The Hydrography of Cambodia in Early Modern Portuguese Textual and Cartographic Sources

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Before the discovery of the Cape route to India, little was known in Portugal and elsewhere in Europe about Southeast Asia. European literary circles had some knowledge of those distant places, of course, based on information collected and spread by medieval travelers who had crossed Asia, such as Marco Polo, or by compilers like John de Mandeville, who had gathered all the material available on the non-European world. However, this literary information, which reached only a small number of people, presented a rather vague and sometimes fantastic image of the real Southeast Asian world. The cartographic representation of Asiatic lands available to the learned European public in 15th and early 16th century printed maps was quite imaginative and symbolic, with little or no connection to the real world, as a quick glance at several printed maps of the Ptolomaic tradition will show (Plates 1 & 2).1 After Vasco da Gama arrived in Western India by sea route in 1498, everything suddenly began to change. Portuguese ships rapidly came into contact with most of Asia's maritime shores, from the Red Sea, visited as early as 1503, to the remote islands off the south China coast, where they anchored for the first time ten years later. Portuguese navigators, in the course of the 16th century, became responsible for the establishment of direct and regular relations between East and West, and also for the spreading all over Europe of detailed

geographic and ethnographic information about the distant and previously unknown, or little-known, peoples and lands of Asia.

Throughout the 16th century, the Portuguese kept a tight control of the Cape route to India, successfully opposing the arrival of other European ships on the oriental seas. At the same time, they established the grounds of a loosely organized but very efficient political, administrative and military body known as the Estado da Índia, which was composed of a string of forts and factories built along the Asian shoreline, linked together by powerful fleets. The Estado da Índia-whose strategic points were to be Hormuz, on the Persian Gulf (occupied in 1507), Goa, on the west coast of India (conquered in 1510), Malacca, on the Malay Peninsula (conquered in 1511), and Macao, on the south China coast (occupied after 1557)-had as its main purposes the systematic involvement in the most profitable Asian trading networks and the diversion to Lisbon of an important portion of the trade in luxury commodities. For almost a century, the Portuguese were the only European power established in the East. They controlled a large part of the spice and drug trade to Europe and also some of the most important regional trade routes in Eastern waters. Their only direct competitors were the Spaniards, who began to settle in the Philippines around 1570, with a view toward contacting China and Japan.² As they mastered the direct sea route between Asia and Europe, the Portuguese also controlled the West's supply of information on Eastern matters. A significant portion of the news about Asia available in 16th century Europe came by way of the Portuguese, so we can speak about a

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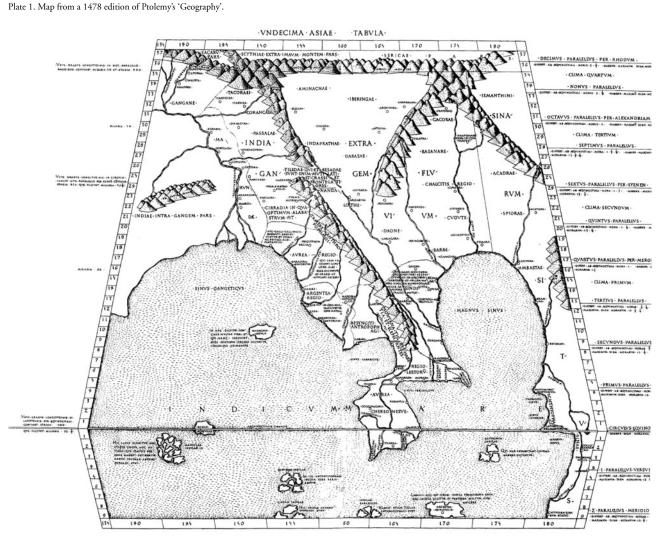
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Portuguese connection in the construction of European perceptions of Asian and Southeast Asian realities.

Various types of 16th century sources traveled under Portuguese supervision and were responsible for bringing the Southeast Asian world to the attention of Europe. Information was diffused, first of all, by oral reports, impossible to quantify; but we know that, besides Portuguese, other European merchants, sailors and technicians traveled to and from Asia on board the Portuguese ships on a regular basis. Many of them, once they were back in Europe, contributed to the dissemination of knowledge. News about Southeast Asia was also spread through literary sources, which were, of course, the single most important factor in the construction and diffusion in Europe of a new image of Southeast Asia. Written reports and sketched

maps produced in the East by Portuguese observers with extensive overseas experience, as well as by homebased scholars in Lisbon, circulated widely, either in manuscript or printed form, being responsible for the spreading throughout Europe of new data about all things Asian and also about the particular circumstances of Portuguese-Asian relations.³

