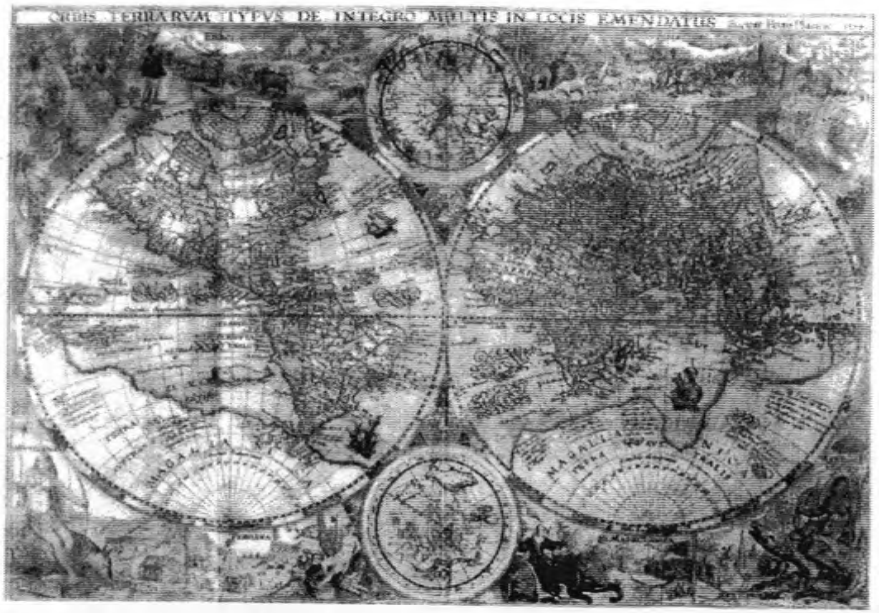

From Jan Huygen van Lischoten, *Itinerario,* Amsterdam, 1596

Travel Narratives
from the
Age of Discovery
An Anthology

Edited by

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Introduction

"Every landscape appears first of all as a vast chaos, which leaves one free to choose the meaning one wants to give it."

—Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques* (1955)

"Emperors and kings, dukes and marquises, counts, knights, and townsfolk, and all people who wish to know the various races of men and the peculiarities of the various regions of the world, take this book and have it read to you."[1] So began the account of Marco Polo, who traveled from Venice to East Asia in the late thirteenth century and subsequently left behind one of the most famous travel narratives ever written. Though he had spent twenty years away from Italy, his tales would have been lost to posterity had he not gone to war and ended up in a Genoese prison in 1298. That is where he probably met a writer named Rustichello of Pisa, who worked with Polo to write the Venetian's *Travels*. The partnership foretold the future: if news about distant places were to circulate, it would take efforts beyond the experience of travel itself. Traveler to chronicler to reader to listener: in this indirect way, knowledge of foreign places became common currency.

Polo's narrative appeared in Venice in the early fourteenth century, long before Johann Gutenberg had carved his first pieces of movable type and inaugurated (at least in Europe) a revolution in the circulation of ideas. Despite the fact that there was no printing press yet, Polo's ideas circulated across Europe in manuscript. As scribes and translators worked on subsequent editions, Polo's account changed. By the time the brilliant sixteenth-century Venetian chronicler Giovanni Battista Ramusio committed Polo's text to print, his version contained material not found in some of the manuscripts. There is, as a result, no single authoritative edition. As one of Polo's twentieth-century editors noted, though "there is so much diversity of opinion about the actual

1. Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, trans. Ronald Latham (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1958), 33.

words used by Polo or his chronicler," those differences "need not, however, shake our faith in the authenticity of the work as a whole." Rather, the discrepancies represent a stark reminder of the ways that texts were (and are) often unstable.[2]

When Ramusio set Polo's account into print in the 1550s in a vast compendium of information titled *Navigationi e Viaggi*, he was part of an intellectual trend that changed the way Europeans understood the world around them. Although Ramusio's efforts reached a primarily European audience, the desire to travel—and to keep accounts of it—was hardly a Western monopoly. At least since antiquity, when Greek poets memorized Homer's tale of the wanderings of Odysseus, peoples across the world had remembered expeditions. The Muslim traveler Abu 'Abdallah ibn Battuta first left his home in Morocco on a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1325, when he was twenty-one years old; by the time he finished his journeys thirty years later he had traveled perhaps 73,000 miles in lands now parts of forty-four nations.[3] Tales of journeys became part of the foundational myths told and retold over the generations. The Tupinambas of Brazil had well-developed rituals for greeting travelers, as the Huguenot writer Jean de Léry recognized.[4] In an age before printing presses could churn out hundreds of copies of a report with less effort than scribes writing by hand, hard-won knowledge about travels survived in manuscripts, some of them copied time and again, or in the memories of those capable of recalling precise details of events they never witnessed. Stories that escaped such refuges often faded away like the wake of a sailing ship cutting through an ocean's waves.

By the late fifteenth century, printing technology in Europe and China (where printing had developed even earlier) helped to preserve and spread more extensive records of travels. More important, travelers generated compelling stories that audiences wanted to read or have read to them. Illustrations of distant lands and peoples made many printed works even more valuable. Travelers also brought back souvenirs. Soon material objects from faraway places began to be displayed more publicly than before, often placed on the shelves, tucked into nooks, and even plastered onto the ceilings of

2. Polo, *Travels*, 24–26, quotation at 26. On the various versions of Polo's text, see especially the excellent discussion of this issue in John Larner, *Marco Polo and the Discovery of the World* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press 1999), 68–87, 184–86.
3. Ross E. Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 1–3.
4. Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Otherwise called America*, trans. Janet Whatley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 164.

