

MAPPING INDIA

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ENDPAPER: *A ILHA E CIDADE DE GOA METROPOLITANA DA INDIA E PARTES ORIENTALIS QUE ESTA EN 15 GRAOS DA BANDA DO NORTE, 1596.*

PAGE ii: *CALCUTTA, Society for the Diffusion of Unified Knowledge, Chapman and Hall, London, 1842.*

PAGE vi: *Improved MAP OF INDIA Compiled from all the Latest and most Authentic Materials, Aaron Arrowsmith, East India Company, London, 1822.*

Many travelogues and maps were published by other travellers to India, but the emphasis remained on the coasts. Atlases published in the 17th and 18th centuries often repeated and copied information from the earlier ones. Amsterdam was an important centre of cartographic publishing.

A popular map of the Mughal Empire came from cartographer Henricum Hondium (1597–1651). He based his map on Baffin's and published it in Amsterdam in 1630. The map was widely distributed from the family's flourishing map publishing businesses in Amsterdam and London. Due to its wide circulation, and the fact that it was copied by several other map publishers, its distinctive lake, *Chiamay lacus*, remained part of the India legend.

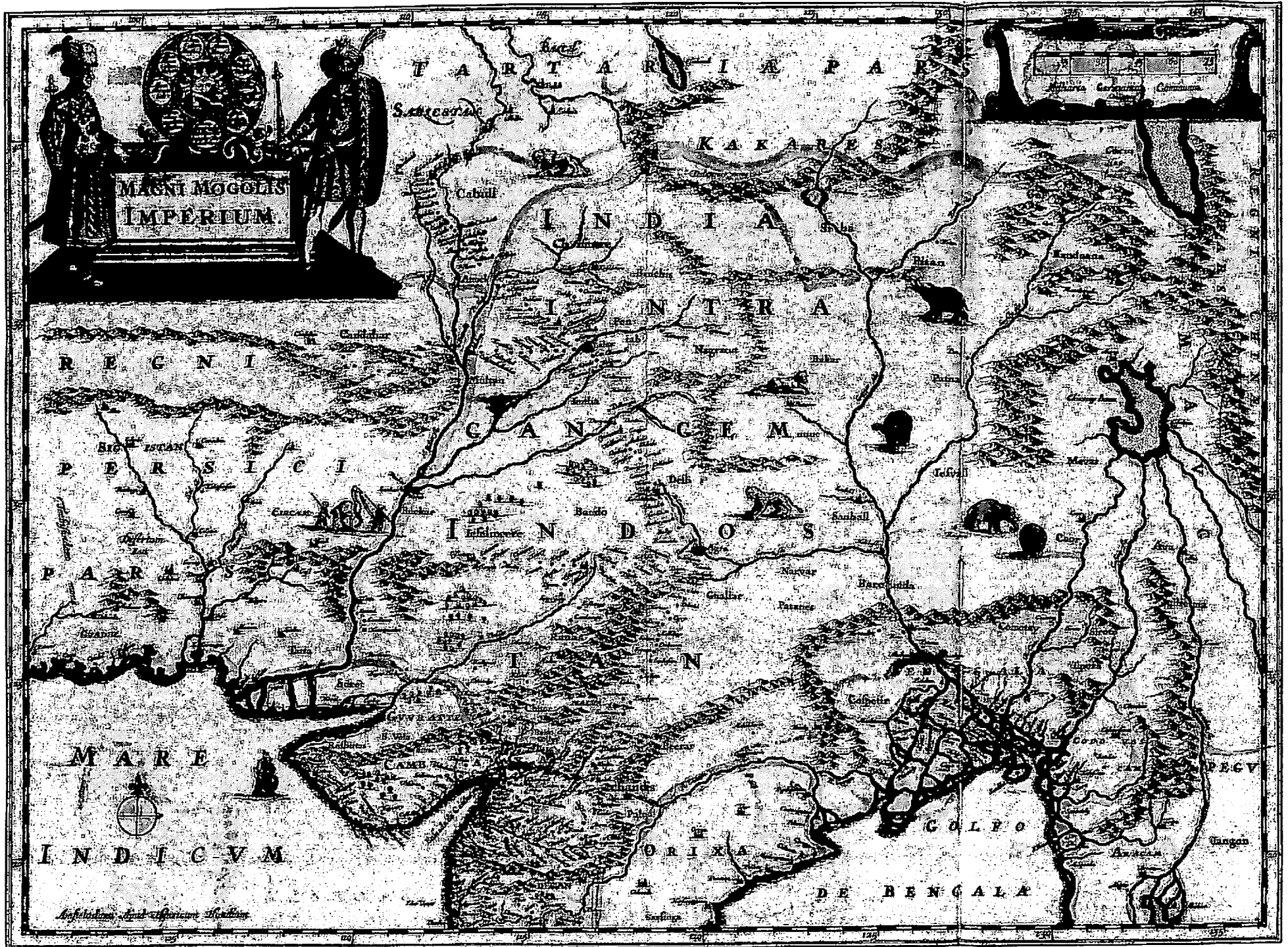
In this map, Henricum Hondium also replaced the cow's head by a lake at Haridwar: *gaumukh* is then replaced by *gaurikund*, a mythical lake often associated with pilgrim destinations in the high mountains. Perhaps Hondium had become aware that both were features of the Ganges. The title cartouche was built around Baffin's Mughal insignia with some changes. The lion in front of the blazing sun takes centre stage with the nine emperors' names surrounding it. Figures of two noble men holding ceremonial staffs, possibly Emperor Jehangir and General Mohabet Khan, stand erect on either side of the title—*MAGNI MOGOLIS IMPERIUM* (Fig. 3.7). Animals native to India—camel, tiger, lion and elephant—are drawn on the map to fill up the blank parts. Agra is the capital and Lahore an important city. Many towns are marked on the routes radiating from Agra. Roads link Agra to Surat, Cabull and Jaisalmer; while Lahore is connected to Multan. It can be assumed that these routes were often used by officials and traders.