The earliest news compiled by the Portuguese, naturally enough, had to do with matters pertaining to commerce and navigation, for, in order to intervene in the trading world of Asia, it was imperative to know where the products came from and how to get there, through what means they came and at which time of the year, how much they cost and what could be offered in return. Matters of economical geography had the utmost priority, but political and religious information



was also relevant because it was necessary to find out which polities would welcome or tolerate the Portuguese as a new trading partner, and if it were possible, and by what means, to establish permanent bases. In this context, the oldest representation of Asia produced by the Portuguese appears in the so-called Cantino world map (1502), which, for the first time, presents a non-Ptolomaic vision of the world, even if its most oriental parts are still drawn from hearsay (Plate 3).⁴ Although a manuscript, this piece of cartographic information circulated widely in Europe and even influenced some of the earliest European printed maps, such as the Martin Waldseemüller map of 1513, the first modern European printed map devoted to Asia (Plate 4).⁵

After 1511, when the Portuguese conquered Malacca and established in that port-city a stronghold,

Plate 2. Southeast Asia in a 1551 edition of Ptolemy's 'Geography'.

the gateway to furthest Asia lay wide open because the former Muslim sultanate had maintained regular contacts, which could now be renewed, with the more important trading centers of East and Southeast Asia. Portuguese ships rapidly came into contact with maritime markets in the Malay Peninsula, Siam, Cambodia, south China, and all over the Indonesian archipelago as far as the islands of Maluku and Timor. Commercial exchanges had, as a counterpart, the collection of strategic geographical information, consigned in sundry official letters, trade reports, sea rutters, and charts and maps dispatched to Goa and to Lisbon.

Around 1515, in response to Europe's enormous curiosity about the Eastern world, Tomé Pires, a Portuguese civil servant who had been stationed in

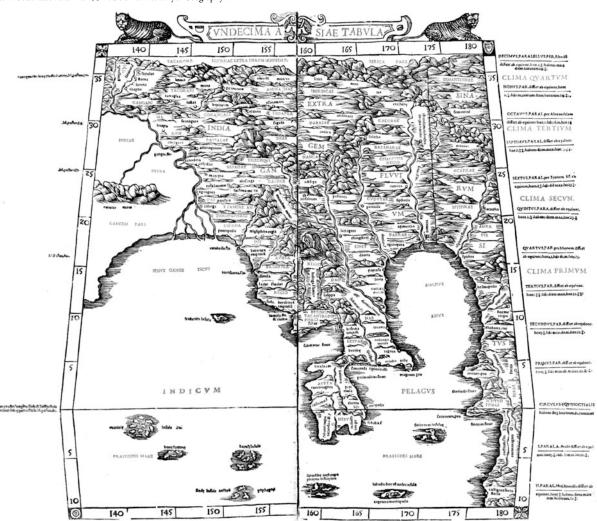




Plate 3. Southeast Asia in the Cantino worldmap of 1502.

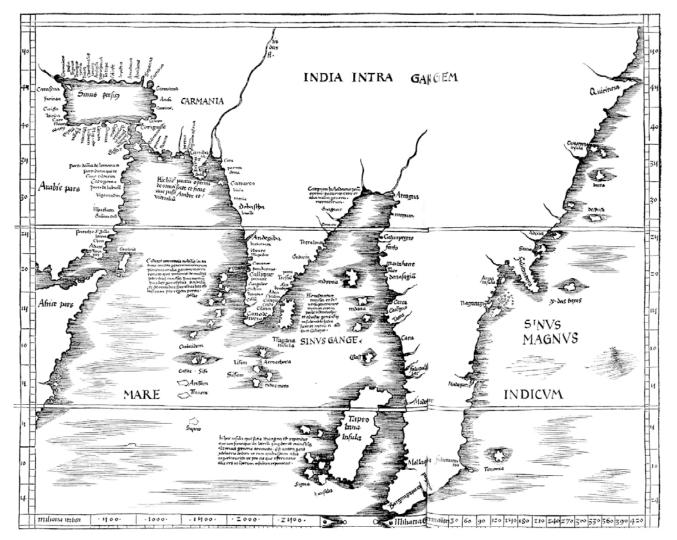
Malacca for some time, prepared a global geographic treatise on Asiatic matters, the well-known *Suma Oriental*. The persistent enquiries undertaken by Portuguese men in the ports of Asia had paved the way for a large accumulation of information about lands and seas, routes and products, peoples and societies, economies and cultures—information that was now, for the first time, compiled in a systematic manner. Obviously, Tomé Pires had gathered from his informers some data about continental Southeast Asia, a part of the world almost totally unknown to Europeans. Specifically about Cambodia, the Portuguese apothecary stated that it was a powerful heathen kingdom whose people were "warlike" and fiercely independent. Pires didn't have much to say about the country except that it extended "far into the hinterland" and possessed "many rivers" that were navigated by "many *lancharas*." Being interested above all in commercial matters, he lists the main exports of Cambodia, which included "quantities of rice and good meat, fish," alcoholic beverages, gold, lac, "many elephants' tusks," and dried fish. Concerning imports, there was Cambodian demand for fine "white cloth from Bengal, a little pepper, cloves, vermillion, quicksilver, liquid storax [and] red beads."⁶ At such

an early date the Portuguese had not yet visited the Cambodian coast, but only some of the islands that lie in its vicinity, such as Pulo Condor, although they had sailed as far as Siam and all the way to south China. Most probably, Tomé Pires had to rely on hearsay.

