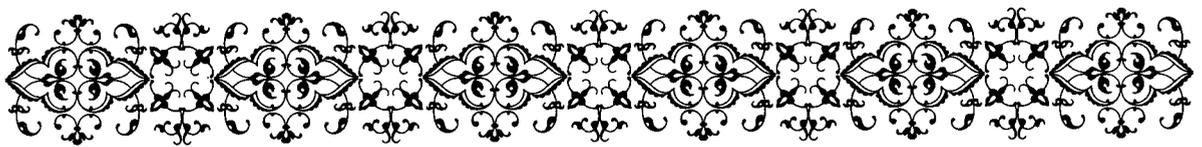


ASIA
IN THE EYES OF
EUROPE

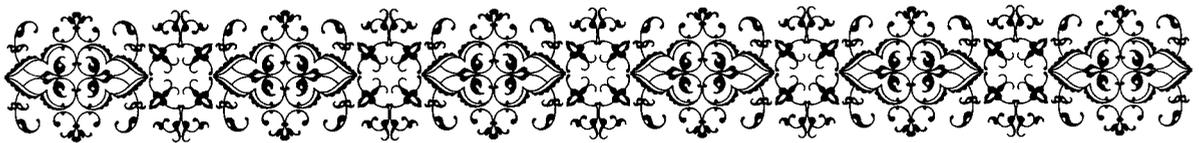
Sixteenth
through
Eighteenth
Centuries

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A S I A
I N T H E E Y E S O F
E U R O P E
Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries



DONALD F. LACH





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Half title from Philippus Baldaeus,
*Naaauwkeurige beschryvinge van Malabar en Choromandel,
der zelve aangrenzende ryken, en hat machtige eyland Ceylon, 1672.*

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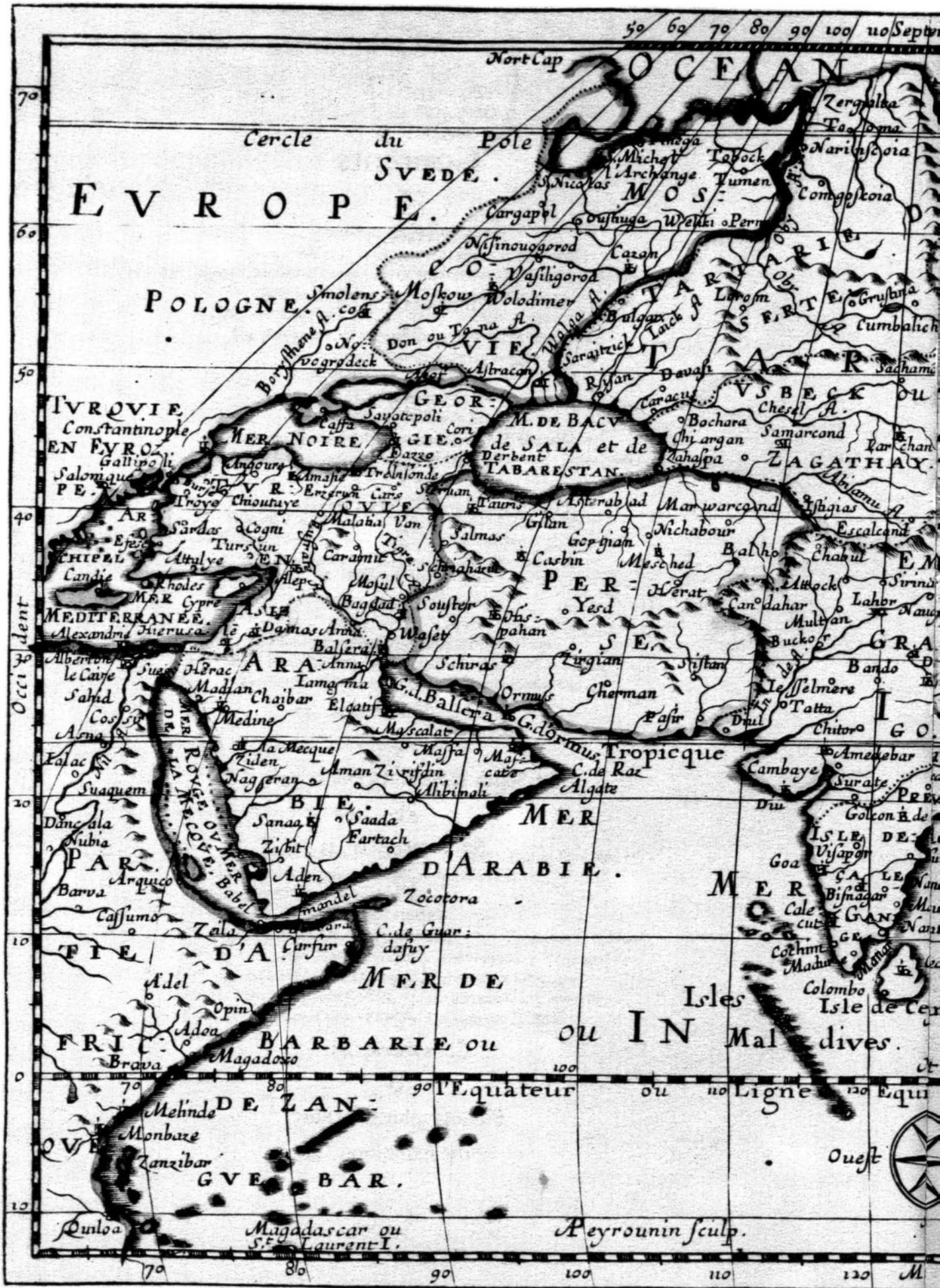
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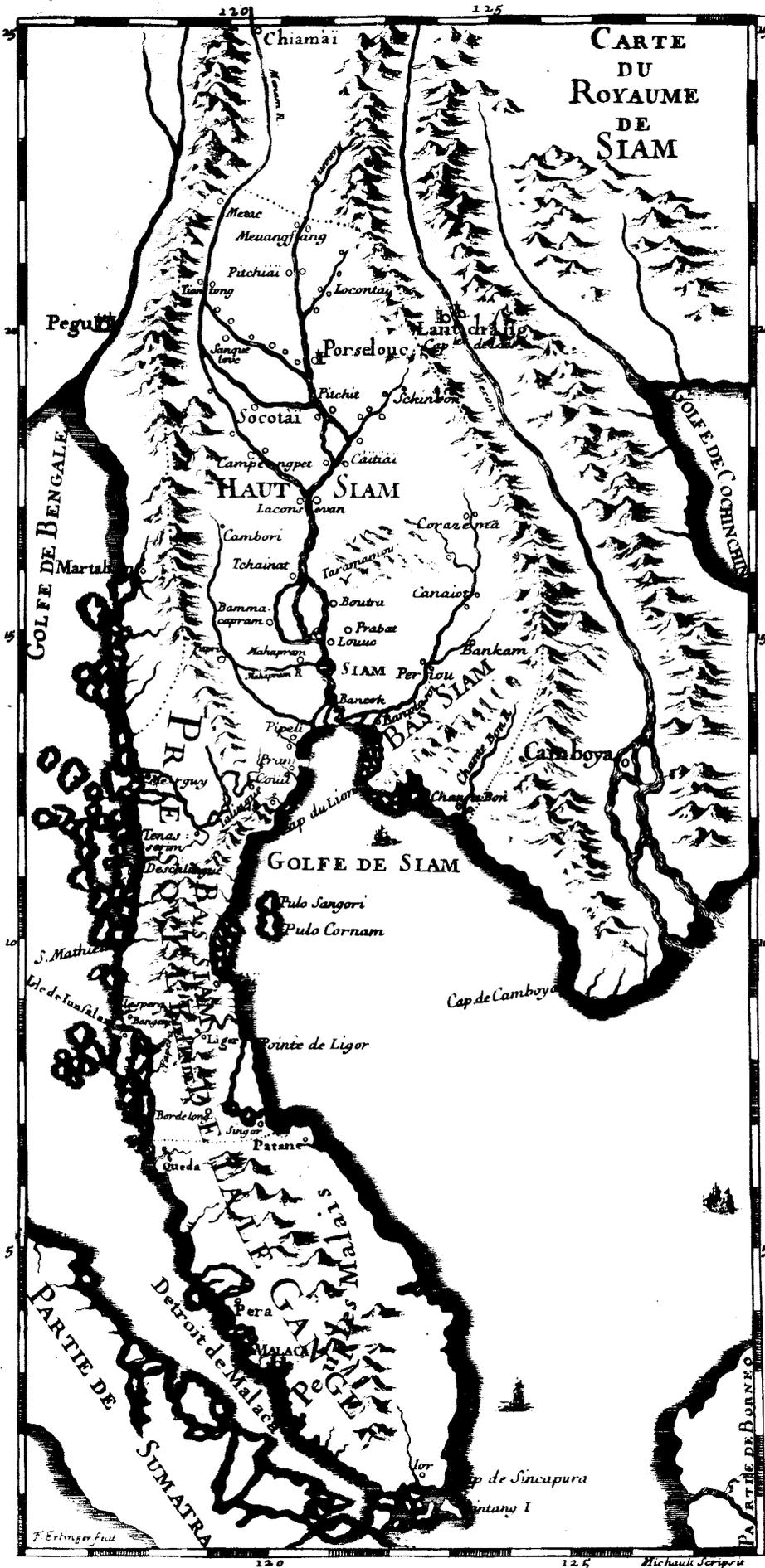
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SEPTENTRIONAL.

L'ASIE
 Par le Sieur Sanson, d'Abbeville
 Geographe ordinaire du Roy
 A Paris chez l'Auteur
 Avec Priuilege pour vingt ans
 1652.

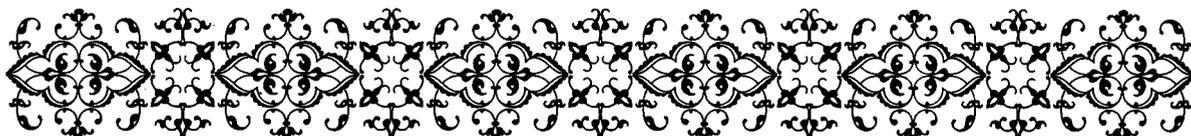


Nicolas Sanson, L'Asie en plusieurs cartes nouvelles et exactes, 1652.



Simon de La Loubère, *Du royaume de Siam*, 1691.

