

C. R. BOXER
JAN COMPAGNIE
IN JAPAN,
1600 - 1850



JAN COMPAGNIE IN JAPAN

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日 月 星
Son Maan Steerd

日本ヨリ海上里數
 タイワノ六百五十二里九寸十釐
 ロフレ 八百五十二里九寸十釐
 とがや十八里九寸十釐
 一里に六十間あり
 とがや十八里九寸十釐
 とがや十八里九寸十釐

阿蘭陀船之圖
 船長十四丈余幅三大丈八尺
 高三丈五尺惣柱長十四丈余
 旗竿三丈余帆數十八
 石炭矢三千六百挺煙出
 三丈余人數百余人



From the original formerly in the author's collection

Nagasaki wood-cut of the Dutch East-India ship *Schellach*, c. 1782

Jan Compagnie in Japan, 1600-1850

AN ESSAY

on the cultural, artistic and scientific influence
exercised by the Hollanders in Japan from the
seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries

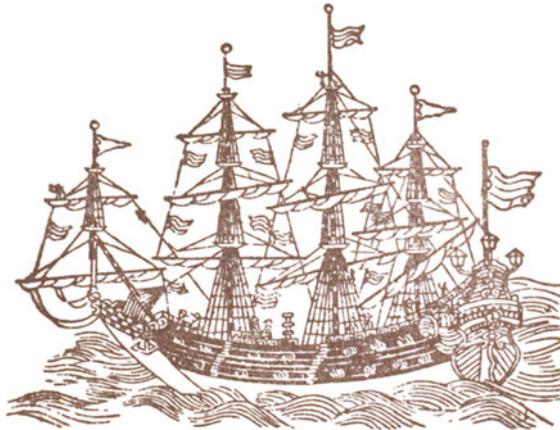
BY

C. R. BOXER

*Camões Professor of Portuguese, London University, King's College.
Corresponding member of the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences.*

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J. C. PABST
In grateful memory

*That among so many things as are by
men possessed or pursued in the course of
their lives, all the rest are bawbles, besides
old wood to burn, old wine to drink, old
friends to converse with, and old books
to read.*

(King Alfonso the Wise, as quoted by Sir
William Temple in his *Essay upon Ancient and
Modern Learning*, (1696).

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PREFACE

This book was originally published in 1936, and went out of print shortly afterwards. With the exception of chapter VII, which has been entirely re-written, this edition is mainly a reprint of the first. Corrections of factual and printer's errors have been made; but the intervening fourteen years have not brought to my knowledge anything which involves making major changes. Since the work is avowedly intended for those who possess a knowledge of Japanese history, the original introduction has been omitted, as smacking somewhat of teaching grandmothers to suck eggs. The opportunity has also been taken to bring it up to date, by inserting in the footnotes and bibliography the necessary references to works bearing on this topic which have been published since 1936.

*As explained in the original preface, the title is not pedantically accurate. The Netherlands East-India Company was incorporated in 1602, and its ships first reached Japan seven years later. Moreover, the expression *Jan Compagnie*, like its English counterpart *John Company*, does not seem to have been used until the second half of the eighteenth century. The Dutch Company was dissolved in 1798; but, in so far as Japan was concerned, it may be regarded as having survived until the end of the Napoleonic period, since the Tokugawa bureaucracy continued to treat the Hollanders at Nagasaki as its representatives. But even if the dates on the title-page do not coincide exactly with the lifetime of *Jan Compagnie*, they give a good idea of the period when Dutch influence was most strongly felt.*

My debt to European scholars in the same field, of whom Dr. Feenstra Kuiper was the most eminent, has been duly acknowledged. For the most part, however, this work is based on the results of the patient researches of Japanese scholars, such as Professors Shimmura, Koda, Kuroda, and Itazawa,

who may justly be regarded as the worthy descendents of the Rangakusha of old. The death of General J. C. Pabst, in January 1942, after a residence of over a quarter of a century in Japan, was a sore loss to all students in this sphere as well as to private friendship. Acknowledgement is also due to Sir George Sansom, and to Mr. Basil Gray, for pointing out some slips in the original. Dr. Van Gulik, of the Netherlands Legation in Tokyo, gave helpful encouragement and advice concerning the reproduction of the coloured plates. Finally, I should like to thank Mr. Wouter Nijhoff for undertaking another edition of this book, — at a time far more unpropitious than that which I foolishly stigmatised as such in 1936.