In the decades following the occupation of Malacca, the Portuguese, whether in the service of the *Estado da Índia* or acting as free-lance adventurers, established a regular pattern of contacts with Asian partners following traditional maritime routes and searching for the most relevant port-cities east of Singapore. The Portuguese crown established solid trading bases in the easternmost islands of Indonesia (Ternate and Banda), on the south China coast (Macao), and in the southernmost islands of Japan (Tanegashima, Nagasaki, etc.). Elsewhere, informal Portuguese communities bloomed in such places as Bantan (Java), Patane (Malay Peninsula), Ayuthia (Siam), and wherever valuable trade commodities and accommodating polities could be found. Regular contacts with maritime Asia throughout the 16th century gave them access to firsthand knowledge of vast Asian territories previously unknown to Europeans, allowing the Portuguese to redraw their maps and charts and to record secure sea rutters. As a result, they produced a steady output of textual and cartographic materials that slowly started to change and to sharpen Europe's representations of Southeast Asia.⁷

Cambodia was probably visited by Duarte Coelho, a Portuguese officer based in Malacca, as early

Plate 4. Southeast Asia in a Waldseemuller map of 1513.



as 1516,8 but the country lacked rare drugs, valuable spices or other luxury wares that were attracting the ships of the Estado da Índia to sundry Asian markets. Therefore, there is no information in extant sources about any kind of permanent Portuguese official outpost in Cambodian territory. Nevertheless, there are some scattered references that indicate frequent visits of independent Portuguese merchants and adventurers to the lower Mekong delta and to Lovek, the Cambodian capital, in the 16th century.9 Portuguese cartography, with its wealth of toponyms, testifies to frequent visits to the Cambodian coast, even if the hinterland regions remained unexplored. Two early examples of such manuscript charts that focused on the coastal features of continental Southeast Asia are, on the one hand, the Gaspar Viegas map of ca. 1537 (Plate 5), included in his Atlas Universal, which shows on the Cambodian coast the pta. de cabodia (Cape Cambodia),

laro and *quelu*, as well as, to the northwest, in Siamese territory, *dadube*, *liam*, and the *c. de drrte. coelho* (Cape of Duarte Coelho); and, on the other hand, an anonymous Portuguese planisphere of ca. 1545 (Plate 6), which shows the *I. do parcel* (Shoal Island) and the *ca. Restinga* (Reef Cape). A slightly different model, with imaginative representations of the hinterland, is found on a map of the anonymous Portuguese *Atlas Universal 'Vallard'*, dated 1547 (Plate 7), and also on the map included in the *Livro de Marinharia de João de Lisboa*, from ca. 1560 (Plate 8).¹⁰ Other examples exist, but what matters is that the extant cartography shows that, regardless of state-to-state relations, Portuguese navigators were no strangers to the Cambodian coasts due to their regular intra-Asian trading ventures.

The increase of Portuguese trading expeditions in the South China Sea in the decade of 1540 due to the first encounter with Japan would eventually lead to the

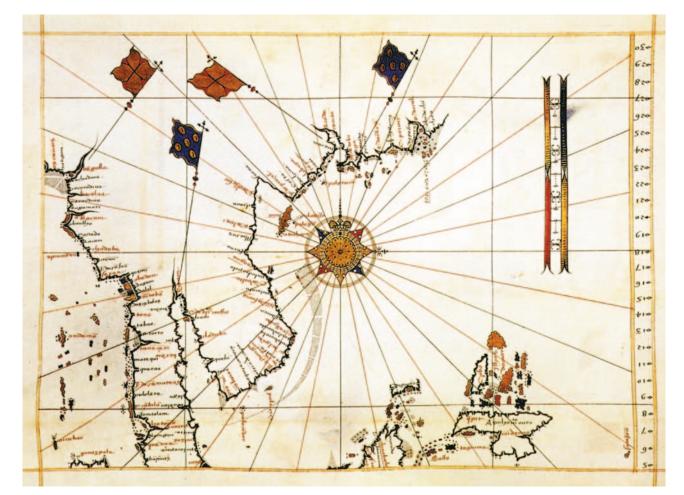


Plate 5. Southeast Asia in a map by Gaspar Viegas, 1537.