European private museums known as *wunderkammer* or cabinets of curiosity.[5] The Chinese were avid collectors, studying treatises about collecting and displaying newly acquired things (such as nonindigenous fruit trees) to mark their status.[6] By the mid-sixteenth century, European encyclopedists such as Sebastian Münster and the French royal cosmographer André Thevet produced vast compendia detailing life in distant locales.[7]

There is no doubt that printing technology spread news of distant places to ever larger audiences. But the printed word, however important, remained only one way that information reached from an observer to an audience. Visual images—whether painted on buffalo skins, carved into rocks, or printed—continued to have a substantial impact.[8] So did accounts preserved orally, which were especially crucial to peoples who relied on written languages less than did Europeans or Asians. Inkan *khipu* (or *quipu*), a series of knotted ropes, preserved information as well. As Ramusio informed his readers, "it is possible to find public houses full of those ropes, through which the person who is in charge of them can tell the past events, although they are far in the past, in the same way as we do with our letters."[9]

5. There has been extensive work on early modern collecting in recent years. For the development of cabinets, see, among others, Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Marjorie Swann, *Curiosities and Texts: The Culture of Collecting in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); and Anthony Alan Shelton, "Cabinets of Transgression: Renaissance Collections and the Incorporation of the New World," in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. Jas Elsner and Roger Cardinal (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), 177–203. For changes in the ways that Europeans coped with the transition from manuscripts to books and the need to store information in new ways, see Henry Petroski, *The Book on the Bookshelf* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999).
6. See Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); and Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991).
7. Münster, *Cosmographia Lib. VI* (Basel, 1552); André Thevet, *Cosmographie Universelle*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1575).
8. See, e.g., Colin G. Calloway, *One Vast Winter Count: The Native American West before Lewis and Clark* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), esp. 4–6; R. W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
9. "Se ne trovano case publiche piene di dette corde, con le quai facilme[n]te da ad inte[n]der coluí, che n'ha il carico, le cose passate, ben che elle siano di molta eta avanti di lui: si come noi facciamo con le nostre lettere" (Ramusio, *Terzo Volume Delle Navigationi et Viaggi* [Venice, 1556], 4r). *Khipus* have attracted serious attention since the sixteenth century; for the earliest European views and modern analyses, see Jeffrey Quilter and Gary Urton, eds., *Narrative Threads: Accounting and Recounting in Andean Khipu* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002).

Ideas also continued to circulate in unpublished manuscripts, often copied and recopied in a process that scholars refer to as "scribal publication."[10] The phenomenon was not new in the sixteenth century. As the historian Anthony Grafton has noted, "communications networks" had "bound intellectuals together across Europe long before 1450."[11] Given the success of manuscripts in spreading information, it is no surprise to discover that handwritten work continued to be produced.[12] The most detailed travel accounts from the Ottoman Empire, Ming China, the Arabic world, and central and South Asia survived in manuscripts for centuries, thereby bearing silent witness to the fact that the printing press, however important to Europeans, was not the only way to preserve what travelers thought about distant places. Some of these texts, notably those describing Islamic travels in search of knowledge (*rihla*), became guides for later pilgrims.[13] Even within Europe, the "irreducible residue of oral culture" (to use the apt phrasing of the historian Carlo Ginzburg) continued to shape understandings of the world, even among those who were literate and had access to learned texts. While the spread of printed books promoted the retention of certain ideas, the transition from a world of oral to written to printed communication was often contested; information once preserved in the telling of stories—the gestures and expressions of the one giving the account, for example—could not survive the transition to the printed page.[14]

10. See Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Marcel Thomas, "Manuscripts," in Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450–1800* (orig. pub. Paris, 1958), trans. David Gerard (London: NLB, 1976), 18–28.
11. Anthony T. Grafton, "The Importance of Being Printed," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 11 (1980): 285.
12. As David McKitterick recently observed about the coming of print and its relation to manuscripts, "it is more realistic to speak not of one superseding the other, but of the two working together." See McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order, 1450–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), quotation at 21.
13. Suraiya Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans: The Hajj under the Ottomans, 1517–1683* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1994), 14; and Abderrahmane El Moudden, "The Ambivalence of *Rhila*: Community Integration and Self-Definition in Moroccan Travel Accounts, 1300–1800," in *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination*, ed. Dale E. Eickelman and James Piscatori (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 75.
14. Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1980), 59. The linguist Walter J. Ong argued for a more complete shift: "Oral cultures indeed produce powerful and beautiful verbal performances of high artistic and human worth, which are no longer even possible once writing has taken possession of the psyche. Nevertheless, without writing, human consciousness cannot achieve its fuller potentials, cannot produce other beautiful and powerful creations. In this sense, orality needs to produce and is destined to produce writing." See Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen,1982), 14–15.

Further, though Europeans embraced the printing press, literacy was far from universal. As one literary critic recently observed, when Francisco Pizarro and the Incan emperor Atahualpa met in November 1532, "they had one thing in common: neither knew how to read."[15]

Still, though travelers' information circulated in these various media, the large volume of European printed accounts from the sixteenth century suggests an audience eager to learn from those who had ventured far from home. But the fact that many accounts appeared in print did not mean that they were accurate or objective. To modern eyes, the claims made on some pages of sixteenth-century printed books seem far-fetched. Rather than dismiss these texts, we must understand them within their own contexts. Sir John Mandeville's fourteenth-century tales of the East, for example, prompted one reader to note that "Mandeville's longest journey was to the nearest library." Yet there are hundreds of surviving accounts of Mandeville's journey, and among those who possessed copies were Leonardo da Vinci and Christopher Columbus.[16] Further, his claims were in many ways not that different from those of later observers, such as the English cleric and naturalist Edward Topsell, whose two enormous books on animals and serpents included creatures as fabulous as those Mandeville described, or the French anatomist Ambroise Paré, whose tetralogical studies described the monsters to be found in Europe.[17]