Preface

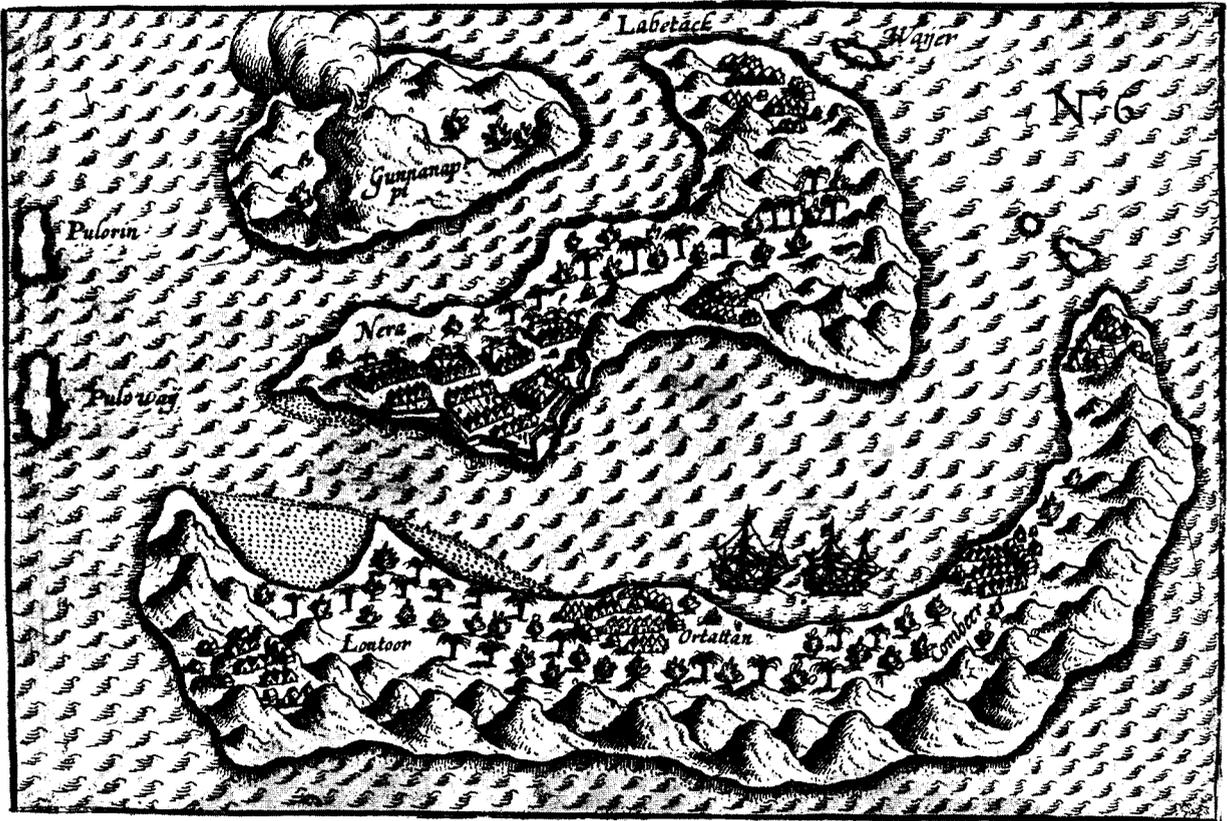


THIS exhibition examines one of the most important and enduring themes in Western thought. From the time of the Renaissance onward, Western consciousness has been shaped by a multitude of diverse and rapidly changing images of Asia and its peoples. Explorers, traders, missionaries, and scholars returned from the East with stories of strange plants, animals, and cultures beyond the limits of European experience. Incorporated within developing fields of knowledge from astronomy to botany, these reports formed the basis of new and constantly altered visions of what lay beyond the Eastern horizon. In many important ways, the process of Western exploration and discovery of Asia continues to the present day. From the Persian Gulf to Vietnam to China, the West is still contending with a host of powerful and barely-understood images conjured by the ancient cultures of the East.

In examining "Asia in the Eyes of Europe," we are fortunate to be able to benefit from the distinguished scholarly research of Professor Donald F. Lach. In his text for the exhibition and catalogue, Professor Lach has compressed the insights of a lengthy career in Asian studies and provided a fascinating overview of the Western intellectual tradition at a crucial period in its development. We are grateful for his generous contribution to the creation of this exhibition.

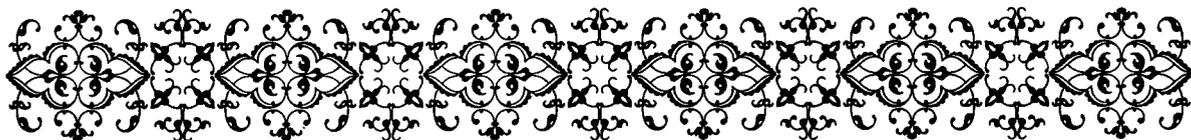
While selecting the books and preparing the text, Professor Lach worked closely with Kim Coventry, the coordinator of exhibitions in Special Collections. Kim shepherded the exhibition through the entire process from conception to production, consulted with Lynn Martin on the design of the catalogue, and managed the technical details of installation and display. With Professor Lach, she deserves a large measure of credit for the final shape of the exhibition.

Daniel Meyer
Acting Curator



Willem Lodewijcksz, *Premier livre de l'histoire de la navigation aux Indes orientales par les hollandois*, 1609.

Introduction



THROUGHOUT history the European view of Asia has changed kaleidoscopically. Before the sixteenth century the Europeans saw Asia to the east of the Indus as a shadowy image relayed to them through intermediaries, a circumstance which led to the mixing of myth with fact. In the Age of the Great Discoveries (16th–18th centuries) Europeans went personally and directly to the East by sea and land and returned home with their own stories and souvenirs from Asia. Through these new channels of information and through constantly growing trade and missionary relations the fanciful East was gradually replaced in Europe's perceptions by a more realistic image of Asia. India, China, and Japan emerged clearly as great independent countries with their own civilizations that rivaled Christian Europe in vitality and sophistication. Even Asia's lesser regions, particularly Siam, Vietnam, Formosa, Java, and the Philippines, were added to the European picture as time went on. But while realism gradually replaced fantasy, the dream of an exotic East never faded out completely from the European consciousness. The vogue of Chinoiserie in eighteenth-century European literature and art testifies to the persistence of the fabulous.

Reports by the European travelers to the East began to be printed in Europe during the early sixteenth century. What started as a trickle gradually swelled into a deluge of published materials from presses all over western Europe. Initially most of the books about Asia emanated from the presses in southern Europe, but as the center of economic and political gravity shifted to northern Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, books on the overseas world came out with increasing frequency from the presses in the Low Countries, south Germany, England, and France. The publishers themselves soon came to realize that books on exotic subjects and in the vernacular languages could be sold profitably to a population whose literacy was steadily increasing.

In the middle of the sixteenth century the missionaries of the newly founded Society of Jesus took the lead in Catholic missions to reap the harvest they thought awaited them in pagan Asia. Instructed by Rome to report regularly on their missionizing progress, the Jesuits in the field penned formal annual reports and informal personal letters to their superiors, colleagues, and friends in Europe. While these were designed as letters for the edification of the faithful, most of them contained discrete information on Asian matters that the recipients in Europe characterized as "curious." With the passage of time the letters from the widely scattered mission stations in Asia tended to become less edifying and more and more "curious." In Europe many of these letters were compiled and then published in book form for the moral benefit of the laity and as an inspiration to other Jesuits to volunteer for the missions.

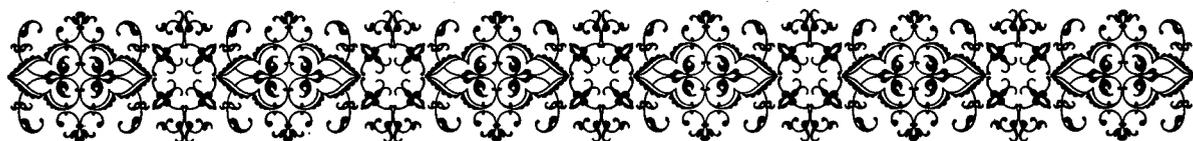
Other missionaries and secular writers contemporaneously published reports on Asia at the request of their superiors or on their own initiative. In Portugal the

earliest commercial and missionary reports became the basis for João de Barros' monumental *Décadas da Asia*, a chronicle-narrative of the Portuguese exploits in Asia that was published in parts, beginning in 1552, and was continued by others well into the seventeenth century. Meanwhile in Venice Giovanni Battista Ramusio was compiling his *Navigazioni*, 1550–59, the first of the great collections of retrospective and contemporary travel accounts. Soon others began to compile separate studies of the individual countries of Asia, one of the most notable being the work of the Spanish Augustinian Juan González de Mendoza called the *Historia ... del gran reyno de la China*, 1585. In the succeeding centuries other travel collections and ethnohistories were published throughout Europe, especially in the northern countries. Translations of these works and many others helped to circulate news of Asia from one European country to the other.

In many of these books the texts were enriched by illustrations, especially copper engravings of maps, sketches made in Asia by amateur artists, and depictions of Asian subjects created in Europe by professional artists who tried to follow as best they could the descriptions in the texts. Individual maps like travel accounts were compiled, revised, and published in collections called atlases by Mercator, Ortelius, and the Blaeu family. The sketches made in Asia were most often reproduced faithfully by the engravers of the Netherlands. The Dutch engravings, as well as those of a few others, were borrowed and sometimes altered, by presses all over western Europe. Portable objects—costumes, jewelry, and other everyday objects—were often copied accurately by European artists who incorporated them into their representations of Asian life. At other times the unfamiliar was portrayed through the use of familiar stereotypes, such as a temple or mosque being shown with Christian attributes, a practice which distorted Asian realities. Realism in depiction reached its apogee in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

In the eighteenth century the European depictions, often copied from earlier engravings of Asian places and peoples, were generally less clear and more fanciful. Accuracy of depiction of mundane matters became of less interest in Europe as its intellectuals became more preoccupied, especially during the Enlightenment, with understanding and analyzing the languages, religions, and philosophies of the East and in undertaking comparative studies. European artists and engravers meanwhile began to use Asian peoples and products, especially “porcelain Chinese,” for their own exotic purposes. The Industrial Revolution which began in late eighteenth-century Europe created a technological gap between Europe and Asia that brought an end to our period—a time when Asia and Europe were at about the same level of technical achievement.