establishment of a Portuguese settlement in Macao, on the Guangdong coast, around 1555.11 Voyages along the coast of Cambodia multiplied since the main maritime routes followed by the Portuguese linked Malacca with Siamese ports, and these with the south China coast. Pulo Condor was a regular stopover for Portuguese navigation, and the contacts with Cambodian ports seem to have increased, as the testimony of Fernão Mendes Pinto, a well-known adventurer who repeatedly sailed off the Mekong delta in the 1540s, seems to indicate. In his Peregrinaçam, published years later (1614), he mentions "a river called Pulo Cambin which divides the domain of Cambodia from the kingdom of Champa." Local people told him that this mighty river "had its source in a lake called Pinator, 260 leagues east of the sea in the kingdom of Quitirvão; and that the lake was ringed by huge mountains."12 Pulo Cambin, which has not been identified so far, certainly means

Plate 6. A Portuguese anonymous map of East Asia, 1545.

one of the arms of the Mekong delta; as for *Pinator*, it has been tentatively located somewhere in Tibet, but it probably originated from reports about the Tonle Sap collected by the Portuguese from local informants.

Elsewhere in his voluminous travelogue, while cruising off Champa, Mendes Pinto again alludes to another inland lake that "the natives call Cunebeté, though others call it the Chiang Mai." It is said to measure "sixty *jaus* in circumference, with three leagues to a *jau*," being the source of four great rivers that "provide water for a great part of the land."¹³ Later, in the course of his alleged travels across the interior parts of Asia, Mendes Pinto encounters this "lake of Singapamor, called Cunebeté by the local people," which, according to the information he received, "measured thirty-six leagues in circuit." He then proceeds to describe the hydrography of a region roughly situated in upper Burma: "In this lake

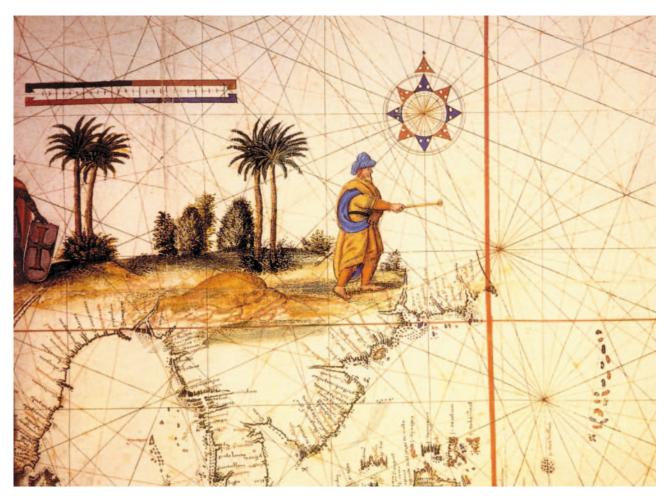
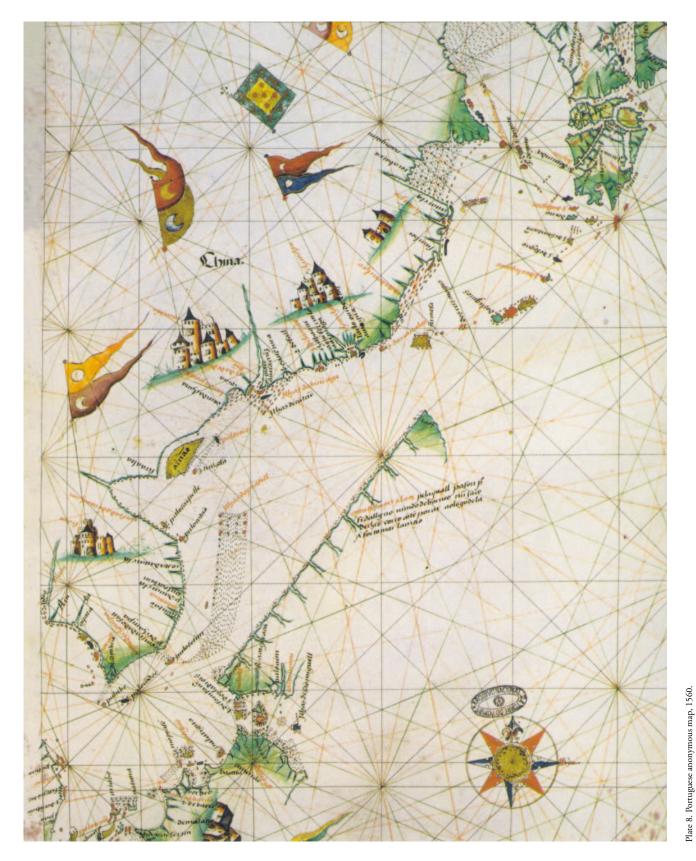