From a distance of four centuries, a reader today might be struck by the way that sixteenth-century travel accounts vacillated between admiration and disgust. The Mughal emperor Babur, for example, offered details about the landscape of Hindustan, a territory he had conquered in the 1520s, only to add that "Hindustan is a place of little charm. There is no beauty in its people, no graceful social intercourse, no poetic talent or understanding, no etiquette, nobility or manliness."[18] Yet by 1600, a few particularly sensitive observers had overcome such tendencies and wrote dispassionate ethnographic assessments of foreign societies. That move toward less overtly judgmental accounts represented a stark break with the ways that classical and medieval European

15. Julio Ortega, "Transatlantic Translations," *PMLA* 118 (2003): 25.
16. *The Travels of John Mandeville*, trans. C. W. R. D. Mosely (London: Penguin, 1983), 9–12, quotation at 12.
17. See Edward Topsell, *The Historie of Foure-Footed Beastes* (London, 1607), 12–19; and *Ambroise Paré on Monsters and Marvels*, trans. Janis L. Pallister (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). Such claims led Topsell's nineteenth-century biographer to note that his work "reflected the credulity of his age"; see *Dictionary of National Biography*, s.v. "Topsell."
18. Zahiruddin Muhammed Babur, *The Baburnama: Memoirs of Babur, Prince and Emperor*, trans. Wheeler M. Thackston (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 350.

authorities had described non-Western peoples primarily as savages. Still, the impact of these earlier scholars was enormous; as the anthropologist Margaret Hodgen put it, Europeans "lingered in this twilight of the mind" deep into the sixteenth century, evident in the reluctance even of the educated elite to cast off the prejudices that had built up for so long.[19] The historian Jacques Le Goff went so far as to suggest that Europeans understood the Indian Ocean as if in a trance since they possessed little actual knowledge to chase off the "dreams, myths, and legends" that medieval writers had spun.[20]

The sixteenth century marked a change in the spread of travel accounts. The shift is most evident in European sources, not because Europeans were fairer appraisers than others but because more evidence about their views has survived. Because printers had the technological ability to spread stories and sensed an audience for travel accounts, news about the larger world circulated faster and farther than ever before. What had once been information circulated in manuscript, such as religious texts and detailed historical annals, now became more widely available. This does not mean that earlier journeys had little impact or that travelers from the Mughal, Ottoman, or Ming empires played insignificant roles in the sixteenth century. Rather, with the advent of the printing press, the lessons to be learned from long-distance travel could now spread to a wider audience than the number of people who had access to manuscripts in the age before print. This moment was captured brilliantly by Hans Weigel, the compiler of a costume book printed in Nuremberg in 1577, who stationed emblematic representatives of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas on the cover of his collection. There they stand, warily eyeing each other, a visual tableau of a world made smaller through acts of travel.

But as the peoples of the world looked at each other, they did not always like what they saw. Some of the narratives included here demonstrate that it was possible to be enthusiastic about others' cultures and architecture, most evident in accounts of European travels to East Asia. But the level of criticism

19. Margaret Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964), 71. This break with the past could be seen even earlier; as Hodgen argued, "One of the most arresting features of the Columbian account of the indigenous peoples of the New World is its friendliness, freshness, and modernity." For a review of classical and medieval authors, see Hodgen, *Early Anthropology*, 17–77; the quotation about Columbus can be found at 17.

20. Jacques Le Goff, "The Medieval West and the Indian Ocean: An Oneiric Horizon," in Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 190.

Figure 1. Hans Weigel's *Peoples of the World* (1577)

aimed by travelers against the people they encountered—such as European views of Africans and Americans—suggests that something other than observation was also a subject of the printed reports. Though Europe remained a destination for travelers, many non-Europeans had little obvious motivation to go there. Europe possessed no holy sites for Muslims, and European ships were not known to be necessarily friendly to Muslim men or women, thereby diminishing both the appeal of the Continent and the ease of traveling there for those who wanted to pursue commercial opportunities. Europeans' hostility toward Muslims, evident in repeated aggression against targets in the Islamic world since at least the early fifteenth century, also created a climate of fear that made travel even less appealing.[21] Expelling Jews and Muslims, torturing the unlucky in Inquisitorial auto-da-fé, allowing countless thousands to eke out a marginal existence—Europe was hardly an inviting or civilized place in many instances, even by its own standards.

21. Nabil Matar, ed., *In the Lands of the Christians: Arabic Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003), xxv–xxvi.

In the past three decades, scholars have turned a fresh eye to early modern travel accounts, particularly those generated by Europeans.[22] In doing so, they have made one point obvious: it is impossible for modern readers to look at these texts in the same ways as the original audiences for them. As historians, literary critics, and anthropologists have argued, every author constructed his or her narrative according to certain cultural, economic, and ideological constraints. In the sixteenth century, many Europeans, whose accounts dominate the surviving texts because printers published so many of them, had specific political goals, notably the expansion of territories controlled by their nation. This aggressive agenda made itself felt in multiple ways. Some authors exaggerated what they saw, especially when they described customs such as cannibalism, which was more prevalent in Europeans' imaginations than in non-European places. Many emphasized what they believed was the primitive quality of non-Europeans' societies, evident (they thought) in styles of dress or a state of undress, rudimentary preparation of food, the practice of some form of paganism or devil worship, and simplistic architectural styles. Even observers who normally described places and peoples without overt condemnation could quickly mock those they encountered. By the eighteenth century, many of these early European accounts came to be linked together in the process that the literary critic Edward Said termed "Orientalism," a form of writing intended to exoticize the "other" in order to provide ideological justification for imperialistic expansion.[23] But it was not only western Europeans who took part in this process of defining others in an effort to establish power over them; the Ottomans, for example, engaged in similar acts.[24]

Every observer carried cultural baggage that shaped each observation.