December, 1949

C. R. BOXER

I. CARTOGRAPHY AND GEOGRAPHY

Appropriately enough, the earliest cartographical relic of the Hollanders in Japan which has survived to the present day, bears every indication of having come out to the Land of the Rising Sun in the first Dutch ship which ever visited that country, the *Liefde, ex-Erasmus*.

I refer to the maritime charts in the Imperial Household Museum at Ueno, which formed the subject of a learned article in the Royal Netherlands Geographical Society's Bulletin by Mr. J. W. van Nouhuys ¹.

There is no need to repeat here the arguments adduced by that eminent authority in support of his attribution of these charts to the *Liefde*, an attribution with which the present writer fully agrees. The fact that the charts are signed by their compiler, Cornelis Doedtsz, as having been drawn at Edam just four months before the departure of the *Liefde* with the fleet of Mahu from Rotterdam, is in itself pretty nearly conclusive for such an origin. The possibility of their having been brought to Japan later is exceedingly unlikely, as by the time the next Dutch ships came to Japan in 1609, other and more recent maps would in all probability have been available for use on board.

Unfortunately the Japanese Museum authorities can give no exact indication of when or how these charts came into the possession of the Imperial Household, beyond the fact that they were part of the spoil acquired from the Tokugawa, when the Shogunal House of that name was expelled from Yedo (now Tokyo) in the Imperial Restoration of 1868. This in itself however provides a confirmatory clue of some kind, albeit a very slight one. For the fact that the charts were Tokugawa property prior to 1868, makes it quite possible

¹ *Zeekaarten van het schip de Liefde ex-Erasmus uit A° 1598*, in *Tijdschrift van het Koninklijk Nederl. Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, 2e Serie, Deel XLVIII, 1931, Afl. 5.

that they were originally in the possession of the first Shogun Ieyasu. If this was so, then these charts may originally have been joined together, and been that "Chart of the whole world" which Will Adams showed the disbelieving Ieyasu when the latter asked him how he had come to Japan ¹.

It must be stressed in passing that the actual maps are rather of Portuguese than of Dutch origin, as is indeed self-evident from the nomenclature (which is almost exclusively Lusitanian, with a few exceptions like the names of some large countries, *i.e.* *Bresilien*), and from the *Quinas* or Portuguese Arms emblazoned on the same chart inscribed by Cornelis Doedtsz. The scale of leagues, wind-roses, and the double (but differing) scale of latitude marked in the N. Atlantic chart are also typical Portuguese productions. Doedtsz has in fact done little more than copy some Portuguese chart (or charts) which he had before him, as for that matter did all other Netherland and English cartographers of the time, from the great Jan Huyghen van Linschoten downwards. By the time the *Roode Leeuw* and *Griffioen* visited Japan in 1609, other and fresher material would have been available, and the maps used by those ships would doubtless have contained a far larger percentage of Dutch additions and corrections to their Portuguese forerunners, based on the recent voyages of Houtman, van Neck, Maatelif de Jonge and others ². The present charts were clearly copied by Doedtsz from Portuguese originals of the last decade of the golden age of Portuguese cartography, as exemplified in the works of Fernão Vaz Dourado and Bartholomeu Lasso ³.

Whilst on the subject of the *Liefde* and Will Adams, we may make passing mention of a globe made by the latter when in Japan, showing the North-East and North-West passages,

¹ "He (Ieyasu) asked me . . . As what way we came to the country. Having a chart of the whole world, I shewed him, through the straits of Magellan. At which he wondered, and thought me to lie." Wieder, — *De Reis van Mahu en de Cordes*, III, p. 75. (L.V. Werken, Deel XXIV). On p. 14 of the same work Dr. Wieder observes, "Onmogelijk te zeggen welke Wereldkaart; Plancius, Mercator, Ortelius of een onbekende." Perchance this map of Doedtsz is the *onbekende*, though there must have been other maps and charts on board.

² Though John Saris still used Linschoten's *Itinerario* and maps on his voyage to Japan in the *Globe* in 1611-1613.