Plate 7. Southeast Asia in a Portuguese anonymous map of 1547.

of Singapamor, which is carved into the heart of the country by some admirable work of nature, four deep, wide rivers have their source; one by the name of Ventrau, which flows straight west across all the land of the Sornau of Siam;" the other, "called Jangumá," flows south towards "the bar of Martaban" in the kingdom of Pegu; the "third river, called Pumfileu," enters "the sea at the bar of Cosmim, near Arakan"; and finally the fourth river "is presumed in the opinion of most people, to be the Ganges."¹⁴

It seems clear, then, that the Pinator and the Cunebeté / Singapamor are meant to be quite different Asian lakes in Fernão Mendes Pinto's notions of Southeast Asian hydrography, which he probably got from Portuguese manuscript maps. The idea that the largest rivers of mainland Southeast Asia originated from one or two great lakes situated somewhere inland quickly spread among Portuguese observers, who conveyed this geographic notion in their reports to Goa and to Lisbon, where chroniclers and cartographers soon turned it into a graphic reality. It is difficult to locate the origin of such a concept, but Western cartographic tradition had frequently represented large rivers originating from imaginary interior lakes in Asia as well as in Africa. The lakes of Pinator and Chiang Mai, even if they did not exist in reality, were necessary to give a certain mental order to the unknown hydrography of Southeast Asia.¹⁵



After the middle of the 16th century, Portuguese printing presses, which until then had remained silent, seem to have awakened to the diffusion of Asian matters, and a series of chronicles, biographies, reports, and geographical treatises were published in Lisbon and elsewhere. João de Barros, factor at the Casa da Índia in Lisbon, published in 1552 the first of his four Décadas da Ásia, a voluminous and well-informed account of Portuguese oriental endeavours up to 1540. Barros had never been east of the Cape of Good Hope, but his official chronicle included a large amount of geographical information gathered from written sources and from oral reports made by men with oriental experience. Continental Southeast Asia, of course, is tentatively described by the Portuguese chronicler, and, certainly for the first time in print, European readers could hear about a huge lake called Chiamáy, located two hundred miles inland, "from whence came six renowned rivers,"16 namely the "Menam which means mother of the waters." From elsewhere came the "powerful river Mecon, whose source is located in China." According to this same source, the Mekong "receives so many and such large rivers, and it runs for such a long distance, that when it wants to come out to the sea it forms a lake more than sixty leagues wide."17

The geographical ideas of João de Barros were not very different from those of Fernão Mendes Pinto, but they must have used different sources of information since the author of the Peregrinaçam was still in Asia when the first two Décadas da Ásia (1552-1553) were published in Lisbon. In 1554, on his way to Japan, Mendes Pinto was in Malacca, from where he wrote a letter to the Jesuits in Portugal with a detailed report on Asian matters. About Cambodia he stated that some Portuguese traders had just arrived in Malacca from there, and they claimed that the Cambodian king was eager to receive Christian missionaries in his country.¹⁸ The challenge was immediately met by a Dominican friar who was then touring Asia in search of possible missionary fields, "although everyone in Malacca was opposed" to his projects. Fr. Gaspar da Cruz arrived in Lovek in 1555, where he stayed for "about a year," but seeing that he "could make no fruit therein," on account of the opposition not only of the local "Bramenes," but also of King Ang Chan I, he decided to move on to the south China coast.¹⁹ Years later, when he went back to Portugal, Fr. Gaspar da Cruz published the Tractado das cousas da China (Évora, 1570), an extensive monograph

dedicated to Chinese matters. In the opening pages of this famous work, he has a lot to say about Cambodian religious matters; and later, while dealing with China's borders, he introduces some relevant information about the layout of Cambodian territory and the course of its rivers. He seems to have navigated up and down the Mekong with his fellow "Portugals," a large community of which lived in Lovek, involved in trading ventures to many destinations in the South China Sea, and prone to causing "disorders."²⁰