22. Even the most recent comprehensive view of travel writing essentially ignored accounts by non-Europeans; see Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). For two excellent collections of European (mostly English) sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century travel writings, see Andrew Hadfield, ed., *Amazons, Savages and Machiavels: Travel and Colonial Writing in English, 1550–1630: An Anthology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Kenneth Parker, ed., *Early Modern Tales of the Orient: A Critical Anthology* (London: Routledge, 1999). For a superb collection that inverts this trend (of publishing European accounts), see Matar, *In the Lands of the Christians*. For an earlier assessment of travel within Europe and by Europeans, see E. S. Bates, *Touring in 1600: A Study in the Development of Travel as a Means of Education* (Boston, 1911).
23. "Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point," Said wrote, "Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient." Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978), 3.
24. See Ussama Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism," *American Historical Review* 107 (2002): 768–796, esp. 773–78.

Politics invariably influenced perceptions, as did imperial rivalries and religious agendas. As two scholars of Islam have noted, "Muslim doctrine explicitly enjoins or encourages certain forms of travel," including *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca), *hijra* (obligatory migration to practice freely), *ziyaras* (travel to shrines), and *rihla* and *talab al-'ilm* ("travel in search of knowledge"). These categories were not always distinct; Muslim travelers might journey for more than a single purpose.[25] Gender too determined the content of an account, though the fact that the vast majority of surviving texts from the period before 1600 were produced by men makes it difficult to know what alternative observations women travelers might have offered. Still, based on evidence from the modern era, it is likely that women's narratives, had they survived in greater number, would have portrayed very different scenarios. Given the centrality of gendered language in the surviving texts, the absence of a large number of female authors leaves the modern reader with little recourse to what are often particularly male representations of other places.[26]

The writing or recitation of travel accounts was part of the fabric of life in the sixteenth century, as at other times. But being common did not mean that these texts are wholly reliable. Travelers were famous for making exaggerations and distortions, and centuries later it is often impossible to tell exactly when their tales departed most seriously into a realm closer to fiction than nonfiction.[27]

25. Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, "Social Theory in the Study of Muslim Societies," in *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), ed. Eickelman and Piscatori, 5. None of these concepts has been static over time. *Hijra*, for example, was the subject of debate, as the fourteenth-century scholar Ibn Khaldun recognized when he made a distinction between the obligation to migrate centuries earlier (during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad) and during his own time; see Muhammad Khalid Masud, "The Obligation to Migrate: The Doctrine of *hijra* in Islamic Law," in *Muslim Travellers*, 29–49, esp. 30–33. The search for knowledge in the concepts of *rihla* and *talab al-'ilm* similarly shifted; see Sam I. Gellens, "The Search for Knowledge in Medieval Muslim Societies: A Comparative Approach," in *Muslim Travellers*, 50–65.
26. For one assessment of nineteenth- and twentieth-century travel accounts that pays particular attention to issues of gender, see Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991). For an assessment of how the recognition of gender has shaped historical accounts in the Pacific, see Nicholas Thomas, "Partial Texts: Representation, Colonialism, and Agency in Pacific History," in *In Oceania: Visions, Artifacts, Histories*, ed. Nicholas Thomas (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997), 40–42. For a review of issues related to gender in travel writing, see Susan Bassnett, "Travel Writing and Gender," in *Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 225–41.
27. For an analysis of how travel shaped fiction and nonfiction in the eighteenth century in western Europe (primarily Britain and France), with a particular focus on "travel accounts that in the Age of Reason told untruths" and with authors who used deception "for the sake of money, pride, or a point of view," see Percy G. Adams, *Travelers and Travel Liars, 1660–1800* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), quotation at vii.

The surviving texts themselves are, as the literary critic Philip Edwards put it, "flawed renderings of the perceptions—flawed by defect of language and failure of memory and self-protective falsehood." All readers of these tales now must recognize that each narrative is inherently partial, containing the details that the tale teller felt the audience would most likely appreciate, the bits of information that the traveler could remember and felt compelled to report. The noted anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss recognized that the stories travelers told reflected their transitory experiences. "Exploration is not so much a covering of surface distance as a study of depth," he wrote in *Tristes Tropiques* in the mid-twentieth century, "a fleeting episode, a fragment of landscape or a remark overheard may provide the only means of understanding and interpreting areas which would otherwise remain barren of meaning." For many travelers, the act of telling their story was as important to the journey as actual participation on it. The widespread availability of these tales, at least in Europe, suggests too that editors and printers stood ready to expend energy and money to spread these reports, often calling them "true" accounts to proclaim their accuracy.[28]

As will become evident in many of the texts contained in this anthology, all tale tellers arrived in distant places with viewpoints shaped by their home societies, mental maps that gave meaning to what they were seeing. None saw a scene *de novo* but, instead, looked upon peoples and landscapes through ideologies already well formed.[29] As the historian Anthony Pagden wrote about the earliest European encounters with the Western Hemisphere, "Observers in America, like observers of anything culturally unfamiliar for which there exist few readily available antecedents, had to be able to classify *before* they could properly see." They made their classifications through series of analogies—comparisons between what they observed and what they already knew.[30] That act appears repeatedly in the accounts here. Further, rather

28. Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques* (1955), trans. John and Doreen Weightman (New York: Atheneum, 1974), 47–48. The information in this paragraph owes much to Philip Edwards's superb introduction to his *Last Voyages: Cavendish, Hudson, Ralegh: The Original Narratives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 1–17, quotation at 14. See also Chloe Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour: Travel Writing and Imaginative Geography, 1600–1830* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1999), 9.
29. See Clifford Geertz, "Ideology As a Cultural System," in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 193–233, esp. 220.
30. Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 1–4, quotation at 2; and Donald F. Lach, *The Century of Discovery*, vol. 1 of *Asia in the Making of Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 2: 686–87.

than being static categories, these same places became transformed in later accounts, and these changes reflected the observers' increased knowledge of what they saw on their travels—knowledge that was quite possibly gleaned from earlier travelers. When travel turned to settlement, observers' views became more detailed, though comparisons still appeared in their texts, sometimes quite explicitly.[31] The Jesuit Luis Fróis, for example, produced a lengthy work comparing Europeans to the Japanese after he had lived in Japan for more than two decades, perhaps as a guide to the missionaries who would arrive later.