³ Cf charts reproduced in A. Cortesão, *Cartografia e Cartografos Portugueses*. Vol II. Plates 38, 39 and 52.

as well as the provinces of that country in considerable detail. This world-globe was somehow acquired by Adams' Jesuit rivals who had a copy thereof made at their headquarters in Macau. This copy came into the lands of that indefatigable chronicler, Diogo do Couto, the great historian of Portuguese India, to whose praiseworthy scientific curiosity we owe a brief description of it, for unfortunately neither the original nor the copy have survived. This is the more regrettable since from Couto's description it is clear that it was based on Dutch, English, Japanese (and presumably Portuguese) sources, which would have rendered it extremely interesting to all students of cartography ¹.

In this connection candour compels us to make mention of Mr. van Nouhuys' strictures on Will Adams' cartographical abilities, which indeed do not seem to have equalled the old Elizabethan sea-dog's undoubted qualifications in other respects, whether as pilot, shipwright or, above all, diplomatist.

It is certain that both the Dutch and English imported maps, globes and charts into Japan during the first half of the XVIIth century, but owing to the vicissitudes of fire and earthquakes, few indeed have survived to this day; and the majority of these are difficult to identify from the cursory references made to them in the original *Dagh-Registers* or other contemporary sources. Amongst those which can be identified with certainty (though they are not perhaps cartographical material in the strictest sense of the term), are two magnificent coloured copper-plate engravings, depicting respectively the siege of Hertzogenbosch in 1629, and the defeat of the English off the Isle de Ré in 1627, which are preserved in the collection of Mr. K. Inabata of Kyoto, through whose courtesy I was enabled to inspect them. They were then mounted as *kakemono* or hanging scrolls. The owner stated that he had acquired them from an old Higo family, which is particularly interesting in view of the fact that we have a contemporary reference to the engraving of the

¹ "E em hum globo que este piloto trazia, de que na China se tirou outro que eu tenho em meu poder, se vem claramente estas duas partes por onde tentarão passar a estas. E postas em gradação esta ilha Iapão com todos os seus reinos ate sobre a terra de Chincungu onde affirmão aver aquellas ricas minas da prata." (Diogo do Couto, *Decada XII*, Livro V. Cap. II. p. 218 of the original Paris edition of 1645).

siege of Hertzogenbosch, being in the possession of the Hosokawa family who were the rulers of Higo province in 1635¹.

The *Goshuinsen* (*Goshuinbune*), or trading vessels whose owners had obtained permission under the red seal of the Shogun to trade with foreign countries, which formed the short-lived Tokugawa mercantile marine during the early part of the XVIIth century, also had some connection with the Hollanders, in that Dutchmen frequently served as pilots in such vessels², and no doubt charts of Dutch origin were often used on board them. In this respect, as in so many others, the Hollanders were but following in the steps of their Portuguese predecessors, for originally these vessels were compelled by Shogunal edicts to carry Lusitanian pilots, and such few of their charts as survive to this day, are clearly identifiable as more or less modified copies or adaptations of Portuguese originals³.

The critical years of 1635–1641 which saw the enforcement of the *sakoku-seisaku* or “closed-country” policy of the third Tokugawa Shogun, Iemitsu, culminating in the expulsion of the Portuguese (1639) and the removal of the Hollanders from Hirado to Deshima (1641), also witnessed the importation of many Dutch geographical works which played a noteworthy part in aiding the Shogun to come to his momentous decision. So much is evident from the following extract from a contemporary report of the *opperhoofd* François Caron, — “[Iemitsu] having ordered for three successive years, maps, globes and an explanation of the way to Europe, after investigating the size of the world, the multitude of its countries, and the smallness of Japan (which hitherto was otherwise believed) he was greatly surprised, and heartily

¹ Letter of Willem Versteegen, Dutch Agent at Nagasaki to the *opperhoofd* at Hirado, 25. viii. 1635. Versteegen was called upon to give an explanation of this print, which incidentally is reproduced on Plate 57 of the *Meiji Izen Yogwa Ruishu* (*Catalogue of paintings and drawings in Western style prior to the Meiji period*) printed at Kyoto in 1925.

² Cf Cocks' *Diary* (ed. Tokyo, 1894) and Adams' *Letters passim*. Nor was this usage confined to Japan. When Willem Jansz visited Nagasaki in the spring of 1630, amongst the shipping then in the harbour were a Siamese junk piloted by a Dutchman named Pieter Jansz. Quick, and two Japanese junks chartered by a Tonquinese embassy, likewise piloted by a Netherlander, Vincent Romeyn. Cf. Coenraedt Cramer's *Journal*, (*Rijksarchief. Stukken van S. Sweers*. Deel V, fol. 206–236).