He reports that the great Cambodian river "is very large and they say has its origin in China," passing along its course "through many untilled and deserted countries of great woods and forests," where there are countless elephants, buffaloes, merus (a species of deer) and badas (or rhinoceros). The Mekong, as the Portuguese friar experienced himself, has "eight, fifteen and twenty fathom of water," and is regularly navigated for trading purposes all the way up-river to the country of the "Laos, or Siões mãos," a journey no shorter than "three months, as they go against the stream."21 Fr. Gaspar da Cruz was truly amazed with the magnitude of the Mekong, as well as with some of its less common hydrographic features. He correctly locates "Chudurmuch," or Phnom Pénh, "which is twelve leagues from the principal city of Cambodia," that is, Lovek, characterizing it as the meeting point of four different river arms. He also describes the Tonle Sap, "a great lake that is in the uttermost parts of Camboja," in the middle of "which, its bigness being great, you can see no land on either side." Furthermore, he mentions the annual reversal of the flow in the Tonle Sap, as well as the great floods that are experienced in Lovek and elsewhere: "it overfloweth all the country of Camboja." Some of his compatriots, men with many years of Cambodian experience, showed Fr. Gaspar da Cruz "a great hill of earth in a field," over which "in the time of the floods a great ship that was made in the country did pass without touching."22 With the Tractado das cousas da China, important first-hand observations about mainland Southeast Asia were widely circulated, and the work was liberally used by Juan González de Mendoza in his best-selling Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran Reyno de la China, published in Rome in 1585.

When Fr. Gaspar da Cruz sailed back to Malacca in 1556 or 1557, he probably encountered Luís de Camões, one of his countrymen who would later become famous worldwide. The famous Portuguese poet, then a mere



Plate 9. Cambodia in a map by Fernão Vaz Dourado (1571).

soldier in the service of the *Estado da Índia*, had recently suffered shipwreck on an outward-bound voyage from Malacca to China, off the dangerous Paracel Islands (Xisha Qundao). Along with other survivors he ended up stranded somewhere on the Mekong delta, from where they all arranged passage back to Malacca on board Asian trading ships.²³ Years later, in 1572, back in Portugal, Camões published his epic *Os Lusíadas*, in which he mentions the Mekong running through Cambodia ("passa por Camboja Mecom Rio"), stating that the river's name means "captain of the waters" ("capitão das agoas se interpreta"). He is aware of the regular summer floods of the Mekong, which he compares to similar floods of the Nile, and in an explicit autobiographic reference, Camões alludes to his "sad and miserable shipwreck" ("naufragio triste, & miserando") on the South China Sea and to his subsequent voyage to the Mekong River, which received "in its bosom the soaked cantos" of the poet.²⁴ The tenth canto of *Os Lusíadas* presents a selection of the most important topics of oriental geography from the point of view of the Portuguese, which means that Cambodia's mighty river was among them. In this



Plate 10. Map of China by Luís Jorge de Barbuda, 1584.

context perhaps it will be relevant to stress that the Mekong floods were well known among the Portuguese in the East, so much so that the expression "macareo de Camboya" (the bore of Cambodia) was commonly used to signify a very strong tide and was even used metaphorically to denote abundant tears.²⁵ Even if the explanations proposed were rather fantastic, such as the one used by Fr. Gaspar da Cruz about the influx of the spring tides that was supposed to push back the waters of the Cambodian rivers.²⁶

Some of the intelligence gathered in Cambodia from first-hand experience by Portuguese observers in the 1550s soon was incorporated into maps being produced within the context of the activities of the *Estado da Índia*. Such was the case of the maps drawn by Fernão Vaz Dourado, a most prolific cartographer of Luso-Asian ascent working in Goa. His 1571 manuscript Atlas Universal included a magnificent map of Southeast Asia (Plate 9), where for the first time the Mekong delta was clearly indicated, along with the interior lake from which it originated, in a geographical position quite similar to the Pinator of Fernão Mendes Pinto. Also, Vaz Dourado, in harmony with his contemporary João de Barros, presents in the interior of Asia a large lake from which several rivers derive.²⁷ Another outstanding cartographic example is the map of China drawn in Lisbon around 1575 by Luís Jorge de Barbuda (Plate 10), which would later be included in the 1584 edition of the Theatrum Orbis Terrarum published in Antwerp by Abraham Ortelius.²⁸ Barbuda was constantly receiving updated information from the Orient, and it was rumoured that he had access



Plate 11. Map from the Itinerario by Jan Huygen van Linschoten (Amsterdam, 1596).

to Chinese cartography. Although China is the main subject of the map, the Mekong River is represented, as well as the "Chiama" lake with its six rivers. The map also shows an imaginary lake in China.

The 1580s would bring paramount changes to the Portuguese Asian enterprise because Portugal for the next six decades was to be incorporated into the Spanish crown.²⁹ As a result of the Iberian Union, the Spanish based in Manila delineated several projects in order to set a foothold in mainland Asia, the primary objective of their endeavours being, of course, the Chinese empire. Until then, the old Treaty of Tordesillas, signed between the Iberian crowns in 1494, had kept them away. The Portuguese had managed for many decades a maritime empire in the Asian seas based on a limited string of fortresses and factories oriented mostly towards trading ventures. Now the Spaniards, possessing a quite different approach to empire, began to raise the possibility of conquering large Asian territories, including Cambodia.³⁰ Several religious and military expeditions were organized from the Philippines, aiming at mainland Southeast Asia. All of them, it is a matter of historical record, were condemned to utter failure, although in some instances the Cambodian king himself sent for Spanish help against his more threatening neighbours.³¹ If in the later years of the 16th century Portuguese adventurers such as Diogo Veloso played an important part in Cambodian affairs,³² for most of the following century the Portuguese had a very limited role to play in Cambodia.

