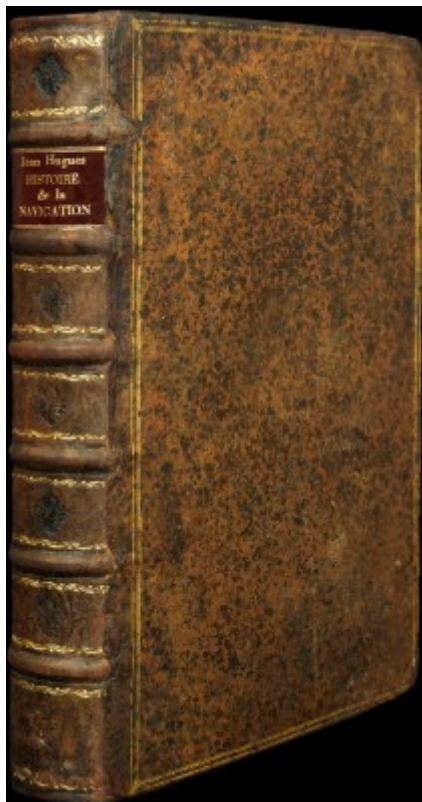




Folio (316 by 198mm), third edition, French text, three parts in one volume, (4) ff., including decorative engraved frontispiece and half-page engraved portrait of Linschoten on verso of fourth preliminary, 206pp.; (2)ff., including second engraved title, 181pp.; (1) f. (third engraved title), 1-60; 67-86 (i.e. 80)pp., 36 plates and six maps by Johann and Baptiste van Doetecom, five folding, 31 double-page, world map close-shaved and with small paper fault hole to image area, old creasing and small neat repairs to map of South America, slight damage to three of the plates, neat marginal repairs to first title and five text leaves, outer lower blank corner of li2 excised, mottled French calf with narrow gilt fillet border, re-backed, red morocco lettering piece, gilt, spine in eight compartments with foliate roll-tool decoration separated by raised bands.

“THE NAVIGATOR’S VADE MECUM FOR THE EASTERN SEAS”

Histoire de la navigation de Jean Hugues de Linschot Hollandois: aux Indes Orientales contenant diverses descriptions des lieux jusques à present decouverts par les Portugais: observations des coustumes & singularitez de delà, & autres declarations ...

Author

LINSCHOTEN, Jan Huyghen

Publication date

1638.

Publisher

Chez Evert Cloppenburg, Marchand libraire, demeurant sur le Water à la Bible Doree,

Publication place

Amsterdam,

Physical description

Folio (316 by 198mm), third edition, French text, three parts in one volume, (4) ff., including

decorative engraved frontispiece and half-page engraved portrait of Linschoten on verso of fourth preliminary, 206pp.; (2)ff., including second engraved title, 181pp.; (1) f. (third engraved title), 1-60; 67-86 (i.e. 80)pp., 36 plates and six maps by Johann and Baptiste van Doetecom, five folding, 31 double-page, world map close-shaved and with small paper fault hole to image area, old creasing and small neat repairs to map of South America, slight damage to three of the plates, neat marginal repairs to first title and five text leaves, outer lower blank corner of li2 excised, mottled French calf with narrow gilt fillet border, re-backed, red morocco lettering piece, gilt, spine in eight compartments with foliate roll-tool decoration separated by raised bands.

Dimensions

Notes

One of the most important of all travel books, Linschoten's was the first printed work to include precise sailing instructions for the East Indies. Its exposition of a route to the south of Sumatra through the Sunda Strait allowed Dutch and, later, English merchants to circumvent the Portuguese stranglehold on passage, and, therefore, trade, to the East through the Straits of Malacca. This enabled the British East India Company and the Dutch East India Company to set sail for the Spice Islands and, ultimately, China and Japan, and was of such economic utility that, according to Church, and others, "it was given to each ship sailing from Holland to India" and soon became "the navigator's vade mecum for the Eastern seas" (Penrose).