The Fantastic Tradition



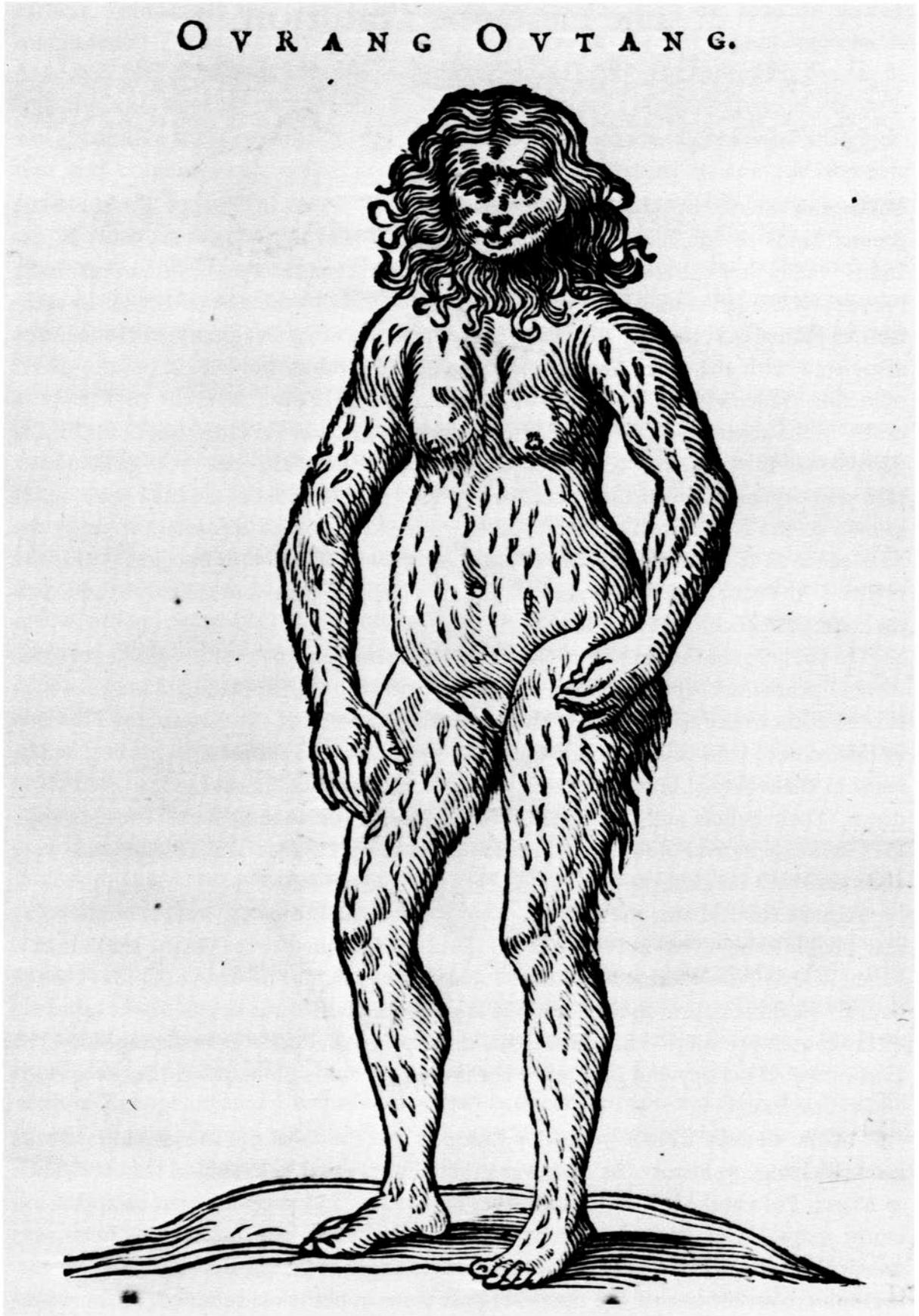
FROM the Greeks onward, "India" was a general name in Europe for the most remote lands to the East. Alexander the Great's campaigns (326–324 B.C.) in the Indus valley inaugurated a period of more direct intercourse which markedly broadened the latitudes of fact and fantasy about Asia to the east of Persia. In addition to factual accounts of Alexander's exploits, a host of imaginary stories became associated with the great Macedonian's name. In Roman times to A.D. 300, direct maritime trade with India and overland trade with China brought to Europe a much more accurate picture of Asia's geography. It was Ptolemy of Alexandria, a geographer of the second Christian century (active A.D. 127–60) who gave a basic plan and organization to European cartography. While India and China were better known to the Romans than to the Greeks, very little factual information about the East came to Europe during the Middle Ages. In this millennium (300–1300) the myths of the past were Christianized and new geographical fantasies were added to the European picture of the East.

In the popular imagination "India" was a synonym for wealth — gold, precious stones, pearls, and spices. It was a land of griffons, monsters, and demons which existed somewhere to the east of the terrestrial paradise of the Christians. The men in this remote land of wonders were often thought to be monsters with dog heads, faces in their chests, and feet so large they could be used as sunshades when lying down. Their beliefs and their gods were as monstrous as their men. These strange dark-skinned natives flourished in a land free of pestilence and disease and were endowed with magical powers.

Unlike the Indians, the Chinese from Roman times onward were thought to be real people who lived in "Serica," the land of silk (hence our word sericulture). When Marco Polo returned to Europe in 1295, his account of China (Cathay) as the largest, wealthiest, and most populous land in the world was not believed by many of his contemporaries. While his factual description gradually gained credibility, the Europeans of his day and long after continued to cherish a belief in the mysterious and exotic East.

In the century from 1475 to 1575 Europe's perception of the world underwent its greatest change in history. As Asia was gradually revealed by overland travelers, such as Marco Polo and Sir John Mandeville, new places and people began to appear on world maps. After Ptolemaic maps began to be issued in printed form from 1477 onward, the depictions of Asia became increasingly realistic. But many of the cartographic conventions of the medieval past were nonetheless retained, as for example in the world map of 1519 prepared by Lopo Homem-Reinels for the king of Portugal. In the depiction of India the blank spaces are filled with European-type trees in the north and everywhere European-type castles and fortresses are spotted. Elsewhere appear black, spear-holding natives, elephants, and a fairly authentic one-horned rhinoceros. At the same time the cartographers also incorporated into their

O V R A N G O V T A N G .

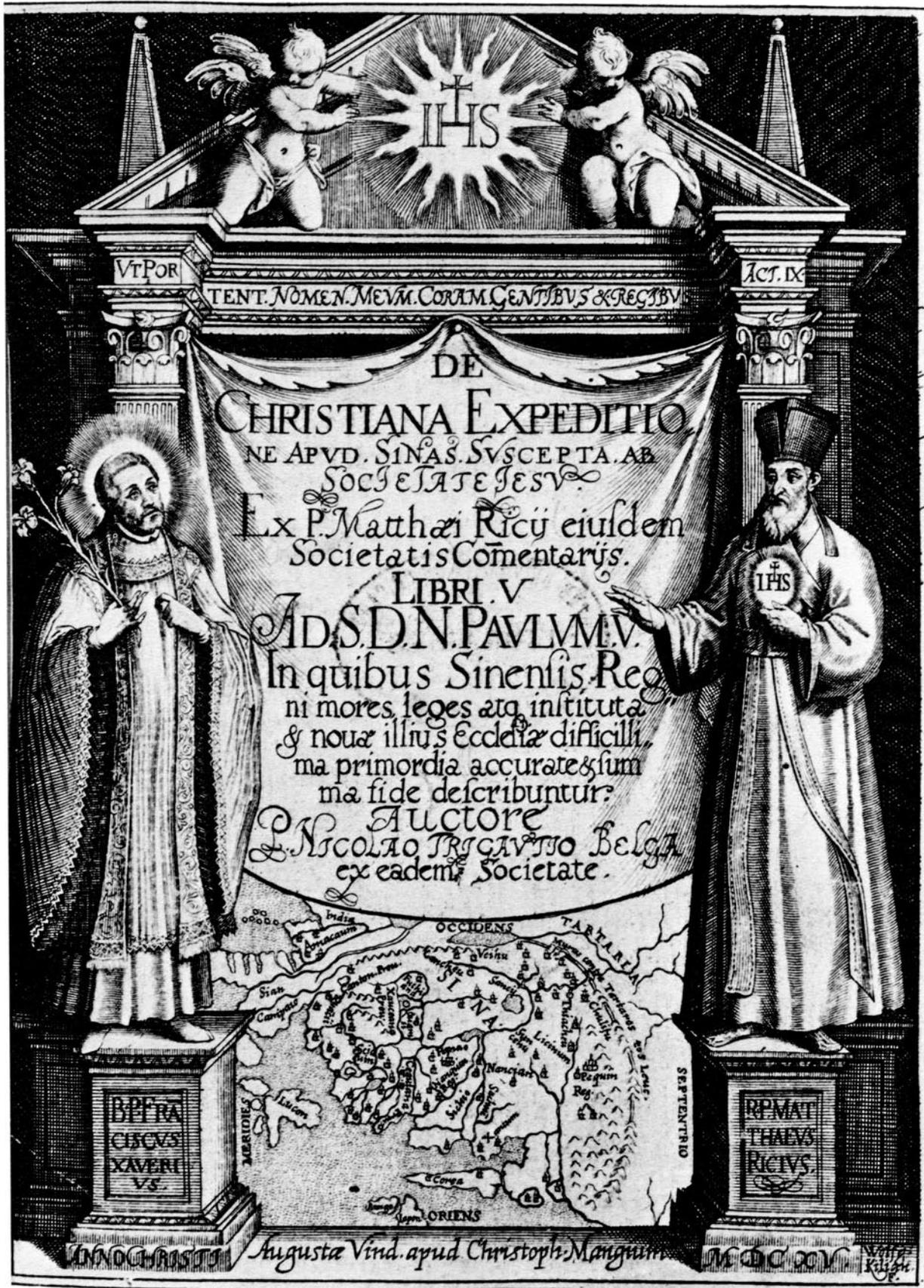


⌘ JAKOB DE BONDT in Willem Piso, *De Indiae utriusque re naturali et medica*, 1658. ⌘ While Bontius claims to have seen a “female satyr” himself and to have made a drawing of her, this published depiction was probably drawn in Europe. Bontius was the first to introduce the Malay name Orang-Utan (“man of the woods”) to European literature. But certainly this portrait bears no resemblance to the long-armed ape of Borneo and Sumatra to which we now commonly apply the name Orang-Utan.

depictions the places in southwestern India actually reported on by contemporary sailors, merchants, and missionaries.

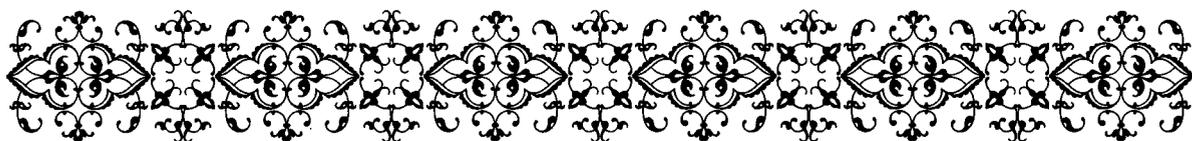
The fantastic tradition was also kept alive in Renaissance travel books such as Balthasar Springer's *Indienfahrt* (1505–06) and in the *Cosmographie* (1550) of Sebastian Münster. In these books, as in many maps, classical and medieval lore about Asia continued to be treated seriously—even more so than the newer information being funnelled into Europe. One of the most popular and widely-read travel books of the 16th to 18th centuries was the *Peregrinaciones* of Fernão Mendes Pinto (d. 1583), a mixture of the factual and the fanciful that still baffles scholars who try to separate one from the other.

In books which achieved a high degree of accuracy such as the report of François Bernier on Mughul India (1670), the engravers in Europe added fanciful pictures which helped to preserve coveted European images. Most striking in this regard is the portrait of an “Ourang Outang” in an otherwise scholarly book on tropical medicine by Jakob de Bondt (Bontius) first printed at Leyden in 1642. In his discussion of “quadrupeds, birds, and fishes,” Bontius insists that “this curious monster with its human face does exist as it has the human habit of sighing as well as that of shedding tears.” He further claims that he himself saw “the female satyr (page 12), [who] hid her person with great shyness for the strange men....”



✠ MATTEO RICCI, *De christiana expeditione apud Sinas*, 1615. ✠ Francis Xavier, the Apostle of the Indies, shown on the left, with Matteo Ricci, the Apostle of China, shown on the right. Xavier was canonized in 1622, just seven years after this book was published. Some Jesuits persist until today in seeking sainthood for Ricci.

Jesuit Letterbooks and Histories



THE Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, approved in 1558, decreed that letters between “subjects and superiors” should be exchanged on a regular schedule to foster the spirit of union among the Society’s members. Only annual letters were required from the missionaries in Asia because the fleets usually arrived in Europe but once each year. These annual reports, as well as many individual letters, usually wound up in Rome. Edited selections from the annual letters began to be published at Rome in 1583 for the edification of the general public and for the stimulation of interest in the missions. Over the next one hundred and ninety years (1583 to 1773, the date of the dissolution of the Society) the Jesuits created an international intelligence system that could not be rivaled by any of the world’s secular powers.

Individual letters from the East began to be published separately in the vernacular languages by enterprising printers even before the Jesuits issued official Latin letterbooks. The letters from Japan were particularly popular in the late sixteenth century because of the great progress that the Jesuits were then making there. With the closure in 1640 of Japan to all Europeans except the Dutch the Jesuit letters hereafter concentrated on China. In 1615 Nicolas Trigault published the *De christiana expeditione* (Augsburg) based on the papers of Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), the founder of the Jesuit mission in China. This was one of the most important books on China produced during the seventeenth century and was widely plagiarized. On its frontispiece shown here (page 14) Ricci stands on a plane with the beatified Francis Xavier who would become a saint in 1622.