Nevertheless, the collection of valuable information continued, and interesting reports about

Cambodian matters were circulated by missionaries of several denominations present in Cambodia after 1580. Paramount among these reports is Fr. António da Madalena's description of Angkor written around 1585. The ancient Khmer capital, abandoned since the 1430s, had been rediscovered by Cambodian hunters around 1550, and King Satha had temporarily moved his court to the vicinity of Angkor by 1570. It was in this period that the Portuguese Capuchin visited the ruins and wrote the first, and most thorough, European description of the site. His report eventually reached Goa and the hands of Diogo do Couto, who for years had been collecting materials about the Portuguese activities in the East and who became official chronicler of the Estado da Índia in 1595. He diligently made a copy of the friar's report in order to use the description of Angkor as a chapter in one of the Décadas da Ásia he was working on. In his Década Quinta, written during the years 1596-1597 and published only in 1612, Couto alludes to "one Fr. Antonio da Magdalena" as one of his informers on mainland Southeast Asian affairs.33

The description of Angkor, for unknown reasons, was not included in Couto's published Décadas da Asia, and remained unknown until quite recently.34 Nevertheless, it seems to have circulated widely, since echoes of its contents appeared in sundry Iberian published works of the first decades of the 17thcentury, such as Fr. Gabriel de San Antonio's Breve y verdadera relacion de los sucessos del reyno de Camboxa (Valladolid, 1604), Fr. João dos Santos' Ethiopia Oriental e vária história de cousas notáveis do Oriente (Évora, 1609), and Bartolome Leonardo de Argensola's Conquista de las Islas Malucas (Madrid, 1609).35 The original manuscript written by Diogo do Couto or one of his secretaries, still kept in the Portuguese archives, is quite outstanding, being a thorough description of "one of the marvels of the world," totally unknown until then.³⁶ The ancient Khmer city was shaped like a square, surrounded by powerful walls, "encompassed by a channel, one musket shot in width, and three fathoms of water deep." Inside the walls there were magnificent stone buildings, many palaces and pagodas, profusely decorated, many of them "of such a strange construction, that it is not possible to describe it by pen." But what was "more surprising about this work," according to Couto's informer, was "that all the stone for it is not found closer than twenty leagues from there, for which one may judge the

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expense, labor, mechanical skill and service necessary for this construction." The description also paid attention to the complex hydraulic system found all around the Khmer city, which included a large network of stone lakes and canals, "very beautiful, full of water as far as the edge."³⁷

Apart from the description of Angkor, Couto's manuscript also deals with some aspects of Cambodian hydrography. It states, for example, that two and a half leagues from "a pagoda called Angar [Angkor Wat]" there is a large lake, "thirty leagues long and sixteen across," which the chronicler mistakenly believes to be the "Chiamai," but must be identified with the Tonle Sap. This huge lake is regularly flooded by the waters of the "famous River Menão [alias the Mekong] which brings in its wake the waters from many others, which have their source in the same region as the Ganges." Diogo do Couto seems to share the confused notion current among other observers of his day and age of a single inland lake giving rise to multiple great rivers. He roughly describes the mechanism of the river movements that flood Cambodia during a large part of the year: "As soon as the winter commences, which is in June, this River Menão [Mekong] descends from the mountains with such force of water, that it spills its banks, and floods many regions, and floods the fields [for] more than twenty leagues around." Likewise, he claims that "the tide of the sea ascends as far as this lake, which is 150 leagues [from the sea]," during four months, only to "empty into the sea for another four months" as soon "as the winter has passed, which is in October."

All through the 16th century, the Portuguese led the way in the complex process of European approaches to Asia in general and Southeast Asia in particular. On the one hand, they were the first representatives of Europe to establish direct links by sea with these oriental regions, from as early as 1511. Their nearest competitors in East Asia, the Spaniards, were only able to provide a regular link between Mexico and the Philippines after 1565, when Andrés de Urdañeta finally discovered the northerly return route to the New World. Relations between Portugal and Southeast Asia led to increased interactions at every level, namely in the fields of trade, diplomacy, war, and religion. The Portuguese, on the other hand, played a fundamental role in the discovery of Southeast Asian realities. Not restricting themselves to simple trading ventures, they were also concerned with the gathering and recording of detailed information

about every aspect of the Southeast Asian world. The information thus accumulated was subsequently circulated, thanks to the wide international diffusion of treatises, chronicles, reports, maps and sea rutters of Portuguese origin.