A few years earlier, Lake *Singapamor* was mentioned in Portuguese explorer Fernao Mendes Pinto's book *Peregrinaçãõ*, published posthumously in 1614 in Spanish. He had visited India in 1573 and spoke of a lake from which issued forth four rivers southward, one being the Ganges, which then flowed into the Bay of Bengal. As mentioned earlier, Flemish cartographer Abraham Ortelius had shown this lake in his 1571 map *INDIAE ORIENTALIS* and called it *Chyamai*. This uncharted and unseen lake fired the imagination of European cartographers and it appeared in many maps through the 17th century.

One may conjecture that the germ of this idea was picked up from the Hindu and Buddhist view of the mythical Mount Sumeru being the centre of the universe, identified with Mount Kailash on earth. At the foot of this mountain is the holy Lake Manasarovar. Indians and Tibetans were aware that four major rivers, the Indus, Sutlej, Karnali and Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) originate from this region. European travellers had probably heard of this but were not aware of where Sumeru could have been. With their difficulties in pronouncing Asian names, it is likely that Sumeru became *Chyamai* and the four rivers were shown on maps rising out of the lake at *Chyamay lacus*. For decades to come, these two features, the cow's head and the phantom lake, appeared in maps of India, even while more cities and rivers were added and named.

The Dutch were dominant in the Indian Ocean in the early 17th century. In 1633, Willem Janszoon Blaeu (1571–1638), an eminent and successful map-maker, was appointed cartographer of the Dutch East India Company. Based on Hondium's map of India, he copied *MAGNI MOGOLIS IMPERIUM* (Fig. 3.8), which appeared in the world

Facing page: Fig. 3.6
*REGNI KACHEMIRE Nova et
 Accurata descriptio.*
 The map shown here is from
Travels in the Mogul Empire
 AD 1656–1668, Francois Bernier,
 1672, Amsterdam.





atlas *Atlas Novus*, published in 1635. After his death, his sons Johannes and Cornelis Blaeu, continued their father's mapping and publishing business. As the inscription on the bottom left shows, this copy was commissioned by Johanni Huydekoper and published by Johannes and Cornelis Blaeu.

Blaeu's *MAGNI MOGOLIS IMPERIUM* map is the same as Hondium's map. Cartographers in those days often bought off engravings from successful publishers and printed them after changing the title and cartouche. As was the custom among Dutch cartographers of the time, Blaeu's map is decorated with a Baroque title cartouche showing a cherub

Left: Fig. 3.7
MAGNI MOGOLIS IMPERIUM,
1630, Henricum Hondium.
Prime meridian: Isle de Ferro.
Size: 49 cm x 37 cm.
Private collection, Sanjeev Sanyal.

Below: Fig. 3.8
An early edition of *MAGNI MOGOLIS IMPERIUM*, 1670, J & C Blaeu, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum sive Atlas novus; in quo tabulae et descriptiones omnium regionum editae a Guiljel: et Ioanne Blaeu*. Maps K Top 115.23. The British Library, St Pancras, London.

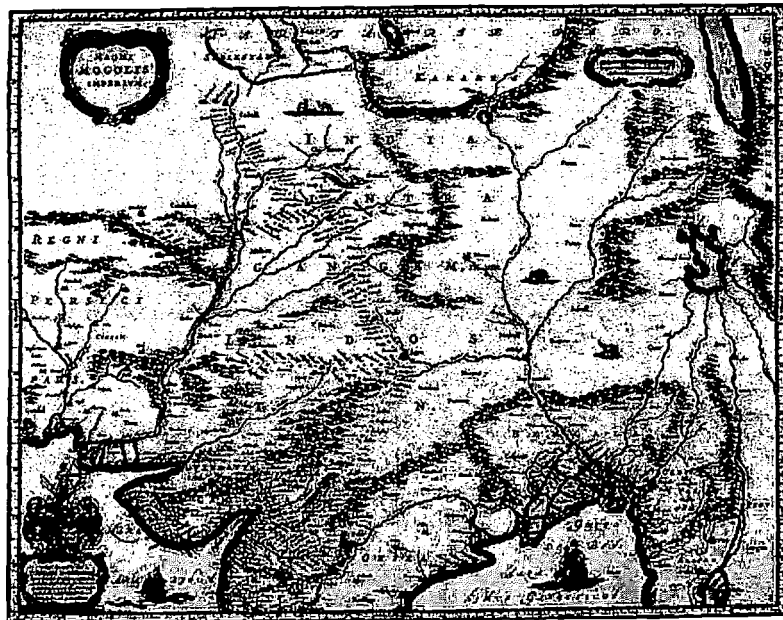




Fig. 3.9
 MAGNI MOGOLIS IMPERIUM,
 de Novo Correctum et Divisum,
 1710, Frederik de Witt.
 Size: 52 cm x 41.5 cm.
 Maps K Top 115.24, The British
 Library, St Pancras, London.