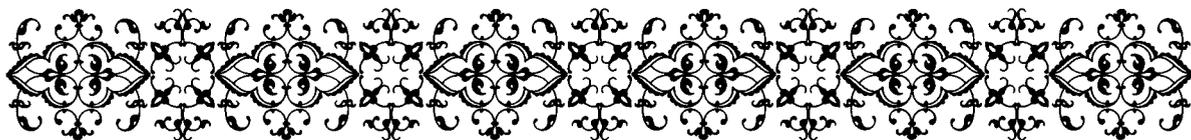
From the Jesuit letterbooks alone, the interested reader in Europe could obtain at best an episodic view of what Asia was like. Jesuits and others therefore soon began to call for a synthesis of the letterbooks and for a general history of Christian-European progress in the various parts of Asia. Ultimately, Giovanni Pietro Maffei (1536?–1603), a young and a skilled Latinist and Humanist, was delegated to prepare an official history of the Jesuit mission in Asia. In 1588 his *Historiarum indicarum libri XVI* was published at Florence and shortly thereafter reissued at Venice. Thereafter this elegant history was repeatedly published in Latin and translated into Italian and French. Besides providing a systematic history of the missions, Maffei’s work laid to rest many of the accusations that were then being made about the falsities and exaggerations being spread by the letterbooks. At this time the Jesuits also began gathering reliable information on Asia’s geography for European cartographers, such as M.V. Coronelli of Venice, to incorporate into their maps.

In the seventeenth century the Jesuit histories and secular accounts of Asia gradually superseded the letterbooks as sources of new information. The lead in publishing moved to the Netherlands, England, and France as their East India companies began to dominate the trade with Asia. The Jesuits continued, nonetheless, to carry out their missionary work in the interiors of India, China, and the Philippines and began the penetration of Tibet, Laos, and Vietnam. Reports on their

remote enterprises were sporadically published in Europe, especially in Rome and Lisbon. The involvement of the Jesuits in a controversy over the Malabar and Chinese rites produced a spate of polemical literature in Europe during the last generation of the century which generated more heat than light about Christian activities in Asia.

Systematic compilations of the letters from throughout the world became the hallmark of the Jesuit publication program in the eighteenth century. The greatest of these edited collections was the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses* published at Paris in thirty-four volumes between 1702 and 1776. After the suppression of the Society in 1773, the *Lettres édifiantes* were reedited and revised before being published with notes between 1780 and 1783 at Paris. In the meantime a similar anthology in thirty-eight parts called *Der neue Weltbott* was being compiled by J. Stöcklin and his successors that was published between 1726 and 1758. This was followed by Anton Eglauer's *Die Missionsgeschichte späterer Zeiten* which appeared in Augsburg in six volumes between 1794 and 1798. Other smaller anthologies appeared in print over the course of the century in English, Spanish, Italian, and Polish. These collections were storehouses of information about Asia that have been ransacked by scholars ever since.

Geography and Travel Literature



LONG the handmaiden of cosmography, geography became increasingly independent in the sixteenth century as its domain suddenly and startlingly was enlarged and recognized to be earthbound. Its emancipation from astronomy, astrology, and other nonterrestrial studies was effected in large measure by the flood of new scientific information about this world which raised serious questions about many of the most cherished conceptions of Europe's classical and religious authorities. Much of this new information was contained within books, particularly in travel collections and atlases. Using them as sources, the late Renaissance geographer applied to the depiction of the entire surface of the known earth the humanistic and empirical methods of local geography. In the process Ptolemy's geography and maps were radically modified over the course of the sixteenth century while being replaced by a new cartography that had its origins in Portugal.

While Portuguese cartographers produced rutters and maps, its historians wrote chronicle-narratives which summarized the military, commercial, and religious activities of their countrymen in Asia. João de Barros was officially delegated by King John III to write about Portugal's expansion into Asia. His *Décadas da Asia*, which began to be published at Lisbon in 1552, is a chronicle-narrative organized on geographical lines which earned for him the title of "the Livy of Portugal." His contemporary, Fernão Lopes de Castanheda (1500–1559), was meanwhile (1551–1561) publishing his *História* at Coimbra of the discovery and conquest of India by the Portuguese. While the Portuguese crown sought to keep secret the nautical details about the voyage to India, the Portuguese printed histories were soon translated in whole or in part into other European languages.

Ramusio, the great Venetian collector, quickly translated excerpts from Barros for Volume I (1554) of his *Navigazioni*. Castanheda's work was quickly translated into numerous continental languages and even into English by 1582. Soon, however, others began to take the lead away from the Portuguese. Of particular importance was the work of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten (1563–1611) called the *Itinerario*, which was published in Dutch between 1594 and 1596. A feature of this work which makes it unusually valuable is its excellent maps and its thirty-six plates based on Linschoten's own drawings made in India.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries most of the books on Asia were less comprehensive and usually concentrated on particular countries. Travel collections became more numerous; Hakluyt (1599) and Purchas (1625) in English; Issac Commelin (1645) in Dutch; Thévenot (1663) in French; and Churchill (1704) in English. They included both published and previously unpublished materials as well as a constantly increasing number of engravings and maps.

The related arts of printing and engraving enjoyed some of their greatest triumphs in the production of globes, maps, and atlases. By these means they were enabled to convey unvaryingly to a broad public the visual materials which lay



AWNSHAM CHURCHILL, *A collection of voyages and travels*, 1744–1747. Soldiers of Makassar (Celebes or modern South Sulawesi) in Indonesia using their blow-pipes and poisoned darts.

beyond description or definition by words alone, particularly a new sense of world geographical relationships and configurations. The globe, as an imitation of the world, was celebrated by John Donne in his *A Valediction of Weeping*:

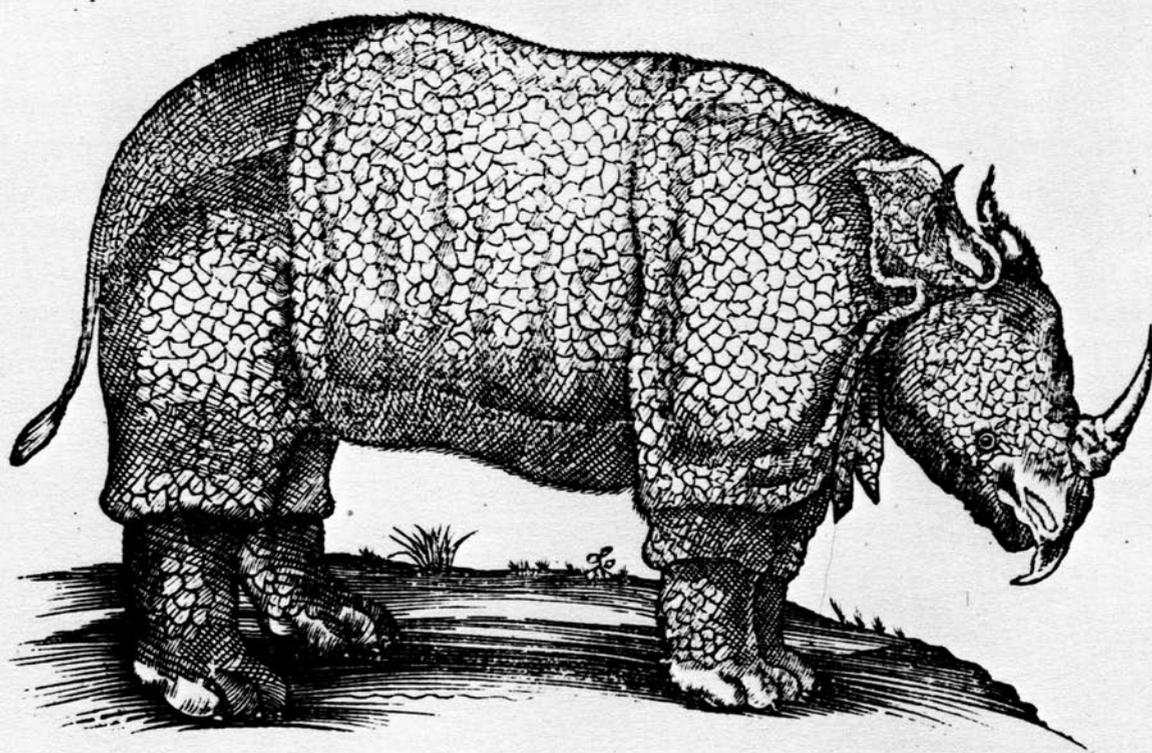
“On a round ball
A workeman that hath copies by, can lay
An Europe, Afrique and an Asia
And quickly make that which was nothing, *All*.”

Gerhard Mercator (1512–1594) and Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598), two friends in the Low Countries, pioneered scientific geography and launched the cartographic revolution. Ortelius’ *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (1570) was an encyclopedia of cartography that quickly became a scholarly and financial success as well as the model for the numerous “Theatres of the World” produced in the following century and thereafter.

The revelation of Asia in Europe can be followed by studying its evolving depiction in the atlases of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: the Sanson (1652) in France; the Blaeu (1662) in Holland; and the Homann (1707) in Germany. Questions were both raised and answered about Asia by the maps in these great atlases. Did all the great rivers of Southeast Asia rise from a lake in the center of the continent? Was Korea an island or a peninsula? Was Asia attached to North America or not? In the efforts made to answer some of these questions maps were altered and realtered, sometimes in deference to what could be learned from maps of Asian provenance. Even for the common man in Europe the Asia of tradition was visibly changing and becoming more complex in these centuries.

HIST. NATURAL. & MEDIC. LIB. V.

RHINOCEROS.

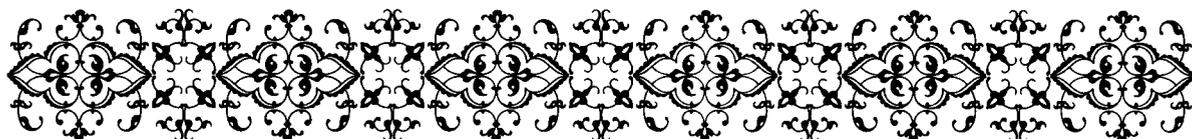


CRANIUM RHINOCEROTIS.



✂ JAKOB DE BONDT in Willem Piso, *De Indiae utriusque re naturali et medica*, 1658. ✂ One of the first attempts to draw a rhinoceros from life and to study its anatomy scientifically. This depiction owes nothing to Albrecht Dürer's marvelous rhinoceros of more than a century earlier.

Flora and Fauna



MANY of the plants of the East, especially spices, had traveled across the land routes and were well known in Europe before the discovery of the water routes to India. Almost every European commentator of the sixteenth century remarked upon the luxuriant vegetation of Asia, its strange fruits and herbs, and their uses as foods and medicines. Seeds, and often the plants themselves, were carried to Europe. Herbalists and botanists in Europe then grew specimens of these exotic plants in their gardens, collected dried plants, and began serious study of their attributes. Other plants which could not be grown in Europe or sent there, such as the cinnamon tree, were sketched in Asia and the drawings sent to Europe. Physicians and pharmacists sent out to India with the Portuguese fleets spent much of their spare time gathering information on and experimenting with the plants of tropical Asia.

