washmap@gmail.com in order to receive the meeting ID and passcode. Meeting starts at 7 pm ET, 6 pm CT, 5 pm MT, and 4 pm PT.

18–21 November 2026, Istanbul

In commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Kitâb-ı Bahriye, the *International Piri Reis and Maritime History Symposium* will be held at Piri Reis University. The symposium aims to address the life and works of Piri Reis within their historical context through a multilayered perspective. The

Poster announcing the exhibition *Fantastical Maps from Legendary Stories* on at the Zurich Central Library until 5 December 2026.



symposium will address topics such as the reflections of Mediterranean-centered maritime experience in the Kitāb-ı Bahriye, Ottoman cartography, the circulation of knowledge during the Age of Geographical Discoveries, maritime strategies in the Mediterranean, and global maritime activities in the Black Sea, Red Sea, and Indian Ocean. Information: <https://denzicoliktarihi.pirireis.edu.tr/en>

24 November 2026, London
The Gallery, 77 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6EJ
This year the British Records Association (BRA) annual conference – *All Mapped Out: Maps, Plans and Charts in the Archives* – will be held on the topic of records and archives which take the form of maps or geographical plans and charts. Information: <https://www.britishrecordsassociation.org.uk/up-coming/>

3 December 2026, Washington (Online)
Tom Paper (Managing Partner Webster Pacific, LLC; California Map Society, Board of Directors Member at Large) will discuss *Mistakes on Maps*. Originally presented to the California Map Society and at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, this is a witty, visually immersive journey through twenty historical maps, each featuring a fascinating flaw. Hosted by the Washington Map Society, in partnership with the California, Chicago, New York, Philip Lee Phillips, Rocky Mountain, and Texas Map Societies. To participate RSVP to John Docktor at washmap@gmail.com in order to receive the meeting ID and passcode. Meeting starts at 7 pm ET, 6 pm CT, 5 pm MT, and 4 pm PT.

5 December 2026, Brussels, Belgium
A conference on nautical cartography is being organised by the Brussels Map Circle. Information: www.bmc.org

12–13 March 2027, Le Havre, France
The Comité Français de Cartographie and the Université Le Havre Normandie are hosting *Women and Cartography*

from the Middle Ages to the 20th century
The conference sets out to re-examine the place of women in the making, circulation, and reception of cartographic knowledge up to the 20th century, taking into account the various forms their participation took, the documentary biases inherent in the sources, and contemporary methodological issues. It is part of the broader field of the history of women in science and of the study of the gendered construction of knowledge. By adopting a broad chronological framework, from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, the conference is open to all geographical areas. It is aimed at researchers in history, history of science, art history, literature, geography, and related disciplines. Information: luicile.haguet@lehavre.fr and catherine.hofmann@bnf.fr

24–28 May 2027, Barcelona
The (ISHMap) Symposium and Workshop – *Mapping Outside the Metropole* will take place in Barcelona in collaboration with the Institut Cartogràfic i Geològic de Catalunya. Information: <https://ishmap.com/ishmap-2027-barcelona/>

Exhibitions

4 September – 5 December 2026, Zurich
Fantastical Maps from Legendary Stories is on at the Zurich Central Library. The exhibition is conceptually informed by a notion developed by J.R.R. Tolkien: the ‘Cauldron of Story’. According to Tolkien, fictional narratives and their maps emerge from a continual process of blending, layering and reinterpretation. Myths, fairy tales, legends and literary traditions from different epochs form the ‘ingredients’ of the cauldron. Authors draw upon these sources, transform inherited motifs and reconfigure them within new imaginative contexts. The exhibition translates this model into a spatial experience: the visitor’s journey itself becomes a ‘Cauldron of Story’. The exhibition is hung so that a chronological narrative unfolds, revealing the literary works, myths and cartographic traditions that have shaped the development of fictional worlds across more than seven

centuries. Running in parallel, the centre of the exhibition space presents historical maps that served as important visual and conceptual references for fictional cartography. Particular attention is given to early modern maps of Switzerland, whose aesthetic and structural characteristics profoundly influenced later literary world-building traditions, including Tolkien’s own imaginative geographies.

Accompanying the exhibition is a lecture series which explores the various imagined landscapes. Information: www.Zb.uzh.ch/exhibits

21 October 2026–17 April 2027, Warburg Institute, London
Night Maps traces the entangled histories of cosmic imagination and earthly power. From medieval courts and cathedrals to moon landings and satellite surveillance, the exhibition reveals how depictions of the heavens have been made to serve rival systems on earth – and how these mythical flights continue to shape the worlds we share. The exhibition is curated by Warburg Professor John Tresch in partnership with The Sunderland Collection.

The exhibition is organised in four interconnected sections, revealing how the heavens have been observed, imagined, ordered, and put to work. It opens with ‘Myth and Logic’, which shows the constant interaction between precise astronomical knowledge and mythological projection, where human observers and calculators contend with ancient, personified constellations and the pressure of obscure forces enveloping the earth. ‘Celestial Bureaucracies’ follows, examining how star maps conjure up elaborate systems of terrestrial administration, accounting, and time- and record-keeping on earth. The third section ‘Claiming Space’ explores how celestial knowledge is mobilised in the service of governance, from royal and imperial cosmologies to modern military and corporate space-race cartographies. The exhibition concludes with ‘Satellite States’, in which contemporary maps, digital and video works detail the entwinement of space, surveillance and planetary orientation today. The exhibition is free. (Courtesy of the Warburg Institute).