Cambodia was on the horizon of Portuguese navigators from early on in the 16th century. However, Portuguese interactions with that Asian region were limited, due to the specific nature of the Portuguese imperial enterprise, which was based mainly on trade relations and on the search for luxury goods with international market value. Even if large groups of Portuguese adventurers and mercenaries lived in Lovek or other cities during the second part of the 16th century, Portuguese materials concerning Cambodia were not particularly rich. These were produced mostly within the framework of the Estado da Índia, which had no particular interest in the Cambodian hinterland, only caring about the surveying of its coast; also, the Portuguese crown, unlike its Spanish counterpart, never entertained projects of conquest connected with Cambodia, the same being true of the missionary orders when it came to spiritual conquests. The Jesuits in

particular, responsible as they were for the production of a huge mass of documentation about other Asian territories, never much cared about Cambodia until the closing years of the 16th century.³⁸ Trade and navigation were the main Portuguese goals, and these options are reflected in the extant textual and cartographic materials.

Nevertheless, 16th century Portuguese sources originating from Asia included invaluable data about Cambodia, as some contemporary European materials show. Such is the case, for example, of Jan Huygen van Linschoten, who lived in Goa for a few years in the 1580s, where he collected a large mass of Portuguese texts and maps. On his return to Europe, the Dutch traveler used all this valuable material to publish his immediately famous Itinerario in Amsterdam, in 1595-1596. Among its wealth of invaluable data about Asia, it was possible to find a summary of all the information the Portuguese had gathered about Cambodia, along with a detailed map of Southeast Asia (Plate 11) that featured the city of "Camboia" and the "Mecon fluuius."39 The Portuguese connection, after all, was being used for the benefit of Northern Europe. RC

NOTES

- 1 See Fell (1988), pp. 1-7; and also Suárez (1999), pp. 64 & 84-85.
- 2 For a recent survey of Portuguese early modern overseas activities, see Newitt (2005), passim; regarding Spanish activities in the Philippines, see Ollé (2002), passim.
- 3 The best introduction to this subject is still Lach (1994), passim.
- 4 For an excellent reproduction of the Cantino map, see Marques (1996), p. 57.
- 5 Suárez (1999), p. 110.
- 6 Cortesão (1990), vol. 1, p. 112.
- 7 Specifically on Cambodia, see Groslier & Boxer (1958), passim; for coastal Indochina, see Manguin (1972), passim.
- 8 Smith (1968), p. 30.
- 9 See Népote (1995), pp. 113-128.
- 10 Marques (1996), pp. 85, 91, 93 & 115.
- 11 See Loureiro (1999), passim.
- 12 Pinto (1989), pp. 68-69.
- 13 Pinto (1989), p. 74.
- 14 Pinto (1989), p. 266.
- 15 See Le Gentil (1947), pp. 36-40; and also Suárez (1999), pp. 152-153.
- 16 Barros (1988), p. 345.
- 17 Barros (1988), p. 346.
- 18 Catz & Rogers (1983), p. 44.
- 19 Boxer (1953), pp. 59-63.
- 20 Boxer (1953), p. 63.

- 21 Boxer (1953), pp. 76-78. See Lach (1994), bk. 2, pp. 565-568.
- 22 Boxer (1953), pp. 78-79.
- 23 See Loureiro (2003), pp. 109-125.
- 24 Camões (2000), pp. 278-279 (X, 127-128).
- 25 Rego (1963), p. 18.
- 26 Lach (1994), bk. 2, p. 566.
- 27 Marques (1996), p. 147.
- 28 Marques (1996), p. 153.
- 29 For a recent analyses, see Valladares (2001), passim.
- 30 See Boxer (1969), pp. 118-136.
- 31 See Briggs (1950), pp. 132-160; and Groslier & Boxer (1958), pp. 27-62.
- 32 See Teixeira (1983), passim.
- 33 See Loureiro (1998), pp. 167-182.
- 34 It was published in the original Portuguese with a French translation by Groslier & Boxer (1958), pp. 169-172 & pp. 68-74, respectively. For an English translation, see Smith (1968), pp. 104-108.
- 35 About these works, see Groslier & Boxer (1958), pp. 64-89; and also Lach & Van Kley (1993), bk. 3, pp. 1146-1148.
- 36 All quotations from Smith (1968), pp. 104-108.
- 37 About Angkor in the 16th century, see Groslier & Boxer (1958), pp. 90-121.
- 38 About Jesuit endeavours in Cambodia, see Loureiro (2005), pp. 193-222.
- 39 Linschoten (1997), pl. 39.

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