Garcia de Orta, a Portuguese physician who lived for thirty years (1534–1564) in India published at Goa in 1563 his *Coloquios dos simples e drogas . . . da India*, a book that became basic to the related sciences of tropical medicine and botany. In Europe Orta's descriptions exerted a significant impact upon systematic study of the plants not known to Dioscorides and the other authorities of antiquity. Charles de L'écluse (1526–1609), the Flemish botanist known as Clusius, translated Orta's book into Latin in 1567 and added to it a few woodcuts of Asian vegetables that he found in the markets of Antwerp. Cristobal de Acosta (ca. 1525–ca. 1594), another Portuguese physician with lengthy experience in Asia, published at Burgos in Spain his *Tractado* (1578) about East Indian drugs and medicines which came to rival Orta's book in authority and influence. Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605), the eminent naturalist of Bologna, meanwhile collected accurate drawings and paintings of overseas plants. In Rome Castor Durante (1529–1590), a physician, published in 1585 his *Herbario nuovo* with 874 woodcuts, a massive work which continued to be reprinted and translated into the eighteenth century.

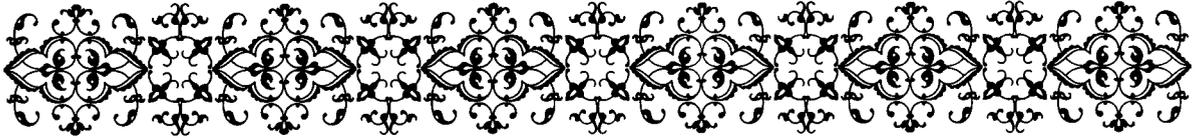
While the Iberians concentrated on the plants of India, China, and the Philippines, the Dutch in the seventeenth century broadened Europe's horizons by the attention they gave to the plants of Southeast Asia. In 1587 a botanical garden was founded at Leyden to experiment with tropical plants. The Dutch East India Company had gardens at Batavia in Java in which their physicians and pharmacists grew plants from all over the East. Jacob de Bondt (d. 1631), a physician known as Bontius, studied tropical diseases and the natural world of the East Indies in Batavia. In 1658 Willem Piso published Bontius' writings in conjunction with his own work on America, as *De Indiae utriusque re naturali et medica*, a work that continued to be translated and reissued down to the end years of the eighteenth century.

The greatest of the botanical enterprises of this era was the *Hortus indicus malabaricus* (12 vols., Amsterdam, 1683–1703) of Hendrik Reede tot Drakestein (1637?–1691), a monumental work on the flora of Malabar in India. This was a huge cooperative effort, supported at Van Reede's expense, to sketch and catalog

the trees and plants of Malabar. It involved as many as one hundred European and Indian participants before it was completed. In these volumes the specimens are meticulously sketched, described, and identified in Latin, Arabic, Sanskrit, Malayalam, and Tamil. Reede's work was a source of primary importance to Carl Linnaeus (1707–1778) in the preparation of his fundamental eighteenth-century work systematizing the entire botanical world called *Species plantarum* (1753).

Asia's animals were not as easy to bring back to Europe as were its plants. Still the Portuguese of the sixteenth century carried back home a number of Asian elephants and one-horned rhinoceroses as well as specimens of smaller animals and birds. The larger animals, especially the elephant, were dispatched as curiosities from Iberia to the papacy and Europe's secular courts. The Dutch were particularly intrigued by the emu of Ceram Island and by the dodo of Mauritius, a bird that became extinct late in the seventeenth century. Descriptions and depictions of the other animals, particularly the dangerous ones, were included by Bontius and others in their natural histories. The Europeans remarked especially on the tigers and crocodiles of Asia, and collected information on them from local informants. They also dissected the larger animals and thereby gradually provided scientific descriptions of animals not known in Europe (page 20). Asia's huge turtles, flying-foxes (giant fruit bats), lizards, snakes, and strange fish also attracted much comment and attention. Specimens of the smaller animals and birds were stuffed and sent to Europe. And particularly intriguing to European collectors were the strange seashells and the other marine life that could be added to their chambers of curiosities. Asian fauna, unlike its flora, had relatively little impact in Europe upon contemporary developments in the natural sciences.

Asian Languages



ASIAN words, like spices and other exotic products, had migrated to Europe long before the establishment of direct and permanent relations. It was the medieval overland travelers who first commented seriously on the multiplicity and on the peculiarities of the Asian languages. In the sixteenth century Europeans lived for many years in Asia's port cities where they acquired practical working vocabularies, and sometimes the patois, used in business, government, war, evangelizing, and social functions. Some of these persons wrote down lists of words useful to the conduct of European operations in the East. Over the course of the sixteenth century lists were sent to Europe of Malayalam, Malay, Bisayan, Tagalog, and Javan words, selections from which were quickly published in Europe in compendia or made into small dictionaries. Sample characters from the ideographic languages of East Asia were quickly incorporated into European histories, geographies, and atlases.

The missionaries, especially the Jesuits, of the second half of the sixteenth century and thereafter sought seriously to command the Asian languages necessary to their work of evangelizing. They also collected books in the local languages, whenever available, for relay to Europe. In the field they contrived systems of romanization and made attempts to organize various of the Asian languages according to the principles of Latin grammar. For their younger colleagues and their converts they translated Christian writings into romanized versions of Asian languages. Some of these were in turn put into the traditional scripts of the Asian languages by the converts themselves. The European printing press and printers soon appeared in various Eastern centers to issue Christian and other works of interest for local and European readers. It was not long before the printers with help from local literati were also preparing types in Asian scripts and ideographs. In the Far East the missionaries took advantage of the block-printing techniques of the Chinese to publish Christian writings in characters. In the meantime Asians were sent to Europe to learn how to make matrices and types and how to operate the Western press. In Europe they even worked with the printers to prepare metal types of Asian scripts and characters to take back home with them.

For European Humanists the discovery of a multitude of new languages raised questions about the validity of the prevailing linguistic doctrines based on classical and biblical precepts. Slowly the linguists and theologians of Europe began to describe the "new" languages and to look for affinities among them and the languages of the Levant and Europe. Samples of Asian alphabets and scripts were assembled and repeated efforts made to "alphabetize" Chinese and other ideographic scripts or to compare them with Egyptian hieroglyphs. Words as well as letters and characters were analyzed and compared. The Lord's Prayer was translated into most of the known Asian languages and then examined for common elements, resemblances, and incontrovertible differences in vocabulary and syntax. Efforts also were undertaken to group and to classify the Asian languages in terms of their cog-

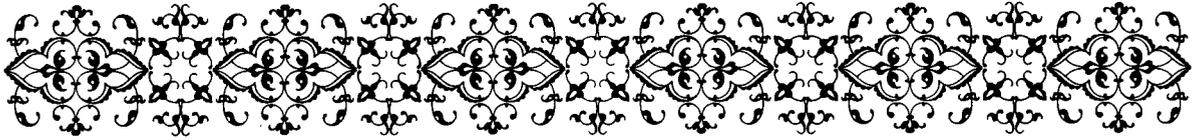
nate and related elements. In the process the linguists gradually gave up looking for a language common to all humankind and began searching for differences and for the discovery of families of language. For example, the affinities between the European languages and Sanskrit were noticed as early as the 1580's. Comparative language study reinforced, while it also raised doubts about, European ideas of linguistic harmony and the efforts to recover the universal idiom lost at the Tower of Babel.

In the seventeenth century the collection of Asian languages continued unabated as samples were published even more frequently of the lesser languages: Malay, Siamese, Bisayan, and Vietnamese. The European printers and engravers bravely published more and more materials in the native scripts: Tamil, Malayalam, Persian, Japanese, and Chinese. Texts of Asian works, such as the Confucian classics, were translated. In the eighteenth century, collections of examples were gradually supplanted by analysis, particularly of the Chinese language. By this time it was clearly understood that Chinese could not be organized according to the principles of Latin grammar or by following schemes appropriated from the organization of the phonetic languages. The world of language, like the world itself, was recognized as being characterized by diversity rather than by a universal harmony and that the number of languages and their variants were beyond counting.



✂ OLFERT DAPPER, *Asia; oder, Ausführliche Beschreibung des Reichs des grossen Mogols und eines grossen Theils von Indien*, 1681. ✂ This is a European impression of Prince Selim, better known as the Emperor Jahangir, who ruled the Mughul empire from 1605 to 1627. This engraving typifies what many Dutch printers prepared for the lavish and expensive encyclopedic books that were designed to become conversation pieces for the wealthy and educated of northern Europe.

The Mughul Empire



ON THE Ptolemaic maps of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries India proper encompassed only the territory between the Indus and the Ganges and was known as Hindustan. Divided into many kingdoms, this region between the Himalayas and the Deccan included both Muslims and pagans (Hindus) whose customs and rites differed markedly. South India, particularly its west coast, was better known to the Europeans of the sixteenth century than was Hindustan, for none of the European commentators based in Gujarat or Bengal penetrated personally very far into the interior of north India before the end years of that century. Most of what they report about the interior cities of northern India and the Afghan-Mughul struggle for political supremacy was relayed to them by informants, both Indian and Europeans, in India's port cities. It was from the Jesuits, who began to go regularly to the Mughul court during the last generation of the sixteenth century, that Europeans learned about Akbar (r. 1556–1605) and the Mughul realm.

Giovanni Battista Peruschi (1525–1598) published in 1597 a summary of what the Jesuits knew about the Mughul empire, the first systematic account of its rise and of its provinces and cities. Much of Peruschi's *Informatione* reports on Akbar, his court, his military conquests, and his presumed interest in Catholic Christianity. Early in the seventeenth century the English and Dutch began to penetrate the Mughul empire through the port of Surat. The accounts of many English sailors, merchants, chaplains, and emissaries were soon published as a whole or in part in Samuel Purchas' collection called *Pilgrimes* (London, 1625). Of particular value were the reports of Sir Thomas Roe and Edward Terry, Roe's chaplain, about the first English embassy (1615–1619) to the Mughul court. William Baffin, a mapmaker who had been a master-mate on Roe's ship, prepared a map of the Mughul empire on his return to England that was to become the base for most other such maps in the great atlases prepared by Europeans during the seventeenth and well into the eighteenth century.

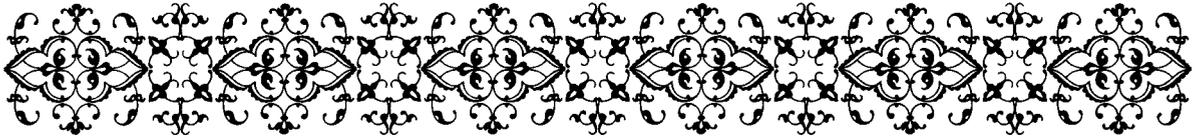
The servants of the Dutch East India Company who followed the English into north India entrusted the compilation of their earliest reports to Joannes de Laet (1593–1649), a Flemish geographer and naturalist. His *De imperio magni mogolis*, published at Leyden in 1631, details the geography and administration of the Mughul empire and includes more information than the English authors on Bengal and other eastern parts of the empire, on the imperial revenues and treasury, and on Mughul history. Later English and Dutch writers concentrated on the religions, cities, and trade of the province of Gujarat, the part of India they knew best. Of particular importance was Henry Lord's *A display of two forraigne sects in the East Indies*, the first European effort to study systematically the beliefs and practices of the Hindus and Parsis. Johan van Twist (d. 1643), chief of the Dutch factories in Gujarat, provided a detailed report on Gujarat and Bijapur during the 1630's that was first published at Amsterdam in 1646 in Isaac Commelin's collection known as

the *Begin ende voortgangh*. The first substantial account of Orissa and Bengal was by William Bruton and it was published at London as *Newes from the East Indies; or A voyage to Bengalla*... (1638). It was shortly amplified in the work of the Augustinian friar Sebastião Manrique (d. 1669) called *Itinerario* (1649).