Yet for all the problems modern readers have navigating these travel accounts, the texts that survive should not be dismissed as revealing more about the observer than the observed. Many of the travelers whose accounts can be found in this anthology strove to find ways to describe precisely what they saw. Though it is possible that these accounts helped Europeans in particular create an "other" seemingly awaiting the arrival of Christian colonizers, the travelers themselves did not necessarily write their accounts to promote such ventures. As the historian Joan-Pau Rubiés aptly put it, there "is much more to European accounts of non-Europeans than a justification of Empire." Read carefully, these accounts can be used to reveal foreigners struggling to understand new worlds. This is not to suggest that travelers left their political agendas behind. Rather, the ablest of these writers provided posterity with accounts that have proven to be fundamental for scholars trying to understand what particular societies were like. Since the arrival of visitors often transformed the places they landed, reading these early texts becomes one way, however flawed, to grasp what parts of the world looked like centuries ago.[32]

The early modern writers whose travel accounts appear in this collection did not invent the genre of writing about places they visited (or pretended to visit). The earliest account of an East Asian excursion to Europe, for example, dates from the thirteenth century.[33] Nor were the sixteenth-century travelers the first to feel the sensation of wonder about what seemed exotic to them.

31. For particularly well-documented interpretations of how views of natives and newcomers evolved in North America, see Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000); and Joyce Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500–1676* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001).
32. Joan-Pau Rubiés, "New Worlds and Renaissance Ethnology," *History and Anthropology* 6 (1993): 157–97, quotation at 158.
33. Morris Rossabi, *Voyager from Xanadu: Rabban Sauma and the First Journey from China to the West* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1992).

The Europeans engaged in the task of recounting their experience inhabited a society in which written travel literature had long existed. It constituted part of what the historian Caroline Walker Bynum has termed "the literature of entertainment"—a body of texts (including histories and collections of stories) that "drew on the encyclopedic tradition of the ancient world known as paradoxology—the collection of oddities (including monsters or hybrids, distant races, marvelous lands)—and on antique notions of portents or omens, that is, unusual events that foreshadowed the (usually catastrophic) future and were accompanied by a vague sense of dread." Within that world, travel could bring astonishment, as the Franciscan missionary William of Rubruck learned when he visited the Great Chan in the thirteenth century only to discover that the Chinese thought he was a monster because he did not wear shoes. Those he encountered interpreted his ascetic gesture as a sign that he must not need his feet "since they supposed we should lose them straightaway." William learned that the Chinese expressed wonder at him, thereby anticipating the kind of wonder that travelers frequently engendered among those they visited.[34] The sense of astonishment that medieval Europeans felt occurred time and again in the sixteenth century. Wonder was "not the sign of revulsion," as the literary critic Stephen Greenblatt put it in a commentary on Jean de Léry's account of his voyage to Brazil, "but of ravishment, an ecstatic joy that can be experienced" long after the end of the journey itself.[35] That sense of wonder can be found in most of the texts included here; it is inseparable from the other parts of any travel account.

Long before sailing ships could carry crews across open oceans, groups of people walked or paddled across vast distances. The ancestors of the native peoples of the Americas crossed the Bering Strait land bridge from Siberia between 40,000 and 10,000 years ago, and their descendants fanned out across the Western Hemisphere until some reached the southern tip of South

34. Caroline Walker Bynum, "Wonder," in her *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York: Zone Books, 2001), 37–75, quotations at 53 and 56; Christopher Dawson, trans., *Mission to Asia* (1955; New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 150. William soon learned that the Chinese were right: shortly after dismissing the locals' questions about whether the Europeans were monsters, he wrote that "the tips of my toes froze so I could no longer go bare-foot" (p. 152). For the medieval context, see Mary B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988).
35. Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 16.

America. Perhaps more remarkably, Polynesian peoples used long canoes to cross the South Pacific, peopling islands that had previously had no human occupants. Groups of those migrants reached Aoteroa (modern New Zealand) around the turn of the first Christian millennium.[36] The fact of travel was common among the peoples of the Old World too. As one scholar recently noted, "one characteristic of the population [of France] at the end of the Middle Ages was mobility."[37] The same could be said for Muslims, who traveled in large caravans and by ship as well, in journeys that stretched across Europe, Africa, and much of Asia.[38]

Stories of epic journeys abound across Europe. Some told how Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, traveled from Britain to the Holy Land in the fourth century, a journey that took her from antiquity's periphery to its core. That expedition was well documented and plausible, especially compared to some of the more outrageous travel claims of the Middle Ages. Saint Brendan left Ireland for the "Blessed Isles" sometime in the sixth century, and his supporters have long maintained that he reached the Western Hemisphere. Six hundred years later an explorer named Madoc purportedly sailed from Wales to the West Indies. There is no material evidence that either of these travelers made it far from the western periphery of Europe. Yet their stories survived, and in the age of print they appeared again, nestled against more modern accounts of voyages to distant lands.[39]