Jan Huyghen van Linschoten (1563-1611) left the Netherlands for Spain in 1576 and, with the assistance of his brother, Willem, secured passage to India in 1583 as secretary to Dominican Vicente da Fonseca, the newly-appointed Portuguese Archbishop of Goa. As a result of his position, Jan Huyghen had access to secret information, including the Portolan charts relating to the East Indies that had been well guarded for over a century. With an impressive disregard for the trust placed in him, Linschoten began to copy these maps meticulously, displaying an "avaricious thirst for knowledge which enabled him to get detailed information of land and sea as far afield as the Spice Islands and China" (Penrose). With the death of the Archbishop in 1589, Linschoten was obliged to set sail for Lisbon, but was delayed for two years in the Azores by a shipwreck following an attack by English pirates. He landed in Lisbon in 1592 and shortly thereafter traveled back to his home at Enkhuizen.

In June 1594, Linschoten sailed from Texel on the first of two unsuccessful expeditions in search of a Northeast passage via the Kara Sea led by Dutch cartographer Willem Barentsz.

In 1595, with the support of the Amsterdam publisher, Cornelis Claesz, Linschoten began to record his travels in the three books contained within the present volume which Parry calls "a journal of human adventure and observation, [and] an uplifting story that appeals on many levels."

The first book deals with the East Indies and East Africa, including regions as far east as Japan. Klooster describes the work as "a magnificent panorama of pictures and maps of the non-European world ... [that] contained so much detailed and accurate information about shipping lanes, winds, and currents, that seafarers could use it virtually as a handbook". The work is also especially valuable for its eyewitness account of India, termed by Lach "the most important of the firsthand accounts published independently of the great travel collections". He further states that 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, which are much better and more detailed than earlier printed maps, were clearly derived from the latest and best Portuguese charts of the Eastern oceans and sea coasts".

The second book, here as 'Le grand routier de mer ... Continant une instruction des routes & cours qu'il convient tenir en la Navigation des Indes Orientales, & au voyage de la coste du Bresil, des Antilles, & du Cap de Lopo Gonsalves', was originally published in 1595: a year before the 'first' book of this volume. It describes the navigation of the coasts of West Africa around the Cape of Good Hope to Arabia, together with the coasts of the New World. It includes a real 'roteiro' after the Portuguese Royal pilot Diego Alfonso, containing sailing directions from Portugal to India, and instructions for sailing from island to island in the East Indies.

The third book, 'Description de l'Amerique & des parties d'icelle, comme de la Nouvelle France, Floride, des Antilles, Iucaya, Cuba, Jamaica, &c.' gives an account of America and the African coast.

Linschoten's travels are also of importance as one of the few Renaissance works on the East to be illustrated from life, with plates depicting the people, manners, and products of Asia (particularly Java, China, and India) engraved after drawings by the author. Its many large and folded maps include van Langren's maps of the East Indies and South America (including the Caribbean and Florida), and the double-hemispherical world map of Plancius (Shirley 187), and are, according to Klooster, based upon the manuscript portolans of Fernão Vaz Dourado (c.1520-c.1580) and Lach considers them "the last important depiction of Asia to be produced for general distribution in the sixteenth century".

The present work is a fine and fresh example of the third edition in French, with commentaries by B. Paludanus reprinted from the edition of 1619. "Fine copies of this work with all the maps and plates are extremely rare" (Church).

Bibliography

Church 252; JCB (3) II:271; Klooster, 'Dutch in the Americas', p. 8 & Catalogue Item 5; Palau 138584; LOC European Americana 638/67; David E. Parry, 'The Cartography Of The East Indian Islands', pp. 84-85; Lach, 'Asia In The Making Of Europe', Volume 1, pp.198-204 & 482-489; Sabin 41373; Shirley 187; Tiele 686-88.

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 1010