Once the outline of the Mughul empire had been delineated, the European authors of the latter half of the century concentrated on trading conditions in India and on the activities of the emperors Shah Jahan (r. 1628–1657) and Aurangzib (r. 1658–1707). The best informed on trade was Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605–1689), a diamond merchant, who published his reminiscences in *Les six voyages* (Paris, 1676–1677). His fellow Frenchman François Bernier (1620–1688), who worked as a physician for eight years at the imperial court, published at Paris his *Histoire de la dernière révolution des Etats du Grand Mogul* (1670–1671). This work deals with the succession wars of 1655 to 1661 through which Aurangzib came to power as well as the emperor's conquests and other activities during the early years of his reign.

In the eighteenth century the mapping of India, its early history and antiquities, and the study of its religions, philosophy, and arts became of central concern to European authors. While travelogues continued to appear, they were supplemented by serious study of the genealogies of the Hindu gods and by translations of Sanskrit and Persian texts. Great attention was directed to India's monuments and cave temples; an article on the caves of "Elephanta" in Bombay harbor appeared in Diderot's *Encyclopédie* (1765). Studies were numerous comparing the gods and beliefs as well as the arts of India to those of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Jews. Particularly popular were the profusely illustrated volumes of Bernard Picart on *The ceremonies and religious customs of the various nations of the known world* (London, 1733–1739). From these comparative studies the conviction grew constantly stronger in Europe that India possessed one of the world's most ancient, enduring, and sophisticated civilizations.

South India and Ceylon



SOUTH INDIA and Ceylon, unlike the Mughul empire, were politically divided in these centuries and under constant and increasing pressure from the European intruders. In south India the Hindu empire of Vijayanagar fell into a decline after 1565 that ended in total disintegration during the seventeenth century. It was replaced by a host of small warring political entities unable to protect themselves against the southward expansion of the Muslims and the demands of the Europeans. The Portuguese obtained their earliest footholds in Ceylon and along India's southwest coast or Malabar (meaning "hill country"), a region of city-states where the Arabs had long been trading. All of the sixteenth-century Portuguese accounts, especially those of Duarte Barbosa and João de Barros, describe the individual states of Malabar and their role in the international spice trade. Concerned as the Portuguese were with the trade of Malabar, they still took time to comment on matrilineal descent, the caste system, and the role of Muslims in these coastal cities.

After Portugal's capture of Goa in 1510, its merchants, missionaries, armed forces, and officials created an informal maritime empire along India's southwest coast to control and stabilize the spice trade. Thereafter Goa also became the administrative and episcopal center for Portugal's empire throughout Asia. Merchant fleets and missionaries regularly left Goa for north India and for places as far away as Bengal, Malacca, the East Indies, China, and Japan. In the second half of the sixteenth century the Jesuit letters provided new information on south India's Fishery Coast and on the St. Thomas Christians of the Serra in Malabar. They also began to study the Konkani, Tamil, and Malayalam languages, sometimes for the purposes of refuting Hindu teachings. On social questions the Jesuits concerned themselves mainly with those south Indian ideas and institutions which most complicated the work of conversion.

India's southeastern coast, often called Coromandel, was known to the Portuguese and the Jesuits of the sixteenth century only very superficially. In the following two centuries it was more closely investigated and commented upon in far greater detail by the English and Dutch who lived and worked in its port cities and hinterlands over long periods of time. Jesuit missionaries from Malabar and the Fishery Coast meanwhile crossed overland to Madura and other interior places of the south. Roberto de Nobili, an Italian Jesuit and a staunch proponent of the policy of Christian accommodation to local conditions, set up a flourishing mission in Madura and environs in the first half of the seventeenth century. Meanwhile the Dutch preacher Abraham Roger (Rogerius) was investigating Hinduism at Pulicat in Tamilnadu between 1630 and 1640. His book on the beliefs and practices of south Indian Hinduism is called *De open deure tot het verborgen Heydendom* (Leyden, 1651), a book which really opened the door in Europe for an understanding of the Brahmanical faith. It was followed by the celebrated work (1672) by Philip Baldaeus, another Dutch missionary, which describes both of India's south coasts and



PHILIPPUS BALDAEUS, *Naauwkeurige beschryvinge van Malabar en Choromandel, der zelve aangrenzende ryken, en het machtige eyland Ceylon*, 1672. The Fish Incarnation (*Matsya-avatara*) of Vishnu. The god in human form emerges from the mouth of a fish and rescues humanity from the universal deluge. This is an engraving based, in all probability, on an Indian miniature painting.

Ceylon and provides additional information on the temples, gods, and ceremonies of the south Indian Hindus. The best book on northern Coromandel and on the sultanate of Golconda in its dying years was Daniel Havart's *Op-en ondergang van Cormandel* (Amsterdam, 1693).

The Portuguese first began to have important contacts with Ceylon in 1505–1506. The earliest commentators identified Ceylon with the Taprobane of the Ptolemaic maps, compared its relation to India with Sicily's relation to Italy, and described its geography and political and linguistic divisions. While the Portuguese knew Ceylon's coast in detail, it was the Dutch and English in the seventeenth century who penetrated the interior, Buddhist, and Sinhalese kingdom of Kandy. Robert Knox, an English sailor, who was a prisoner in Kandy from 1660 to 1679, wrote an account of his experiences called *An historical relation of the island Ceylon* (London, 1681), which is still an invaluable source for the social and economic history of Ceylon in the seventeenth century. In 1724 François Valentijn (1666–1727) began to publish his *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien*, an encyclopedic work in five folio volumes which covers the diverse Dutch footholds throughout Asia. Most of volume V (1727) is a compendium of what was then known about Ceylon gathered from the writings of his predecessors and contemporaries as modified by his personal experiences in the East.

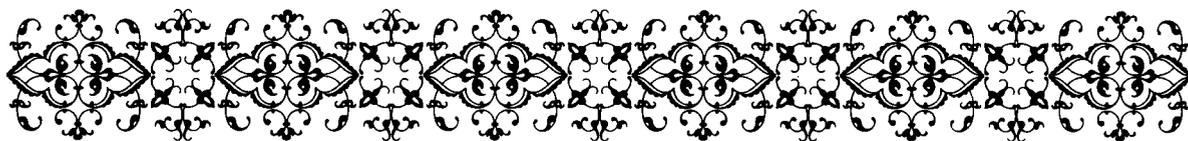
Eighteenth-century antiquarians and students of comparative religion and mythology became obsessed by the erotic elements in Indian religion and temple art. The *linga*, or phallic, worship of the southern Hindus was compared to the attention paid to the phallus in Greek and Roman art and ceremony. Other Europeans of the mid-eighteenth century collected Indian texts as they undertook the study of Sanskrit literature and language. Abraham-Hyacinthe Antequil-Duperron went to India in 1754 for the express purpose of learning languages in order to translate Indian religious and historical texts more accurately. Meanwhile the Danes sent an expedition to Tranquebar on the Coromandel coast and elsewhere to collect art objects for the ethnographic museum in Copenhagen. Members of the French academy of sciences went to India to observe and record natural phenomena and to study the Hindu astrological and astronomical systems. Finally Sir William Jones (d. 1794) founded the Asiatic Society in Bengal in 1784, established modern Sanskrit scholarship among Europeans, and prepared the ground for the more generalized discipline called Indology.



*Liurea de Soldati della
Guardia del Re detto Bua
in TumKino*

✂ GIO. FILIPPO DE MARINI, *Historia et relatione del Tunchino e del Giappone*, 1665. ✂ A seventeenth-century guardsman of the king of Tongking in the northern part of modern Vietnam.

Southeast Asia



SOUTHEAST ASIA divides naturally into two geographical groupings: the continental peninsulas east of India and south of China, and the insular triangle which has Sumatra, the Philippines, and New Guinea at its vertices. Life in the mainland states follows its great rivers that all flow in a north-south direction; trade and communications along the connecting sea lanes follow east-west lines. Until 1641 most of these lines intersected at Malacca, the hub of commerce for both the mainland states and the Indonesian archipelago. Malacca was replaced after 1641 by Batavia in Java, the commercial and administrative center of the Dutch East India Company's maritime empire in Asia. From Batavia and Malacca the Dutch thereafter exercised a degree of political authority throughout Southeast Asia except in Burma, Siam, Vietnam, and the Spanish-controlled Philippines.

Most of what Europeans learned about Southeast Asia during the sixteenth century came from the writings and maps prepared by the Portuguese and Spanish. The Portuguese are especially authoritative on Pegu (Burma), Siam, the Malay Peninsula, and Sumatra; the Spanish are best on the Philippines, Borneo, Cambodia, and Laos. Near the end of the sixteenth century Italian, Dutch, and English merchants commented on their own experiences in the commercial centers of this region. The published Jesuit letters provided scattered runs of information on a host of isolated islands and places in Southeast Asia from 1552 to the end of the century. The Spice Islands (the Moluccas), because of their commercial importance, received detailed attention in all the European sources. The Philippines, from Magellan's time (the 1520's) onward, were known primarily through a small number of Spanish writings and maps. Java, the most important island in the archipelago, was least well known to sixteenth-century Europeans.

The Iberian and Dutch writers of the seventeenth century extended the horizons of European readers by their commentaries on the continental states of Southeast Asia. Therevada Buddhism was discerned as the religion common to the entire region, except for Malaya. In Vietnam Buddhism competed with Confucianism, Taoism, and local beliefs. The Buddhists, unlike the Muslims and the Christians, were generally tolerant of foreigners and their beliefs. The continental monarchies are depicted as having independent but similar political, social, and military systems. The king in all of them was an absolute monarch, proprietor of the land, and the arbiter of every man's destiny. Wars between these countries involved huge movements of people since all males were liable for military service and since it was commonly the practice for the victor to depopulate the vanquished state by carrying off its inhabitants.

Siam was seen to be the most stable and integrated of these states during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. It also was an international emporium where the Europeans could buy the exports of China and Japan. Buddhism was the state religion and the king like other Buddhists was tolerant of foreigners and their

IV.
 DELINEATIO PROCESSIONIS REGINÆ
 PATANIENSIS.



Cluitas Patane à Regina quadam defuncti Regis uxore, cum Hollandi ibi essent, gubernabatur. Hac si quando animi oblectandi gratia prodire in publicum constituit, Elephanti regum in morem splendide exornato insidet, habetq̄ secum gynaceum suo virgines suas pulcherrimè exornatas, Elephantib. similiter insidentes, nobilibus vero & satellitibus stipata, Elephantes aliquot secum ducit, arma defuncti sui Regis gestantes.

B

V. DELI.

THEODOR DE BRY, *Indiæ orientalis pars octava*, 1607. A procession of the Queen of Patani, a city-state on the Malay Peninsula. It was not uncommon in the seventeenth century for females to rule in Southeast Asia. Two queens ruled Patani successively from 1584 to 1624.

alien ways. He employed Japanese, Indians, Persians, and Europeans as advisors and as soldiers. The Portuguese, Dutch, and English regularly traded and missionized in Siam. In the last generation of the seventeenth century the French became religiously, commercially, diplomatically, and militarily involved in Siam. Emisaries were sent from Siam to France and French diplomatic missions were sent to Ayut'ia, Siam's capital city. While these relations prospered for a brief period, a palace revolt in Siam during 1688 ousted the officials who favored the French. The Dutch thereafter remained the most important Europeans in Siam. The best European descriptions of Siam came from Dutch and French authors. Especially important were the two volumes by Simon de La Loubère, *Du royaume de Siam* (Paris, 1691), a work that is still universally regarded as the finest source on seventeenth-century Siam.