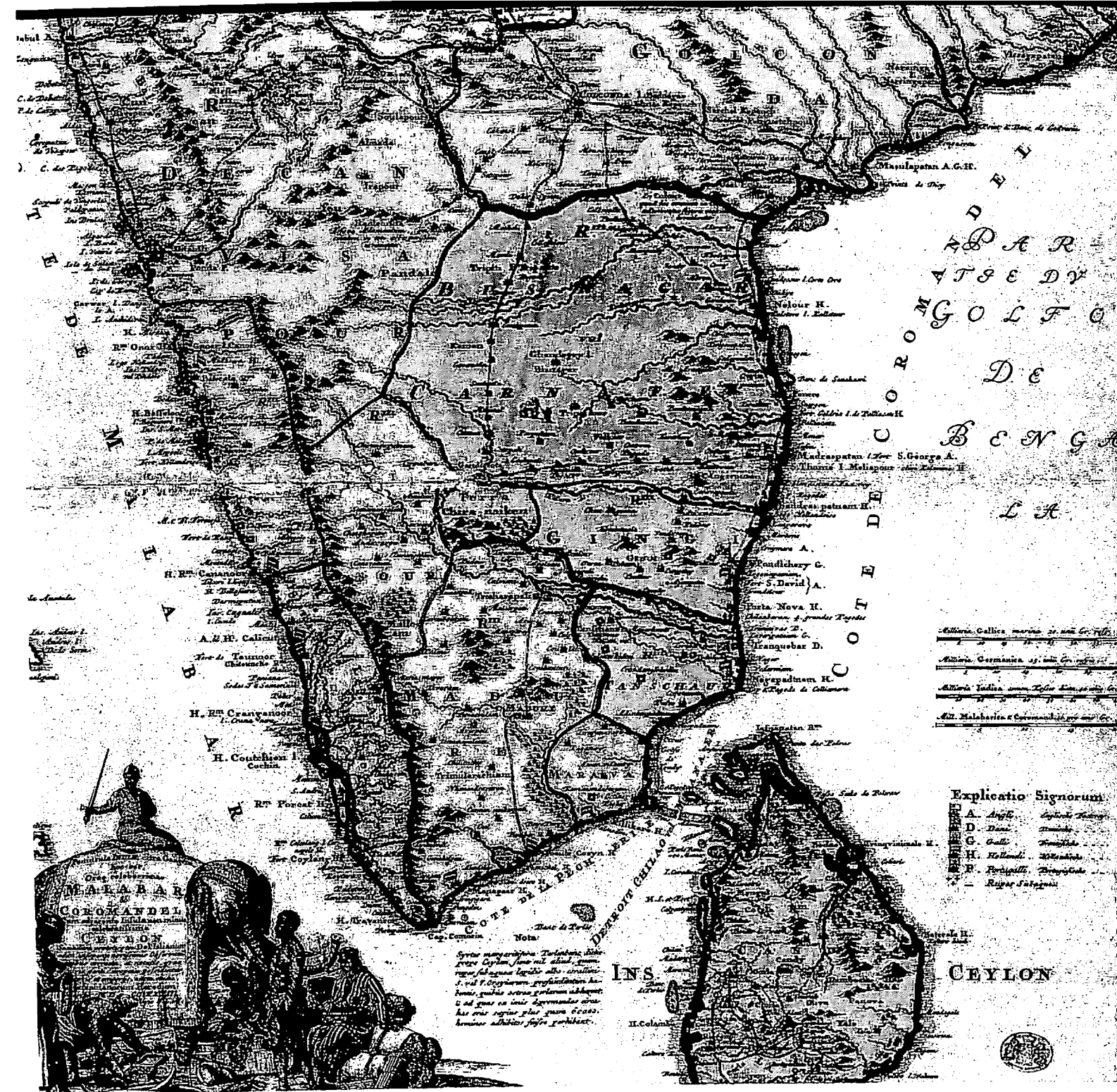
shooting arrows towards India. Cherubs were not arbitrarily featured on maps. This was a recurring image of an angel gifted with knowledge for conquering heathens. Another popular copy was published by Frederik de Witt in 1647. He showed the title cartouche in the form of two cherubs holding a sheet with the words *MAGNI MOGOLIS IMPERIUM de Novo Correctum et Divisum* (Fig. 3.9). This map emphasised the provinces within the empire.

A Latin map of India, *Peninsula INDIAE, citra Gangem, hoc est Orae celeberrimae MALABAR & COROMANDEL Cum adjacente Insula non minus celebratissima CEYLON* was engraved in 1733 (Fig. 3.10). It was included in Matthaeus Scutter's *Atlantis Geographicus Maior*, under the publisher's Latin name *Homannianorum Heredum* (the Homann Heirs). The famous cartographer Johann Baptist Homann had founded the company bearing his name in 1702 in Nuremberg in Germany.

This map is an important historical document as it shows the English, Danish, French, Dutch and Portuguese establishments in the Deccan in the early 1730s. The major kingdoms of the time, trade routes, cities, ports and rocky coasts are marked. The Ganges River, however, is misplaced.