³ As for instance that used by Kadoya Shichirobei in his voyage to Annam c. 1630 and still preserved at Ise.

wished that his land had never been visited by any Christians”¹.

The Shogun's curiosity about Western geography was also shared by some of the great nobles, and among the items ordered by the chief (anti-Christian) Inquisitor, Inouye, Chikugo-no-kami and by Iemitsu's uncle, the Daimyo of Kii-no-kuni in this same year, we find listed *'t licht der Zeevaert int latyn*,² — incidentally proving that Latin was more generally understood than Dutch in official circles.

This influence exerted by the Hollanders on the geographical conceptions of the Japanese, had its counterpart in the influence derived from native Japanese sources which is discernible on the progress of the Western cartography of Japan. It does not seem to be generally realised that although the Japanese freely copied Portuguese and Dutch world-maps or maps of the Asiatic continent, they almost invariably improved on the originals in delineating the outlines of their own country. For their geographical conceptions of China, India, Europe and America they were indeed wholly dependent on European sources, but as regards the representation of their own land (or those countries immediately adjacent such as Korea) they by no means blindly accepted their Western prototypes. For instance, the portulan chart of Kadyoa Shichirobei just alluded to, though based on a Portuguese model, as is evident from the typically Lusitanian windrose, loxodrome lines, scale of leagues and even the very material which is vellum, yet depicts the outline of Japan far more accurately than does any contemporary Lusitanian map. The earliest Portuguese map showing the sixty-eight provinces of Japan, and Yezo as an island (contrary to the usual European practice), is Father Antonio Cardim's of c. 1646, in itself derived from a Jesuit map based to a large extent on Japanese sources.

A curious example of this Japanese influence on Dutch cartographical knowledge is furnished by the following item which I have not seen quoted elsewhere in this connection. When Maerten Gerritsz. Vries set out with the *Castricum* and *Breskens* on his celebrated voyage in search of the fabled

¹ *Dagh-Register Batavia* in voce 21. iv. 1641.

² *Ibidem*.

gold and silver islands, believed to lie off the East coast of Japan in February 1643, he was given by the Governor-General, Antonio van Diemen, and the Raad van Indië a number of books and maps as listed in a 'Memorandum of the books and papers which must be appended to the instructions for the expedition to Tartary'¹. Amongst these works in addition to the Atlases of Willem and Johan Blaeu, as also the *Itinerario* of Linschoten, we find the following under item no. 21 — 'Two sketch-maps of the gold island, as the same is depicted in the Japanese Beobys'. The word *Beoby(s)* is, of course, a corruption of the Japanese *Byobu* (folding screen), and the depiction of these fabled treasure islands on contemporary Japanese folding screens is of great interest. Clearly a *Byobu* with a world-map or one of Japan thereon, of the type of those now in the collection of Mr. Ikenaga at Kobe, is the kind of screen indicated here². It is probable that the Japanese derived their notions of these islands from the Portuguese or Spaniards who first propagated this myth³.

More as a curiosity than anything else, I reproduce a translation of the earliest Japanese account of the gold and silver islands which I have met with, and which contains a jumbled allusion to the voyages of Quast (1639) and De Vries (1643) in search thereof. It is extracted from a well-known compilation on the foreign intercourse of Nagasaki written by Nishikawa Joken c. 1700 and entitled *Nagasaki Yawagusa* or *Twilight Tales of Nagasaki*,

"Concerning gold and silver tales of various countries, and of how the Red Hairs reached an isle of gold."

Having been born in the port frequented by foreign shipping (*ie.* Nagasaki) for many years I have seen and heard a good deal about men's customs, birds, beasts, fishes,

¹ Printed on pp. 32-4 of the *Reize van Maerten Gerritsz. Vries in 1643 naar het noorden en oosten van Japan*, edited by Leupe and Siebold. (Amsterdam, 1858).

² Cf the *Byobu* with maps reproduced in H. Ikenaga's *Hosai bankwa Daihokan*, Plates 9, 127, 128 & 130; also the two reproduced on pp. 11 and 12 of the *Kaikoku Bunkwa Daikan* (Osaka, 1929). The corruption of *Beobos* or *Beobys* for *Byobu* is also found in contemporary Portuguese records.

