



Double-page engraved map of the East Indies, with fine hand-colour in full.

“FROM THE MOST CORRECT CHARTS THAT THE PORTUGUESE PILOTS MAKE USE OF” (LINSCHOTEN)

Exacta & accurata delineatio cum orarum maritimarum tum etjam locorum terrestrium quae in regionibus China, Cauchinchina, Camboja sive Champa, Syao, Malacca, Arracan & Pegu... - Waaractige wtworpinghe oste afbeeldinge van alle die custen ende landen van China, Cauchinchina, Camboja, Syao, Malacca Arracan ende Pegu.

Author

LINSCHOTEN, Jan Huyghen; and Arnold and Henrik Floris van LANGREN

Publication date

1596.

Publisher

Cornelis Claesz.,

Publication place

Amsterdam,

Physical description

Double-page engraved map of the East Indies, with fine hand-colour in full.

Dimensions

367 by 533mm (14.5 by 21 inches).

Notes

A map of the East Indies and the southern Pacific, showing China, Southeast Asia, the Philippines,

Borneo, Korea (as an island), Japan, Java, and Beach, oriented to the west. First published in Jan Huygen van Linschoten's (1563-1611) *'Itinerario, Voyage ofte Schipvaert van J.H. van Linschoten'*, published by Cornelis Claesz in 1596. The coastal and navigational details are taken from the Portuguese portolans copied by Linschoten. It is exceptionally detailed; the first published map of the area to be prepared primarily from Portuguese sources, but also drawing on Petrus Plancius.

The map's "representation of Japan and Southeast Asia, except for the Philippines, was based on the work of the Portuguese cartographer Fernao Vaz Dourado, while the depiction of China is taken from Barbuda. The Philippines appears to be a variant of the Lasso model, and is most obviously characterized by its peculiar east-west orientation for Palawin... Linschoten labels the island of Seram as "Os Papuas". Reinforcing Plancius's confusion of Seram with the newly-emerging land of New Guinea. His depiction of New Guinea, however, proved influential at a later date; Thomas Forrest, who explored New Guinea in the service of the East India Company in 1774-76, cited the Linschoten map as proof that the islands of New Britain discovered by William Dampier were one and the same archipelago as the Solomon Islands. He reproduced the New Guinea section from the Linschoten map and compared with that of Dampier: "It is to be regretted, that Dampier, who sailed to New Britain in the *Roebuck* 1699, had not seen Linschoten's map. Such a guide might have induced him to put into harbours which he did not visit, not knowing they existed: for the least additional light to a discoverer may be productive of important consequences" (Suarez).

The map also records information from the travel accounts of Marco Polo, including the "beach provincia auriferain", at roughly where the northwest coast of Australia would eventually be discovered.

From the first book of Jan Huygen van Linschoten's *'Itinerario'*, the first printed work to include precise sailing instructions for the East Indies. It allowed Dutch merchants to circumvent the Portuguese stranglehold on trade to the East. It was of such economic utility that "it was given to each ship sailing from Holland to India" and soon became "the navigator's vade mecum for the Eastern seas" (Penrose).

The mapmaker

Jan Huygen van Linschoten (1563-1611) left the Netherlands for Spain in 1576 and secured passage to India in 1583 as secretary to Dominican Vicente da Fonseca, the newly-appointed Portuguese Archbishop of Goa, which gave him access to secret information, including the East Indies portolan charts guarded for over a century. With an impressive disregard for the trust placed in him, Linschoten began to copy these maps meticulously. On his return to the Netherlands, he wrote an account of his travels in 1595 with prints based on his own drawings and maps incorporating the information stolen from the Portuguese.

The first book is especially valuable for its eyewitness account of India, as one of the few Renaissance works on the East to be illustrated from life. Linschoten's description of Goa is "one of the most original and reliable narratives prepared during the sixteenth century on life at the hub of Portugal's Eastern empire and still is regarded as one of the best sources for Goa's history at the peak of its glory". The maps in the first book of the *'Itinerario'* were engraved by Henricus van Langren, mainly using Portuguese maps owned by Cornelis Claesz, the original publisher of the *'Itinerario'*. They were mostly drawn by de Lasso, and originally acquired by the Houtman brothers between 1592-93, during their secret mission to Portugal at the suggestion of Petrus Plancius, the first official hydrographer of the VOC.

The engravers

The maps in the first book of the *'Itinerario'* were engraved by Arnold and Henrik Floris van Langren, mainly using Portuguese maps owned by Cornelis Claesz, the original publisher of the

'Itinerario'. They were mostly drawn by Bartolomeo de Lasso, cosmographer to the King of Spain, and originally acquired by the Houtman brothers between 1592-1593, during their secret mission to Portugal at the suggestion of Petrus Plancius, the first official hydrographer of the VOC.

Bibliography

Literature: Suarez, 'Early Mapping of Southeast Asia', page 178; Suarez, 'Early Mapping of the Pacific', 92.

Provenance

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