The cartouche paints a recurring exotic image of India in the early 18th century. It shows Arab traders and their African slaves inspecting ivory, fruit, jewels and coir ropes. A rich merchant smokes his pipe with his pet *cheetahs* by his side, while an armed soldier on an elephant guards the wares.

In the Mughal period, a Persian world atlas was made in the indigenous style. It showed the *Inhabited Quarter* (world) in brilliantly coloured maps. These maps were included in the Mughal administrator Sadiq Isfahani's encyclopaedic work, *Shahid-i-Sadiq*,



completed in 1647. Isfahani's maps of India show several place names written along the edges at appropriate latitudes, but they are not marked on the map itself. The manuscript of the *Shahid-i-Sadiq* lies in the British Library. An examination of the *Inhabited Quarter* by Irfan Habib suggests that these maps are based on earlier ones by Islamic cartographers. The maps were made in Jaunpur, in the Doab of the Ganges and Jamuna Rivers, very close to where a century later Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Gentil had his maps painted.

A very interesting Persian Mughal military map is in the repository of the National Archives of India. This map is in very poor condition, with parts missing. A photograph of the manuscript which is owned by the SOI, reduced by half, is available at the British Library. The *Mughal Map of Northwest India* (Fig. 3.11) was probably made around 1780 for the use of the EIC army. It is a copy of an original Mughal map dated between 1650 and 1730. The names are in Persian script with English transliteration added later. The map shows distances between towns, river crossings, mountain passes: in short, information required for the movement of troops. It extends from the Jamuna River in the east to Helmund in the west, Kashmir in the north to the Arabian Sea in the south. The island of Bukhur in the Indus River, a strategic crossing point, is marked conspicuously. This map points to the fact that maps were in use by the Mughals. There are many examples of long and narrow route maps, but this map demonstrates the ability to represent large areas in one rectangular map sheet.

In the waning years of Mughal rule, several provincial governors of the Mughal Empire became regionally important. The Nawabs of Awadh (Oudh)

Explicatio Signorum

A.	Angli.	Anglores Indiarum.
B.	Dani.	Indiarum.
C.	Delli.	Indiarum.
D.	Hollandi.	Indiarum.
E.	Portugalli.	Indiarum.
F.	Rajae Satavahanae.	Indiarum.

completed in 1647. Isfahani's maps of India show several place names written along the edges at appropriate latitudes, but they are not marked on the map itself. The manuscript of the *Shahid-i-Sadiq* lies in the British Library. An examination of the *Inhabited Quarter* by Irfan Habib suggests that these maps are based on earlier ones by Islamic cartographers. The maps were made in Jaunpur, in the Doab of the Ganges and Jamuna Rivers, very close to where a century later Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Gentil had his maps painted.

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and Bengal and the Nizam of Hyderabad, for instance, were given large tracts to govern in recognition of their loyalty and services to the Emperor. They were known to employ foreign engineers, soldiers, tutors and administrators. Since wars were common, as were uprisings and feuds within a governor's own subjects, large armies were maintained and foreign soldiers often employed. At the same time, wars between the Western nations at different times in Europe, Asia and the Americas, poverty at home and the yen for travel to distant lands brought young foreign men in search of work to India. Several adopted Indian habits and settled in the country.

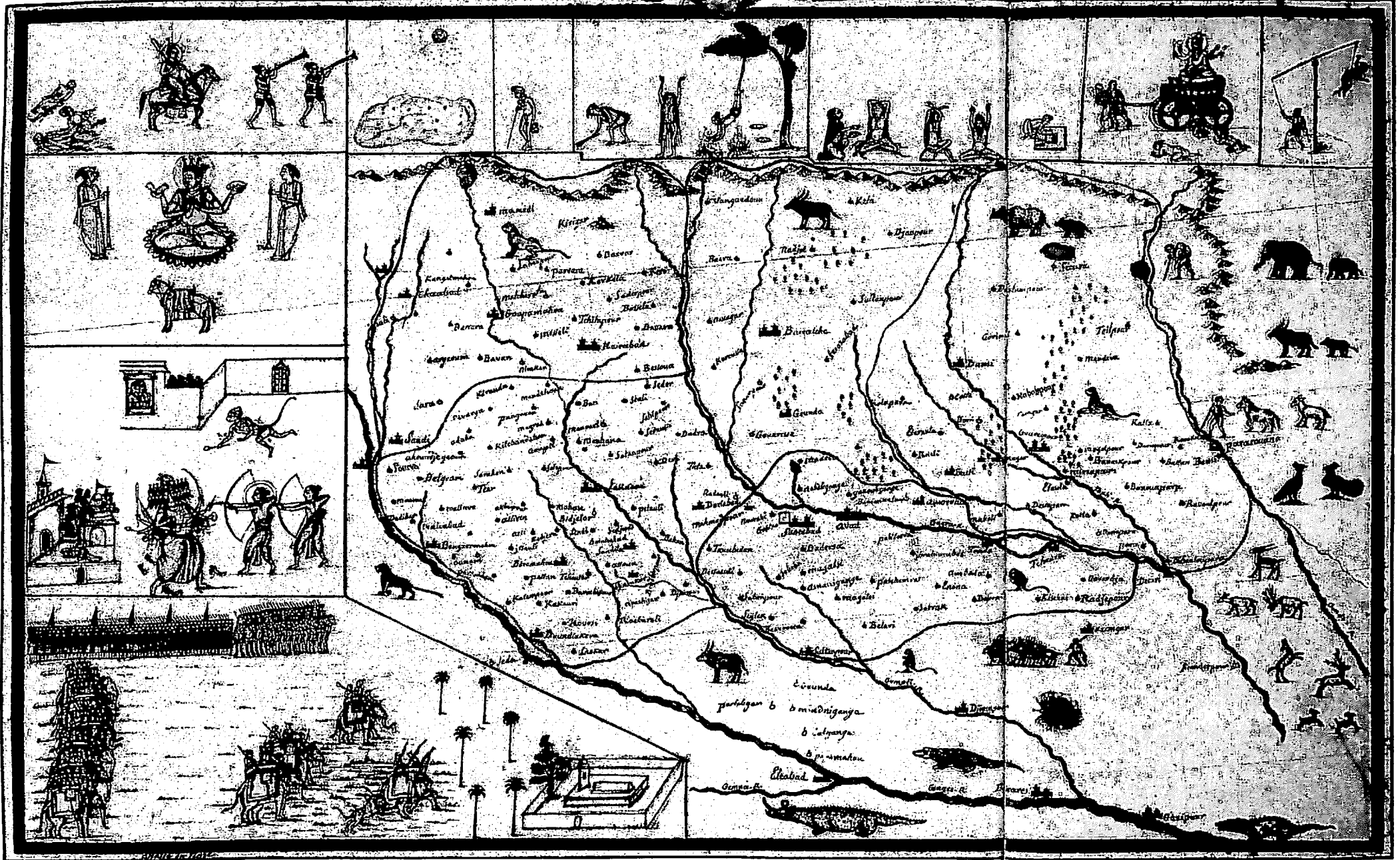
One such Frenchman was Colonel Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Gentil, who lived in India for 25 years. Circumstances led to him living in the court of Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh (*Avad*) for seven years as the Agent of the French Government from 1767 to early 1775. When he finally returned to France in October 1777, he had an enormous collection of Indian cultural artifacts, books, musical instruments, tapestry and even animals.