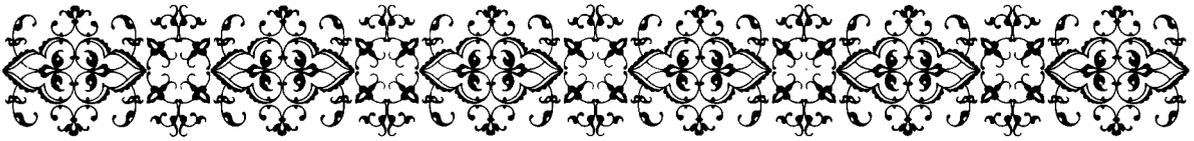
Vietnam, the peninsula where the Hindu and Chinese cultures met, clashed, and sometimes fused, was entered in the sixteenth century by Iberian merchants and missionaries from Malacca and Manila. Gaspar da Cruz, a Dominican missionary, spent about a year in Cambodia, and returned to Portugal to publish his *Tractado* (Evora, 1569), the pioneer European work on Cambodia and Laos. The Europeans at first believed that the key to the entire peninsula lay in the control of the Mekong delta. But in the early seventeenth century Jesuits from Macao began to appear in Cochin-China and Tongking, the two most important states of the north which were then locked in a semipermanent civil war. In the latter half of the seventeenth century French secular priests of the Paris mission society began to compete with the Jesuits for the hearts and souls of the Vietnamese. As a result of these French activities, a conflict developed within the Catholic church for control of the mission in Vietnam. Much ink was spilled in Europe during the controversy. Nonetheless the Catholics and the Dutch managed to provide Europe with solid new information about the political, economic, and social life in the peninsula. And despite controversy, much progress was made in the Christianizing of the Vietnamese. Even today Vietnam, along with the Philippines, is one of the most Catholic nations of Asia.

Insular Southeast Asia, which includes the Indonesian and Filipino archipelagos, was deeply penetrated and then controlled by the Europeans during this period. The Portuguese, after capturing Malacca in 1511, undertook repeated efforts to establish direct relations with the distant Moluccas, the source of the coveted spices. In the process they touched upon Sumatra, Borneo, and Java, the great islands lying between Malacca and the Spiceries. The Spanish, once they were established at Manila in 1565, also began to compete for control of the Spiceries. In the seventeenth century the Dutch entered the fray and were soon to control most of the trade of the Indonesian region. Europe was meanwhile learning from Iberian and Dutch informants, mainly, about this vast insular region. The European reports, published and otherwise, let it be known that these islands were marked by great diversity in geography, flora, fauna, and languages. But they also showed that these insular people possessed common attributes based on history, ethnography, customary law, and foreign influences. Not the least of these foreign influences was the dominating presence of the Dutch in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.



✂ JEAN CRASSET, *Histoire de l'église du Japon*, 1689. ✂ These are vestments of women of quality in seventeenth-century Japan. The woman in the center is in undecorated mourning clothes. The lady on the right is walking under a parasol of oiled paper carried by a servant. The woman on the left exhibits the traditional coiffure with big hairpins and is dressed in a gay kimono with a white undergarment.

Japan



MOST of what sixteenth-century Europe knew of Japan it learned through the letters, histories, and reports of the Jesuits and from a few Portuguese and Spanish merchant accounts. St. Francis Xavier, the Apostle of the Indies, visited Japan in 1549 and concluded that of “the people [Asians] whom we have met so far, these [the Japanese] are the best . . .” Xavier’s Jesuit successors identified Japan with the “Cipangu” of Marco Polo and by 1561 the first independent map of Japan was produced in Europe. The Jesuit writers, while commenting on the political struggles then wracking Japan, were awed by the size, wealth, and monuments of Japanese cities and impressed by its orderly life and sophisticated culture. Once the Jesuits learned the Japanese language, as many did, they began to penetrate beneath the surface of Japanese religion and to make large numbers of converts themselves. They even sent a Japanese mission to Europe from 1584 to 1586 to show off their converts to the Iberians, the papacy, and the general populace of southern Europe.

These Iberian commercial and evangelizing successes in Japan were followed by a series of setbacks in the seventeenth century. The Tokugawa shoguns, as they consolidated their rule after 1603, gradually closed Japan’s doors to the Iberian merchants and missionaries and by 1641 excluded them completely. The Dutch were the only Europeans permitted to trade and live in Japan after 1641, and then only at the port of Nagasaki. The first major description of Japan written by someone other than a Catholic missionary was François Caron’s *Beschrijvinghe* (Amsterdam, 1648). It is based upon his experiences from 1619 to 1641 as a Dutch resident in Tokugawa Japan. Other Dutch writers contemporaneously reported on Japan’s neighbors, including Formosa, Yezo (or Hokkaido), and Korea. The Dutch commercial embassies to Yedo (Tokyo), beginning with the first of 1649–1650, soon became the subject of a number of books published in the Netherlands. Arnoldus Montanus’ *Denckwürdige Gesandtschaften* (1669), a work that was frequently translated, is a rambling encyclopedic account of four embassies that contains a substantial collection of first-hand information about Japan as well as many invaluable copper engravings. George Meister, a German gardener and botanist employed by the Dutch, was probably the first European to appreciate the art of Japanese gardening. He expressed his admiration in his book called *Der orientalisches-indianische Kunst-und Lust-Gärtner* (1692).

The most authoritative and detailed account of seventeenth-century Japan was prepared by Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716), a German physician employed by the Dutch who had a broad experience in Asia before arriving in Japan. As physician to the Dutch traders at Nagasaki from 1690 to 1692, he had enough contacts and leisure to interview Dutch and Japanese informants, to make sketches of persons, plants, and places, and to collect Japanese books, maps, and paintings. After writing up his notes in Germany, Kaempfer was unable to find a publisher. His manuscript was acquired after his death by Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), the eminent English naturalist, who had it translated into English by his librarian, J.G. Scheuchzer.

Delineatio cavitationum vel locorum pulsuum et trium partium corporis.

Fūm fū. i.e. ventarum urbs: locus in occipitis parte ima, ubi extremi capilli statum pulmonis indicant.

Xām ciāo. i.e. suprema pars corporis à vertice usq. ad os supremum stomachi infra cor et pectus.

Feū pē. i.e. natans albedo. locus in occipite infra aures.

Ki muen. i.e. extremorum: locus infra mammillam, prodit originem intestini magni.

Ki Kēu. i.e. spirituum os in dextra ante locum *Quān*.

Ki hái. i.e. spirituum mare, uno et dimidio infra umbilicum digito distans locus.

Chūm ciāo. i.e. media pars corporis à stomacho ad ventris medium: continet fel, hepar, stomachum et ventrem.

Hia ciāo. i.e. infima pars corporis à ventris inferiore ore ad plantas pedum.

Gūn ym. i.e. hominis obviartis seu viarum humidi radicalis et caloris primigenii occursum in sinistra: prodit originem epatis et fellis.

Quān y uēn

i.e. limes originum infra umbilicum tribus et dimidio digiti articulo: perfectorum spirituum receptaculum. Prodit originem ad vesicam.

Tān hēn. i.e. rubeus ager, locus tribus infra umbilicum digitis.

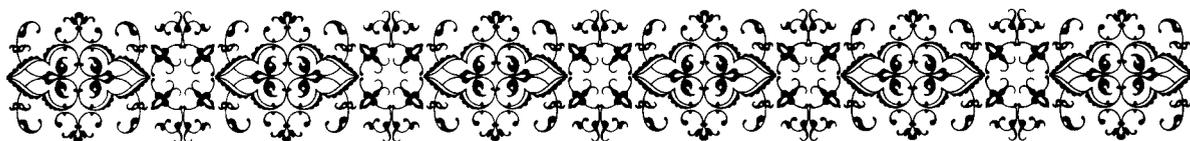
Chūm yām. i.e. penetratio viarum caloris primigenii in pedum superiore parte, ab imo et extremo osse tribus digiti articulis distans. Prodit originem ad ventriculum.

Tā Kì. i.e. magna lacuna, ad latera pedum supra talum, sunt illi pulsus. Mares in pede sinistro, femine in dextro habent.

Tāi chūm. i.e. magna penetratio in ipse planta pedis medio.

Dicitur et porta vite, quia cessante illic pulsu, moritur ager.

China



THE early sixteenth-century European accounts of China were prepared mainly by Portuguese merchants who stressed the material wealth, technological skills, and complex organization of Chinese society. Those who wrote about China after mid-century were mainly missionaries, or persons interested in missions. Gaspar da Cruz, a Portuguese Dominican, Juan González de Mendoza, a Spanish Augustinian, and Giovanni Maffei, the Italian Jesuit historian, provided syntheses of what was known about China in sixteenth-century Europe. They emphasized the rational order prevailing in governmental, educational, and social structures, and explained the tribute system followed by China in the conduct of international relations and trade. Because the Jesuits were hopeful of evangelizing China by cultural penetration, they studied the language, collected books, and tried seriously to understand the Confucian fabric which bound Chinese life together.

The Jesuits, some of whose representatives worked in Peking after 1600, kept Europe informed about China until the dissolution of their Society in 1773. The memoirs of Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), the Jesuit pioneer at the Chinese court, were carried to Europe by Nicolas Trigault who published them in his own amplified version: *De christiana expeditione apud Sinas...* (Augsburg, 1615). This immediately became and still remains a major source on China under the declining Ming dynasty (1368–1644). The Jesuits and the Portuguese of Macao kept Europe apprised of the rise of the Manchus that led to the downfall of the Ming. Father Martino Martini published in Europe in 1654 his *De bello tartarico*, the most authoritative and best-known description of the Manchu conquest in a European language. The tragic collapse of the civilized Chinese (Ming) dynasty before frontier foreigners was viewed by some in Europe as the fall of civilization to barbarism. While this proved not to be the case, since the Manchus were quickly sinicized, the image of China as a changeless and remote empire was replaced, at least in part, by a view of China as a dynamic empire and as a part of the same world as Europe.

The Jesuits investigated the Chinese sources on geography, government, history, and thought. Martini, in particular, used Chinese materials in the preparation of his *Atlas* (1655) and dynastic history (1658). Athanasius Kircher, the Jesuit polyhistor of Rome, produced in 1667 his *China illustrata*, a work on religion in Asia which became one of the most influential and popular books produced in the seventeenth century. Michael Boym, a Polish Jesuit, contributed two important special studies on China's flora (1656) and on medicine (1682). A group of China Jesuits published at Paris in 1687 three of the Confucian Four Books in Latin translation in their *Confucius sinarum philosophus*. In the meantime the Jesuits had become involved in controversy with the other Catholic orders about mission policies in China. This debate called the Rites Controversy produced a flood of polemical literature, from which Europe coincidentally learned much more about China: for example, from Louis Le Comte's *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine* (1696), a popular work con-

taining much accurate information about Chinese life and culture under the Ch'ing (Manchu) dynasty as seen through Jesuit spectacles.