Even before the age of large sailing ships it was possible to cross the Atlantic Ocean. Two ancient sagas tell what the Norse found when they began to sail westward from Scandinavia in the late ninth century. The oldest manuscript version of one, known as *Grœnlendinga's Saga*, dates to the late fourteenth century, when an Icelandic settler named Jon Hakonarson wrote it down. It remained in his family for more than 200 years until the king of

36. For an overview of the process, see Janet M. Davidson, "The Polynesian Foundation," in *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Geoffrey W. Rice, 2nd ed. (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), 3–27.
37. "Une des caractéristiques de la population, à la fin du Moyen Age, est la mobilité des hommes": René Germain, "Déplacements temporaires et déplacements définitifs dans le centre de la France aux XIV[e] et XV[e] siècles," in *Voyages et Voyageurs au Moyen Age: XXVI[e] Congrès de la S.H.M.E.S.* (Paris: Publications de la Sarbonne, 1996), 53.
38. See Youssef Ragheb, "Les marchands itinerants du monde Musulman," in *Voyages et Voyageurs*, 177–215.
39. For Helena and Madoc, see Richard Hakluyt, ed., *The Principall Navigations, Voiages, and Discoveries of the English Nation* (London, 1589), 1–2, 506–07. Hakluyt did not include Brendan, though there were many manuscript editions extant by the sixteenth century; see James F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical* (Dublin: Pádraic Ó Táilliúir, 1979), 414–17.

Denmark received it as a gift from a loyal subject. The earliest surviving version of another tale, *Erik's Saga,* was not written down until the fourteenth century, also in Iceland, and it differs in places from another version which was written a century later. All of these sagas were written on vellum, the dried skin of sheep that had been used for centuries to record the most important texts in the West.[40]

According to the sagas, the Norse settled Iceland sometime around 870 A.D. and created the longest lasting colony of Europe. A century or so later they set off to the west again, eventually reaching Greenland, where they established another colony, and by the turn of the first Christian millennium they had reached lands they called Helluland, Markland, and Vinland. The keepers of Norse sagas told their listeners about the lands they found, the climate, the flora and fauna, and details about the people they labeled "skraelings," a term best translated as "wretches" and applied by these visitors to the Thule Inuit they met. *Erik's Saga* provided details about the trade that both natives and newcomers welcomed, but also about conflicts that set them against each other. The Inuit shouted at the Norse when they attacked, the saga recounted, and "when they clashed there was a fierce battle and a hail of missiles came flying over, for the Skraelings were using catapults." The Norse fled in fear, realizing "that although the land was excellent they could never live there in safety or freedom from fear, because of the native inhabitants." As they left they found five sleeping Inuit. Figuring that they were hostile, the Norse murdered them.[41]

The Norse sagas are among the earliest verifiable travel accounts that have survived. Though the authors of such tales left a fainter record than modern readers might want, they told enough about what they had seen to prove that at least some Norse men and women had in fact traveled to distant lands. Archaeological remains at L'Anse aux Meadows in modern Newfoundland confirm that the Norse had made it across the ocean.[42] Such finds give the sagas a kind of confirmation lacking for other ancient tales. The sagas also contained the sorts of details that became common in travel accounts in the

40. The manuscript of *Grœndlinga's Saga* can be found in the Royal Library in Copenhagen; the two early manuscripts of *Erik's Saga* are located in the Arnamagnæn Library in Copenhagen. For details about the manuscripts, see *The Vinland Sagas: The Norse Discovery of America,* trans. Magnus Magnusson and Hermann Pálsson (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1965), 29–35.
41. *Vinland Sagas,* 99–101.
42. Birgitta Linderoth Wallace, "The Viking Settlement at L'Anse Aux Meadows," in *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga,* ed. William W. Fitzhugh and Elisabeth I. Ward (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 208–16.

sixteenth century, telling about conditions at sea, landing places, particular landscapes, animals and fish to be found, and indigenous peoples. Yet though these overseas settlements survived for a few centuries, ultimately the Norse abandoned such colonization ventures, in all likelihood because shifting economic and ecological circumstances made such journeys undesirable.[43]

The Norse expeditions through those frigid waters marked a decisive moment in the history of travel. Though the journeys were not the equal to the Polynesian migrations that had led to the peopling of the South Pacific, these northern voyages generated a body of literature that survived. Those texts became the precursors to the popular European travel accounts of the sixteenth century. In the period after the Norse abandoned their long-distance journeys, other Europeans realized the benefits of travel. Recognizing the potential audience for such tales, printers committed them to paper, thereby immortalizing journeys that might have passed from memory in earlier generations. This anthology brings together some of the most engaging and important accounts produced during that century. Each represents at least one extraordinary journey, and most document journeys to places far from the traveler's home. Virtually all of these accounts were written by Europeans in the century or so after Christopher Columbus's first historic voyage in 1492, and hence typically represent the views of Protestants and Catholics who often felt contempt for the non-Christians they encountered. This collection also includes portions of several vital non-European travel accounts, including excerpts from the fifteenth-century report of Ma Huan detailing Chinese travel to the Middle East, reports of fifteenth-century journeys to India (including parts of the Emperor Babur's account of territory that came under his control in the 1520s when he established the Mughal Empire), and the Peruvian Felipe Guaman Poma's return home after thirty years away.