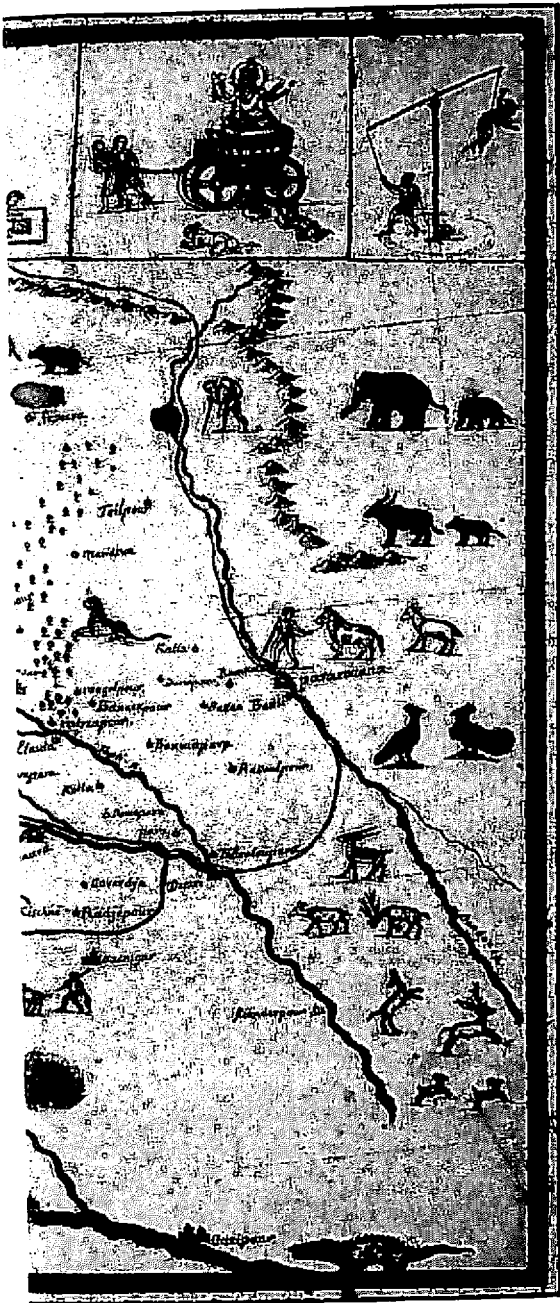
While in India, Gentil had undertaken an unusual enterprise. He had employed the court artists to draw maps of the Mughal Empire and the Deccan. His maps were collated as all other Indian maps of the time, from personal experience of places, information gathered from other sources, and hearsay. Like William Baffin before him, Gentil referred to Abul Fazl's *Ain-e Akbari*, which had a list of the *subas* ruled by the Mughals. Since these were lists and not mapped, Gentil located all places listed under a *suba* to delineate the province. So, as may be expected, the one he lived in, Awadh, was quite detailed and well executed. Deccan, which

Facing page: Fig. 3.10
Peninsula INDIAE, citra Gangem, hoc est Orae celeberrimae MALABAR & COROMANDEL Cum adjacente Insula non minus celebratissima CEYLON, Homannianorum Heredum, 1733.
 As in Ortelius' 1571 map, the cartouche emphasises the exotic elephant and busy merchant.
 Size: 48 cm x 54.5 cm.
 Maps K Top 115.64, The British Library, St Pancras, London.