The Dutch East India Company, being well aware of what the Jesuits were publishing about China, sent embassies to the Ch'ing court in an effort to establish direct trade relations with China. The Dutch embassy of 1655–1656 inspired Johan Nieuhof's *Het gezantschap ... aan den grooten tartarischen Cham* (1665), a lavish encyclopedic work which includes 150 prints, many based on Nieuhof's own sketches. In 1670 Olfert Dapper, an Amsterdam clergyman, published another huge rambling work about the Dutch missions to China that is an amalgam of Jesuit and Dutch writings. In the last decade of the century several Jesuit and Dutch writers began to publish accounts of the journeys made overland as the Russians began to work out their boundary problems with the Ch'ing rulers. The most important of these overland travel accounts were compiled by Nicolas Witsen and published as *Noord en Oost Tartarye* (1692), a work that includes descriptions of the peoples on China's northern frontier. Earlier the Jesuits, who had traveled overland between India and China, included descriptions of Mongolia and Tibet in their accounts.

Leadership in the Jesuit mission to China was assumed in the last years of the century by the French Jesuits, most of whom were high-powered intellectuals specifically instructed to investigate Chinese learning and culture. They worked mainly in Peking with Chinese savants and were successful in 1692 in obtaining from the K'ang-hsi emperor an edict of toleration for Christianity. Father Joachim Bouvet was even sent back to Europe at the end of the century to represent the K'ang-hsi emperor at the court of Louis XIV.

In the early years of the eighteenth century, while certain Jesuits in China were working on K'ang-hsi's cartographic survey of the empire, the Jesuits in France began to publish the letters from China in a series of volumes. The *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, published at Paris intermittently from 1702 to 1776, were designed to be propaganda for the mission that was under fire in Europe and to be a source of "edifying and curious" information about China for the reading public. One of the *Lettres* first editors was Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, the compiler of the *Description ... de la Chine* (1735), a sumptuous folio encyclopedia that was repeatedly reissued in less lavish editions and translations. Written in modern French, this book immediately became reading for intelligentsia as well as the general public. Voltaire and Montesquieu were but two of the *philosophes* who hailed it enthusiastically and relied on it for their own knowledge of China.

The idealization of China as a rational and moral empire even though not Christian, was one of the charges made against the Jesuits by their enemies. Many of the Jesuits in China, especially those from France, were indeed open admirers of Confucian society and culture and their letters repeatedly evinced their respect for China's social and political organization. The Jesuits got into trouble in Europe by stressing the natural morality of the Chinese, a viewpoint that was quickly taken up and embellished by the critics of the Catholic church and the proponents of lay morality. Du Halde himself censored some of the Jesuit letters which touched too much upon natural morality. Still China remained a model of benevolent despotism, natural morality, and a successful agriculture-based economy to many of the *philosophes*.

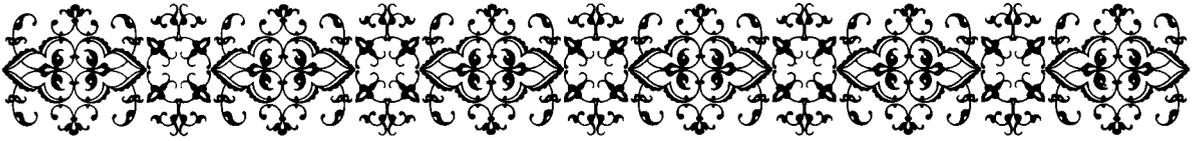
Du Halde's *Description* was not merely another collection of Jesuit letters and another work of propaganda. The focus of it was on geography. It incorporated the maps of J.B.D'Anville, the French engraver, which were based on the cartographic survey of 1708 to 1716. Many of these maps were fuller and more accurate than contemporary maps of Europe and its various parts, and were not significantly improved upon before the end of the nineteenth century. Du Halde also included translated excerpts from Chinese treatises on philosophy, science, and history as well as a French version of a drama of the Yüan dynasty. On Chinese language and history the *Description* contains disappointingly little that is new.

Some of these deficiencies were made up in Europe by the sinological studies of scholars such as Etienne Souciet, Nicholas Fréret and Etienne Fourmont. T. S. Bayer published at St. Petersburg in 1730 his two-volume *Museum sinicum*, a compendium of materials on the Chinese language. More specialized histories on specific periods also appeared such as Antoine Gaubil's work (1739) on the history of the Mongol dynasty. New Jesuit material continued to appear in Europe even after the suppression of the Society in 1773. Father Mauriac de Mailla's translation of the *T'ung-chien k'ang-mu*, a twelfth-century version of Chinese history, appeared in print in 1778 in twelve quarto volumes. Contemporaneously there appeared a work of China Jesuit scholarship in sixteen volumes called *Mémoires concernant ... des Chinois* (1776-1814) which treats of history, sciences, manners, and customs, mostly translated from Chinese materials. These works acted as a bridge between amateur sinology and the professional sinology of the nineteenth century.



ALVARO SEMEDO, *The history of that great and renowned monarchy of China*, 1655. Captain William Bradbent (or Broadbent), a ship's commander for the East India Company, brought these figurines back to England.

Chinoiserie



FROM the Age of Discovery onward, the artists and craftsmen of Europe were intrigued by Chinese novelties: especially silk textiles, porcelains, and lacquer wares. Efforts were repeatedly made, often with little success, to produce similar objects in Europe; the entrancing motifs on the China wares were widely copied in various European art forms. The strange characters of the Chinese language stimulated speculation about their mystical or secret meaning and of their possible relation to the indecipherable hieroglyphs of Egypt. Book designers and engravers featured the characters, sometimes legible and sometimes not, as decorations on their title pages (page 44) and in their illustrations. Sketches made in China by Europeans were copied by engravers, first in the Netherlands and then in France and elsewhere, for book illustrations. If the originals proved to be too ordinary or insipid, the engravers sometimes added their own exotic effects. As on the early maps, the open spaces were often filled in with the stereotypes of Asia: elephants, palm trees, and so forth, without regard to longitude, latitude, or the accompanying text. Chinese people copied from porcelain decorations were added to costume books and to more general works on China (page 42).

Late in the seventeenth century a craze broke out in England for Indian textiles and in France for Siamese objects. These vogues were both short-lived since the English textile workers objected and the French were driven out of Siam in 1688. In France the earlier fad of collecting Chinese art objects became a mania of royalty, nobility, and the upper classes in the first half of the eighteenth century. This Sinomania then spread to the courts of northern and central Europe. Gradually, as in France, it also attracted the lower levels of society who could afford little more than a fan or a lacquered bowl. In China export porcelains and lacquers were especially prepared to appeal to the exotic tastes and the Sinomania of the Europeans.

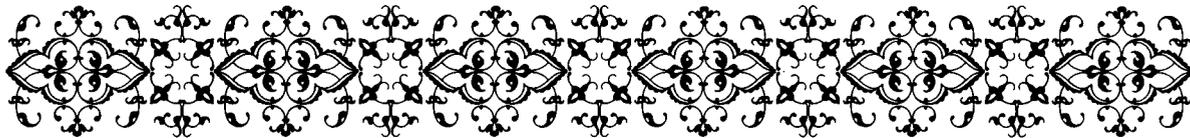
“Chinoiserie” (meaning knick-knacks or bizarre tricks in modern French usage) is best reflected in the visual arts and literature of eighteenth-century Europe, especially during the rococo era. In this view China is a place of escape rather than the rational model postulated by the *philosophes*. China is a paradise that never was, a haven of leisure and luxury, peopled by the gay Chinese of the porcelains who live in beautiful gardens filled with rounded bridges, temples with curved eaves from which hang tinkling bells, and pagodas stretching skyward.

Jean-Baptiste Pillement drew *Chinoiseries* for engravers that were copied far and wide in Europe. In rococo painting the masters of *Chinoiseries* were Antoine Watteau and François Boucher. In literature the “wise Chinese” of the *philosophes*, while traveling in Europe, wrote letters (*Lettres chinoises*) home satirizing the bizarre ideas, beliefs, customs, and practices, of the exotic Europeans.



✂ NICOLAS TRIGAULT, *Regni chinensis descriptio*, 1639. ✂ The Chinese inscription reads: “Swallows descending to the sand flats.” This is certainly the earliest effort to imitate a Chinese scroll painting in a European publication.

Bibliographic Checklist of the Exhibition



The following list contains the books exhibited in *Asia in the Eyes of Europe: Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries*, an exhibition held at the University of Chicago Library, Department of Special Collections, January 23–May 1, 1991.

THE FANTASTIC TRADITION

François Bernier (1620–1688). *Voyages de François Bernier*. 2 vols. Amsterdam: Paul Marret, 1723–1724. Purchase of the Library's General Book Fund.

Pierre Boaistuau (d. 1566). *Histoires prodigieuses*. Paris: Jean Longis [etc.], 1561. Frederic Ives Carpenter Memorial Collection.

Armando Cortesão (b. 1891). *Portugaliae monumenta cartographica*. 6 vols. Lisbon: Comissão Executiva das Comemorações do V Centenário da Morte do Infante D. Henrique, 1960. Gift of the Comissão.

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Fernão Mendes Pinto (d. 1583). *Historia oriental de las peregrinaciones de Fernan Mendez Pinto*. Madrid: Melchor Sanchez, 1664. Purchase of the Library's General Book Fund.

Marco Polo (1254–1323?). *De regionibus orientalibus libri III*. 3 vols. in 1. Brandenburg: Ex Officina Georgii Schulzii, 1671. Hengstenberg Collection.

Balthasar Springer (fl. 1505–1509). *Balthasar Springers Indiensfahrt 1505/06*. Franz Schulze, ed. Strassburg: J.H.Ed. Heitz [etc.], 1902. Gift of the Graduate Library School.

JESUIT LETTERBOOKS AND HISTORIES

Jesuits. Letters from missions. *Annuae litterae Societatis Jesu*. Dillingen: Apud viduam Joannis Mayer, 1609. Helen and Ruth Regenstein Collection.

Jesuits. Letters from missions. *Lettere del Giappone dell'anno M.D.LXXVII*. Rome: Francesco Zanetti, 1579. Purchase of the Library's General Book Fund.

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Matteo Ricci (1552–1610). *De christiana expeditione apud Sinas*. Nicolas Trigault, ed. Augsburg: Apud Christophorum Mangium, 1615. Hengstenberg Collection.

Nicolas Trigault (1577–1628). *De christianis apud japonios triumphis*. Munich, 1623. Purchase of the Library's General Book Fund.

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Joan Blaeu (1596–1673). *Atlas maior*. 11 vols. Amsterdam, 1662. Purchase of the Library's General Book Fund.

Awnsham Churchill (d. 1728). *A collection of voyages and travels*. Third edition. 8 vols. London: Henry Lintot [etc.], 1744–1747. Gift of Leonard B. Meyer.

Richard Hakluyt (1552?–1616). *The principal navigations, voyages, traffiques and discoveries of the English nation*. 3 vols. in 2. London: George Bishop [etc.], 1599–1600. Gift of Dorothy and Graham Aldis.

Johann Baptist Homann (1663–1724). *Neuer Atlas bestehend in auserlesenen und allerneuesten Land-Charten*. Nuremberg, 1707. Berlin Collection.

Gerhard Mercator (1512–1594). *Atlas; sive, Cosmographicae meditationes*. Editio quarta. Amsterdam: Sumptibus & typis aeneis Judoci Hondii, 1613. Purchase of the Library's General Book Fund.

Novus orbis regionum ac insularum veteribus incognitarum. Simon Grynaeus, ed. Basel: Apud Jo. Hervagium, 1555. Carter H. Harrison Collection.

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Nicolas Sanson (1600–1667). *L'Asie en plusieurs cartes nouvelles et exactes*. Paris, 1652. Purchase of the Library's General Book Fund.

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Jakob de Bondt (1592–1631) in Willem Piso, *De Indiae utriusque re naturali et medica*. Amsterdam: Apud Ludovicum et Danielem Elzevirios, 1658. John Crerar Collection.

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