As literary critics have demonstrated, no text is entirely stable. The words and ideas may change from one edition to the next, and crucial phrases may have been lost or altered in the act of translating accounts from the language of the traveler to that of the individual who spread the news in books, manuscripts, or orally. Before 1600, printers often stole material from authors' books, which meant that some texts circulated widely in pirated editions. To

43. See Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 44–56.

this day scholars cannot be certain how many copies of a particular book were printed. In all likelihood publishers printed between 500 and 1,200 copies of any particular text. Some were reprinted often, others appeared only once. The records of the Stationers' Company in England list the titles of works that printers registered in an effort to establish their copyright. But some of those works no longer exist, including travel tales that might have provided yet more information about that age of discovery. There is, for example, no known copy of a book left by a companion of the English mariner Martin Frobisher; his printer claimed that the book included pictures of the peoples met by the sailors in the frozen lands of the North Atlantic.[44]

Still, despite the loss of possibly precious reports, hundreds of accounts have survived. How, then, to make sense of this extraordinary collection of information? One way is to group texts according to the parts of the world described in them, which is the method used here. The accounts in this volume describe voyages to Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe. Though there are similarities to be found in observations from one place to another, and similarities in the tone of the observers, the extant records of journeys through these parts of the world reveal startling differences.

Much has been written, and will continue to be written, about the exploits of Christopher Columbus and the significance of his journey of 1492. Yet it is important to see Columbus and the narratives he generated as a product of a particular time and place and to set his achievement into context. He was, for example, not the most successful captain of the fifteenth century, an honor that should be bestowed upon the Chinese mariners who piloted their junks far from home in the early years of the fifteenth century. Their fleet often hugged the coast of Southeast and South Asia, though it also sailed across the Indian Ocean to the Maldives and on to the east coast of Africa as well. Those journeys are well documented, unlike the improbable claim that the Chinese made it to the Americas in 1421.[45]

The largest of these junks measured 400 feet from stem to stern, almost

44. "A discription of the purtrayture and Shape of those strange kinde of people whiche the worthie master MARTIN FFOURBOSIER brought into England in Anno 1576 and 1577," listed in Edward Arber, ed., *A Transcript of the Stationers' Register, 1554–1640*, 5 vols. (London, 1875–1894), 2: 145.

45. For the argument that the Chinese did reach America, see Gavin Menzies, *1421: The Year the Chinese Discovered America* (New York: Bantam, 2002).

five times larger than Columbus's flagship, the *Santa Maria*. The Chinese termed them *bao chuan*—treasure ships—and to build them they harvested timber from deep in the nation's interior, floating the logs down the Min and Yangzi rivers to the ship-building docks. There were perhaps 28,000 sailors involved in the six expeditions that sailed outward from China from 1405 to 1421. They ventured westward toward what their eunuch admiral Zheng He (Cheng Ho) described as the "barbarian regions far away hidden in a blue transparency of light vapors." Yet though the Chinese under the Ming emperor Chéng-tsu managed to create what may have been the largest fleet in the world before the twentieth century, they abandoned their long-distance journeys when the emperor died in 1421. Zheng He led one last epic voyage, which departed from Nanking on January 19, 1431, again reaching the east coast of Africa on a journey ordered by the emperor Hsüan-te. He returned home in 1433, making a triumphal entry into Beijing on July 22, 1433, where the emperor received him. But after the celebration, the Chinese turned their attention inward.[46]

Yet while the Chinese came to ignore the lure of Africa, Europeans and Africans had remained in almost constant contact with each other at least since the fourteenth century. As early as 1150, Europeans had heard news of the legendary Christian king in Africa known as "Prester John" who lived somewhere on the eastern part of the continent near the Indian Ocean; eventually many would come to believe that he could be found in Ethiopia. During the centuries that followed this initial rumor, Africans traveled to Europe, and Europeans traveled to Africa. Over time, an increasing number of the African migrants were slaves, but from the fourteenth century through the sixteenth century—as the slave trade was emerging as one of the dominant institutions of the modern world—African elites sent embassies to European cities for political, military, and religious reasons. Some of these Africans, notably those from Ethiopia, were Christians. In 1306, thirty of these Ethiopian Christians paid a visit to Pope Clement V; he saw them at his palace at Avignon and then sent them to Rome so they could view the magnificent churches of the city. By the end of the fifteenth century, other Ethiopians had journeyed to parts of Europe—bringing leopards to the Venetian doge in 1402, and arriving in Florence in 1441 to seek an alliance with the church, in Naples in 1450 to seek

46. Ma Huan, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan: "The Overall Survey of Ocean's Shores,"* trans. J. V. G. Mills (Hakluyt Society, extra ser. 42 [Cambridge, 1970]): 1-18; and Louise Levathes, *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Fleet of the Dragon Throne, 1405–1433* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 17–20, 75–85.

skilled European artisans, and in Milan in 1459 to buy books. Tasfa Seyon, whom Europeans called Peter the Ethiopian, spent fifteen years in the Vatican in the mid-sixteenth century translating a Missal and a New Testament into Ge'ez, the liturgical language of his homeland. Lisbon became a center for Africans in Europe, many of whom arrived there on Portuguese vessels. African embassies arrived in Portugal from the kingdom of Kongo in 1484, Benin in 1486, and the Jolof kingdom in 1487 and 1488. When another embassy from Kongo arrived in 1488, its members helped transform Lisbon's monastery of Saint Eloy into what one historian has called "a second center of African studies in Europe, where Kongolese learned European religious and secular knowledge and where Portuguese missionaries were trained in Kongolese culture." One of those who studied there was Henrique, the grandson of King João, who, along with his wife and son, had been baptized in 1491. After ten years in the monastery, Henrique became a priest; two years later Pope Leo X consecrated him a bishop. As the historian David Northrup has noted, he "was the first sub-Saharan African to become a Catholic bishop—and the last for over 250 years."[47]

Yet though many Africans visited Europe or even studied there, and many returned home, none left behind a travel account that was printed at the time. As a result, there is no exact way of knowing what those Ethiopians thought when they stared at the Basilica of St. Peter at the Vatican or gazed upon the hordes of Venetians on the piazza San Marco, no way to grasp what the monastery in Lisbon must have been like for visiting Kongolese. Though the history of these African embassies can be reconstructed, the record provides only the occasional glimpse into those who experienced it. Their journeys to Europe and then home again took weeks; some, like the prince Henrique, stayed for years. Others, sold into slavery, remained permanently. Most of their stories are gone, though some did survive in manuscript, including the account here of 'Abu-l-Hasan 'Ali al-Tamgruti, a Moroccan who traveled to Turkey in 1589 and wrote a vivid description of Constantinople's Hagia Sofia, the city's wondrous onetime Christian cathedral.