AVAD

quon nomina aucti Oude





was not a *suba* but a region the French were familiar with, since they had set up factories along the coasts and had close friendly relations with their neighbouring governments, was also well executed. As one moved to the far extremities of the Empire, fewer sources of information were available, so the maps were less informative. Such was true of the provinces of Caboul and Thatta. The Aurangabad *suba* under the governorship of the Nawab-e-Mulk was near to his home in Awadh, and so perhaps was remarkably well represented.

Gentil's maps of India were made to give the outside world a complete picture and experience of India. Not only did each *suba* have a page to itself, but the important characteristics of the region were artistically sketched in. This was done in the Indian miniature painting style and sketches occupied all the empty spaces surrounding the mapped area. The colours were always pastel and each map was made lively with paintings of local animals, dancers and common people at their daily activities. In the maps shown here, AVAD (Fig. 3.12) is decorated with scenes from the Ramayana: King Ravan with his ten heads and ten arms battles with the two brothers Ram and Lakshman, who have gone to rescue incarcerated Sita. The scene includes the monkey Hanuman swinging across to Sita in her prison, with word from husband Ram. Another vignette is from a local Muslim folklore: the king's cavalry of elephants and horses stand guard while he approaches a saint's *mazhar* (tomb) to pay respect, but is attacked by a lion which is put down by his soldiers. Ascetics in various ritual poses are drawn on the top border of the map. All forms of combat between wrestling men, elephants, camels, rams and roosters are shown in CABOUL (Fig. 3.13). In AURENGABAD (Fig. 3.14),

Fig. 3.12
AVAD, where Gentil lived
for several years. *ESSAI SUR
L'INDOUSTAN OU EMPIRE MOGOL*,
Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Gentil,
Paris, 1785.
Size: 34 cm x 22 cm.
Maps 195.b.18, The British Library,
St Pancras, London.

CABOUL

the famous carvings of the Ellora caves are shown in relief within the mountain ranges. And finally, axes, daggers, swords, spears and knives are shown in MALVA, that was a famous centre for making these implements (Fig. 3.15). The cartouches and compass roses, commonly seen in European style maps of the time, are all missing. Regrettably, the men who drafted these maps remained unnamed. However, in another similar unpublished manuscript, Gentil acknowledged the 'peintres indiens Nevasilal and Mounsingue etc., au service du Nabob Visio Soudjaadula...'. In view of the similarities in the paintings included in the two manuscripts, it is possible that the paintings were the work of the same artists.

Gentil's maps of India represented more information than others of the time. On his return to France, he gifted a copy of this beautifully designed and bound atlas to King Louis XVI. Unfortunately, as his atlas of India was not published, it remained unknown to the world till after his death, when his son published it. Although the atlas had been executed in 1770, it was published in 1785, when the world came to know of this collection of maps made by a person who had lived in India for a quarter century and actually visited several places shown in them. Gentil's maps had many more names of places than other maps of the same period, although his maps were not surveyed.

An original of Gentil's Atlas is in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, France. By the time Gentil's published Atlas was known to cartographers, the first of James Rennell's surveyed maps of India in the form of A Bengal Atlas and the Map of Hindoustan were already widely distributed. In independent India, Gentil's original contribution to the cartography of India was almost completely ignored