³ Of the numerous articles and essays written on these fabled gold and silver islands, the best are, O. Nachod, *Ein unentdecktes Goldland*, Tokyo, 1900; E. W. Dahlgren, *Les Débuts de la cartographie du Japon*, Upsala, 1911, and the recent article

insects and plants. They are so numerous that it is difficult to write them all down, but they are usually different from things in China and Japan, — the only thing that Westerners and Chinese have in common being a lust for gold and silver bullion, in searching for which they freely risk their lives and fear no dangers¹. Japan is not the only country which abounds in gold and silver, but although there are vast stores of these precious metals in other countries, yet their inhabitants are not so skilled as the Japanese who know how to mine deep in the bowels of the earth.

In some cases the rulers of these lands prohibit excavating and mining operations, for the reason that the lust for gold is apt to sap the morals of the country; in other lands they think that abundance of gold and silver leads the people to adopt luxurious habits which afterwards plunge them into poverty, and it is said that one country has even passed a law prohibiting the increase of the coinage in circulation. Chosen (Korea) has laid the foundation of the state on simplicity, whilst in the writings of Bosai we read that in countries which are rich in gold and silver, the people become greedy and treacherous. However the Barbarians and Red-hairs are not of this opinion, and specially seek to gather gold and silver from everywhere to store up in their own lands.

In the Kwanei period (1624–1643), at the time when the Red-hairs still visited Hirado, one of their ships coming to Japan was blown off her course by a typhoon to the Eastern sea off Nambu, and on sighting an island they sent off a landing party in the ship's boat to fetch water. Because the sand and stones of that island were all of yellow metal, they tried to take it to the ship, but when they put it in the boat it could not move. Try as they would, they could not get the boat to budge an inch, and as the light was fading and night was fast approaching, they thought the God of the island was begrudging them his treasure; they therefore reluctantly

of E. Chassigneux, *Rica de Oro et Rica de Plata* in *T'Oung Pao*, Vol. XXX, 1933. Cf. also G. Kiss, *The Cartography of Japan during the middle Tokugawa Era. A study in cross-cultural influences*, (*Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. XXXVII, June 1947, No: 2, pp. 101–119).

¹ This recalls Kaempfer's quotation of the Latin saying *Quid non morsalia pectora cogis auri sacra fames* apropos of the behaviour of the Hollanders at the time of the Shimabara revolt.

decided to throw all the gold dust overboard, and no sooner had they done so, but they were enabled to row back to their ship. Well, when they got back to Hirado and discharged the cargo of this vessel in the haven of Kawauchi, they found some of this gold dust in the hold, which when put into water turned it into *saké*. Likewise the local inhabitants used some in the decoration of their *wakizashi*¹ as I have heard tell from eyewitnesses. From this time onwards in world maps, there are a gold and a silver island represented in the sea to the East of Japan, of which this island may be the former.

Subsequently the Red-hairs made innumerable efforts to find this island, and finally a ship supplied with provisions for two or three years scoured the Eastern seas of Japan in search thereof, but it had disappeared. Or perchance the fogs and mists which are thicker and more frequent in this ocean than elsewhere, wrought some kind of a strange transformation which hid this golden isle from view, without its having actually disappeared beneath the waves. On the whole it may be said that this ocean is the roughest sea in the world, where strange things often happen as the Barbarian (*ie.* Spanish and Portuguese) ships have found.

Well, this aforesaid Red-hair ship made landfall on the coast of Nambu in order to take in some fresh water, for which purpose the ship's boat was sent ashore with five or six men therein. The local inhabitants being suspicious of their intentions seized three of them, whereon the remainder fled to their ship which at once put out to sea. The three prisoners were sent from Nambu to Yedo. Some of these three had previously been to Hirado several times, and asked in Japanese for a certain Hirado man named Shidzuku who was a close acquaintance of theirs. Thereupon an order was sent to Hirado for this Shidzuku to come in all haste to Yedo where he met the Red-hairs who rejoiced exceedingly to see him. Shidzuku commiserated with them, and thanks to his clear explanation to the authorities, their doubts were resolved and he was sent with the Red-hairs to Nagasaki. The time of their arrival in this port, coincided with that of the

¹ *Wakizashi* — a short sword worn at the waist, together with the *katana* or long sword, by men of samurai rank.