Harmonia Macrocosmica by Andrea Cellarius, 1661 (CBL Rare Books: Planisphaerivm Copernicum. From A1788, plate 22). [Commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Planisphaerivm_Copernicum_\(CBL_Rare_Books_A1788_plate_22\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Planisphaerivm_Copernicum_(CBL_Rare_Books_A1788_plate_22).jpg)

Map Fairs

12 September 2026, Amsterdam
The third **Amsterdam Map Fair** will be held at the National Maritime Museum. Entry is free. Thirty-three national and international antiquarian map dealers will be attending. Email: amsterdam@map-fair.com

19 and 20 September 2026, Mantua, Italy
Mantua Book and Map Fair
Entrance to the Fair is free. Information: www.mantovalibriestampe.com

30–31 October 2026, Chicago Rare Map and Book Fair
The Newberry Library is hosting this rare map and book fair in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Map Society. Programming during the day on Saturday will include workshops on crafting with maps and mapmaking, speakers on topics including Kevin Mason on the history of maps of Iowa, and a guided tour of maps chosen by charter members of the Map Society.

Schedule
Friday 30 October, 5:30 – 7:30 pm
Opening Reception
\$40 per person with advance registration / \$50 per person at the door. Information: www.newberry.org

November 2026 and February 2027, Cesena, Italy
Antique book and map fairs take place on the third weekend of November and February. info@ceraunavoltantiquariato.com

21 November 2026, Paris
The 25th Paris Map Fair takes place in Espace Cléry, a short walk from the Pompidou Centre. Information [Librairie Loeb-Laroque](mailto:LibrairieLoeb-Laroque@gmail.com), email paris@map-fair.com

19–21 March 2027, Venice
The 3rd Venice International Map Fair will be held in Palazzo Pisani – Revedin, Sestiere San Marco 4013/A. The event hosts dealers specialising in maps, travel books and topographical prints for seasoned collectors and novices alike. Information: <https://www.map-fair.com/venice/eng>

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Frederik de Wit, 1660

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CONTRIBUTING TO THE IMCoS MAP JOURNAL

Author Guidelines

IMCoS invites contributions on all areas and periods of map history and map making. Articles normally range between 3,000–6,000 words plus endnotes. As many of the journal's readers will not have English as their first language, the Editor encourages authors to write clearly, with no ambiguities. Also bear in mind that this field of study embraces many disciplines; your area of specialisation must therefore be intelligible to a broad audience. For authors not writing in English as their native language, the Editor will provide assistance.

Conditions of publication

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- Authors will receive four free copies of the issue of the journal in which their article appears.

Articles

- Articles can range between 3,000–6,000 words plus endnotes. If an article is longer please contact the Editor who will make a final decision on whether it can be included.
- Articles should be emailed to the Editor as a Word document.
- Typescripts should be double-spaced.
- Number all pages.
- **Do not format the article.**
- 4–8 illustrations/photographs. Please read the section below on image size and resolution.
- All illustrations must be cleared for copyright.

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- **DO NOT EMBED IMAGES INTO THE TEXT.** Indicate on your typescript where the images ideally should go in the text.
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- The author should supply a short profile of themselves of 30–50 words.
- **Shorter articles** of 1,500–2,500 are placed in our 'Worth a Look' section with a maximum of 2–3 images.
- **Book reviews** should be 500–1,000 words long.

Photographs/Illustrations

- Digital images can be submitted either as attachments to an email (individually), or preferably via an Internet-based large file transfer site such as WeTransfer or Dropbox.
- We need jpegs or tiffs at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi and at a size no smaller than 20 cms across. The larger the image the better – this gives full flexibility for design and good detail. 5 or 6 MB is more likely to be appropriate. Files should have the quality option set between 8 (high) and 12 (maximum). Good tiff files are larger and are best sent via an Internet-based large file transfer site on a CD-ROM or USB memory stick.
- The source of the illustrations must be fully credited.

For further information contact the Editor,
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It is important to be aware that artwork and files that have been prepared for the web are not of sufficient quality for print. Full artwork specifications are available on request.

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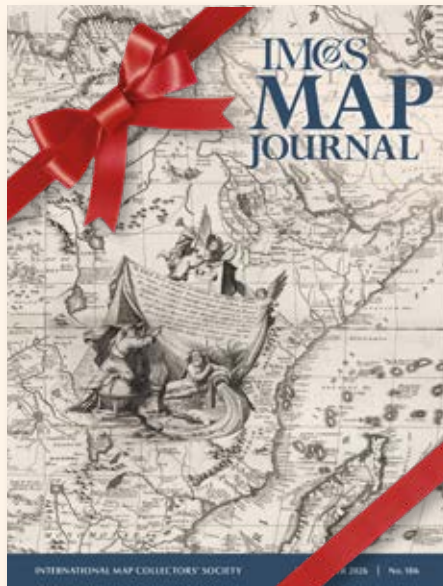
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If you would like to review books for the *IMCoS Map Journal*, or you have come across an interesting new book on an aspect of map history which you think should be reviewed, please contact the Editor.

Email ljiljana.editor@gmail.com

Copy and other material for future issues should be submitted to:

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