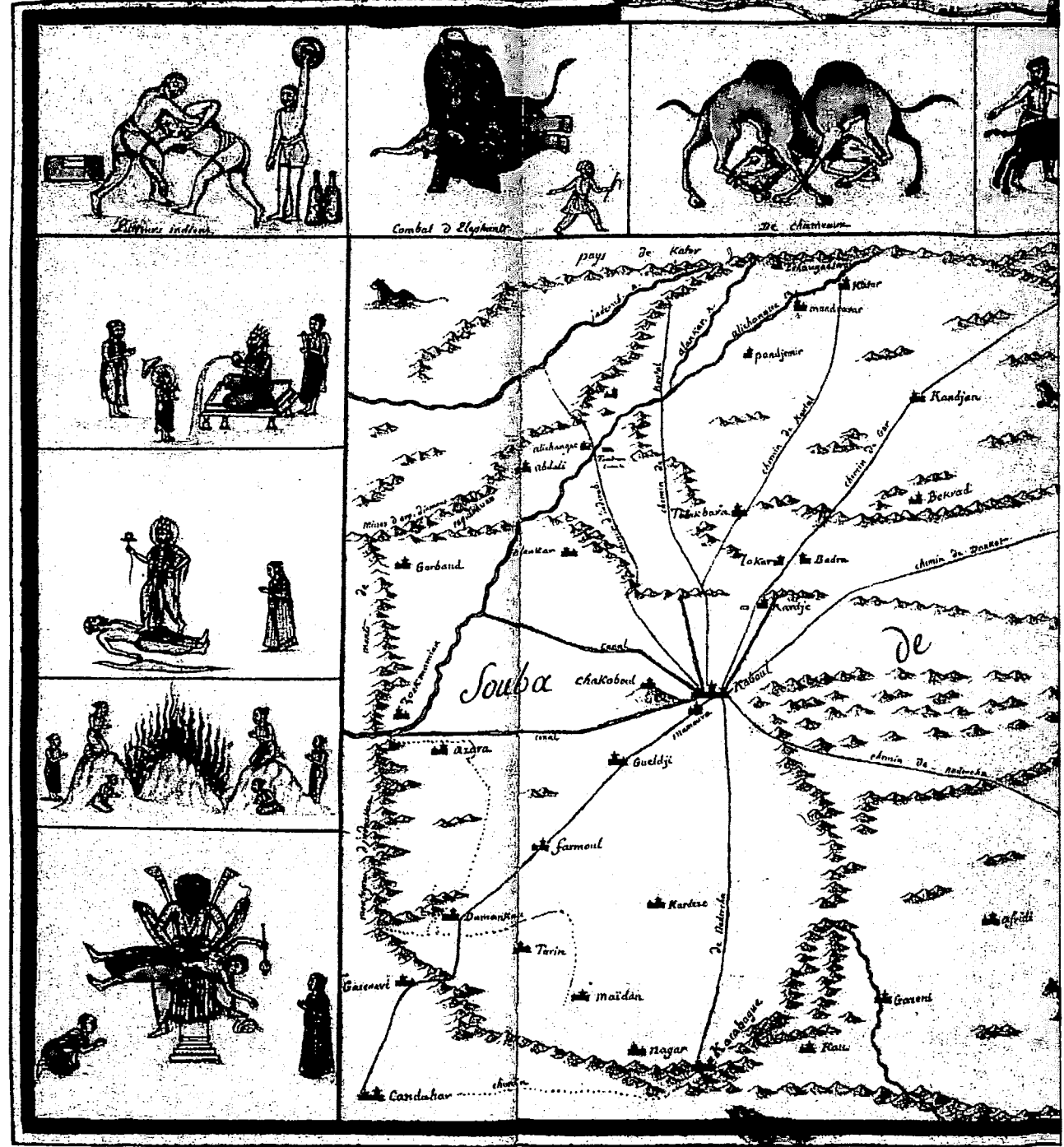
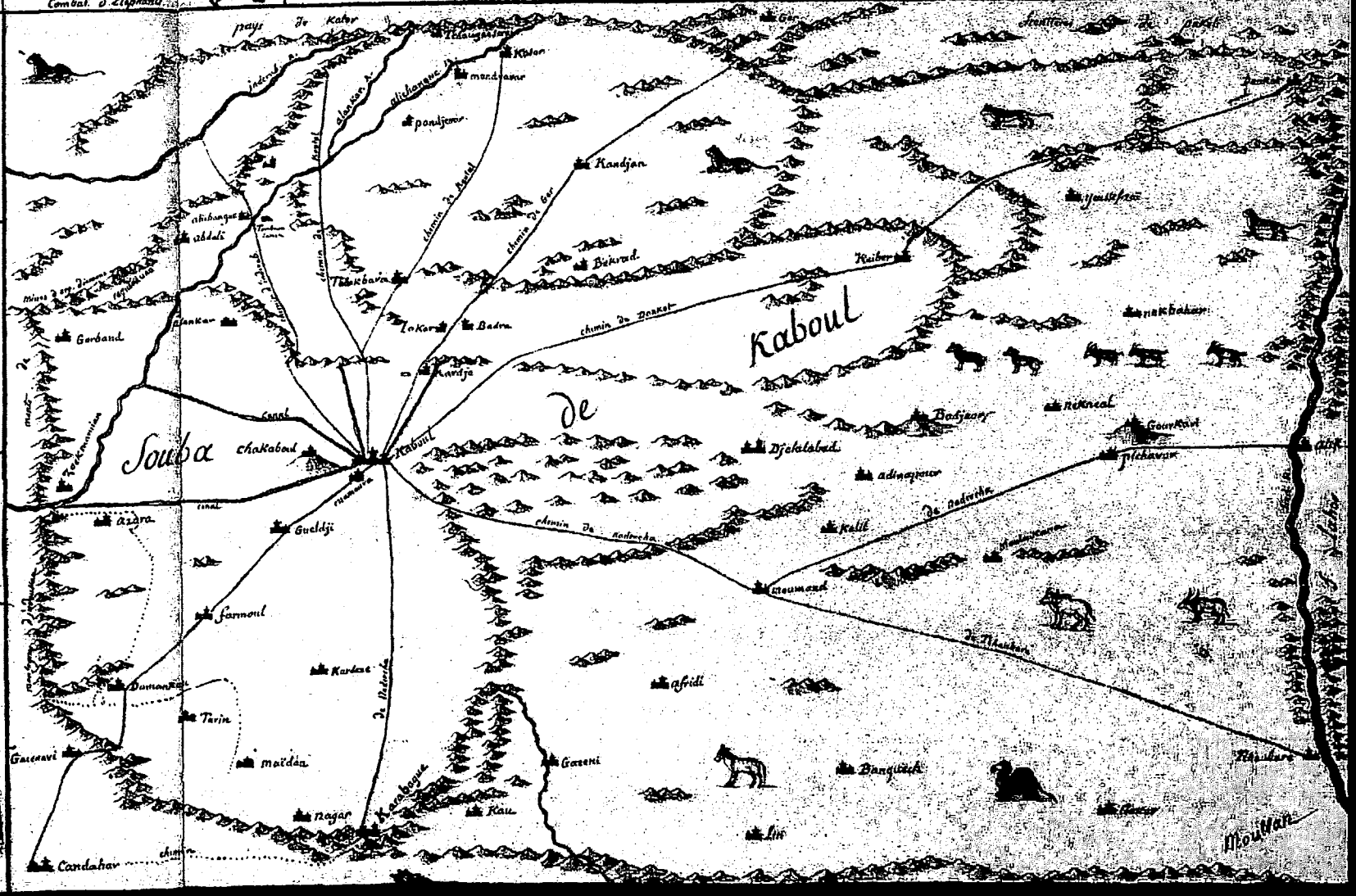
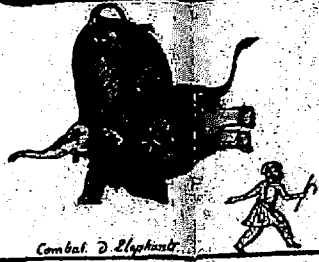
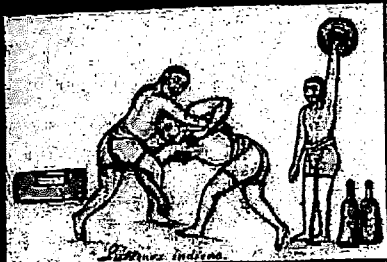


Fig. 3.13
CABOUL, the farthest western extent of the Mughal Empire. *ESSAI SUR L'INDOUSTAN OU EMPIRE MOGOL*, Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Gentil, Paris, 1785. Size: 35.5 cm x 23.5 cm. Maps 195.b.18, The British Library, St Pancras, London.

Following pages 94-95: Fig. 3.14
AURENGABAD, showing sculptures in the Ellora caves, Maratha soldiers and a mendicant with herbs. *ESSAI SUR L'INDOUSTAN OU EMPIRE MOGOL*, Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Gentil, Paris, 1785. Size: 37 cm x 16.5 cm. Maps 195.b.18, The British Library, St Pancras, London.

CABOUL



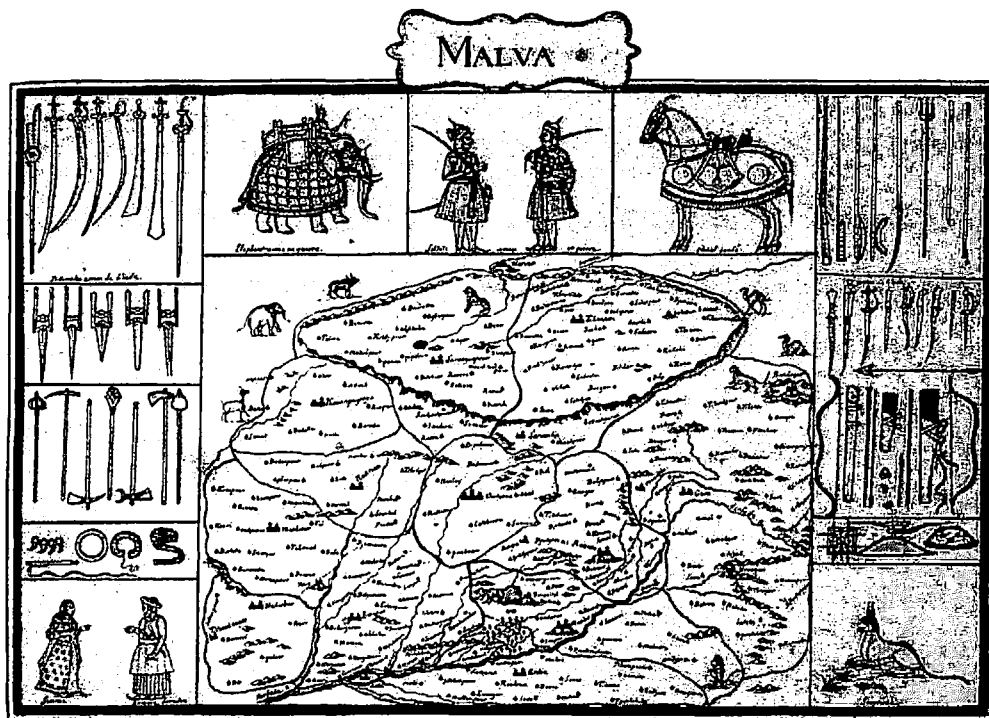


Fig. 3.15
MALVA, famous for the
manufacture of knives and
other implements. *ESSAI SUR
L'INDOUSTAN OU EMPIRE MOGOL*,
Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Gentil,
Paris, 1785.
Size: 27 cm x 20 cm.
Maps 195.b.18, The British
Library, St Pancras, London.

till Susan Gole published *Maps of Mughal India*, an English version of the *Atlas* in 1988. Interestingly, Irfan Habib, in his book *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, like Gentil, shows the Mughal *subas* based on the *Ain-e-Akbari*, but identifies the positions of the places on the basis of modern surveyed maps. His maps are, therefore, easily understood by contemporary readers.

These imaginatively designed maps of India, from Baffin to Gentil, added a great deal of information to the knowledge of the Mughal

Empire. Yet, we know that these maps of the Mughal Empire were mere sketches filled in with information gathered from hearsay and observation. They were drawings of places represented by symbols of mountains, rivers, roads and approximate boundaries. But along the coasts and over the seas, in this same period, the first charts were being made by hydrographers. And they used scientific means and applied principles of astronomy, geodesy, instrumentation and cartography to create the first reliable modern maps of India.