Europeans who went to Africa had better luck preserving their accounts. In the sixteenth century, none could match the impact of the Portuguese, who were at the time Europe's most skilled navigators and had the greatest willingness to travel to Africa. By the mid- to late fifteenth century, the Portuguese had established colonies in the eastern Atlantic and began to extract wealth from Madeira and the Azores.[48] Though the legend that Prince Henry the Navigator established a center for navigators at Sagres dates from a later period and is quite probably more myth than history, he nonetheless played a crucial role in the ascendancy of the Portuguese as the master sailors of this age.[49] They recognized that travel by sea was quicker and thus cheaper than overland expeditions, such as medieval Crusaders' journeys to the Holy Land and the caravans that continued to trek across the ancient Silk Road. Those earlier travelers had demonstrated the benefits to be had from long-distance trade. The trick by the fifteenth century was how to make that commerce more efficient.

47. David Northrup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe, 1450–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1–6, 34–35, quotations at 5–6 and 35. See also Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa, 1450–1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 46–86.

Bartholomeu Dias was only ten years old when Henry died, but he was one of the many who benefited from the Portuguese desire to learn about the patterns of winds and waves on the seas. When he was thirty-seven, Dias led an expedition around the Cape of Good Hope into the Indian Ocean and, in the process, helped the Portuguese create a maritime empire that would become the most important and profitable of its time. The mariner Vasco da Gama followed the route pioneered by Dias but went farther, reaching India and thereby providing the information the Portuguese would use to attempt to control the spice trade. He made observations of the places and peoples he encountered, including reflections on the Muslims he met in Mozambique in 1498. In his report he claims to have received news of Prester John. But while da Gama mused about the possibilities of Christianity spreading throughout the continent, tensions flared between his crew and local Muslims, a sign that religious hostility threatened European travelers to the region.

Wherever Europeans landed in Africa, they carried a three-part agenda.

48. Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Before Columbus: Exploration and Colonization from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, 1229–1492* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 195–202. As Charles Verlinden pointed out a generation ago, the patterns for European colonization developed initially in the eastern Mediterranean and then moved westward; though there is now an enormous body of scholarship on the diversity of colonial experiences in the Atlantic world, Verlinden's essay remains worthwhile. See *The Beginnings of Modern Colonization: Eleven Essays with an Introduction*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970), 3–32.

49. The Venetian traveler Alvise da Cà da Mosto took shelter there in 1454, taking advantage of the fact that Prince Henry had secured at least part of Cape Sagres to assist ships rounding Cape St. Vincent. See Peter Russell, *Prince Henry "the Navigator": A Life* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000), 6–7, 291–292. The historian Donald F. Lach termed Henry "the guiding genius in the systematic and continuous exploration of the African west coast launched by the Portuguese in the early fifteenth century" (Lach, *Century of Discovery*, 1: 51).

First, they were eager to promote the spread of Christianity and thus welcomed any signs of Prester John's activities. Second, they assessed the peoples they met, typically seeing signs of savagery in what they described as Africans' nudity, idolatry, and cannibalism.[50] Third, they went looking to make a profit, which in Africa meant the purchase of human beings as well as rare commodities. When the English mariner John Lok led an expedition to Guinea in the mid-sixteenth century, those who traveled with him busily marked differences among Africans. According to the account of the journey by George Barne and others, some were "of high stature and black" and others "of browne or tawnie colour, and low stature." Some allegedly resembled the monsters inhabiting the pages of the ancient Greek writer Pliny and the fourteenth-century English knight Sir John Mandeville. The stories Europeans told mixed wonder with disgust. Cannibals and ichthyophagi—people who ate only fish—could be found in the interior of Ethiopia south of the equator, a land where moonbeams purportedly provided heat to counter the evening chill. Tales of nature's marvels blended seamlessly with mundane descriptions of domestic architecture and food preparation, including calculations of the value of the wheat grown in Ethiopia. It is almost impossible to classify this kind of report as anything more than a primitive ethnography, an attempt to render in a few pages an image of an entire continent and its diverse inhabitants.[51]

Most of the surviving sixteenth-century accounts of European travels to Africa were written by clerics, merchants, or ship captains, elite members of their own societies. If they survived their voyages, they returned home to share their knowledge and perhaps profit from their adventure. Some reports indicated how sophisticated Africans had become, especially those who had access to goods brought by a variety of Muslim traders who had long worked in disparate communities in the western Indian Ocean. By the time da Gama made it to the southeast coast of Africa at the end of the century, many locals may have deemed the Europeans' goods inferior to what they already possessed or could obtain.[52] A group of English merchants who arrived in Benin in 1588 left even fewer details about those they met; they were content to enumerate the goods to be found there, and especially eager to gather the pepper and elephants' tusks used in local trade. The English traveler Andrew Battel was less fortunate: taken prisoner by the Portuguese, he spent twenty years in captivity in Angola among the Imbangala, and returned home to describe what he claimed were the barbarous beliefs they held. But not all Europeans left such desperate views of Africa; the Portuguese writer Duarte Lopes offered a far more positive view of the kingdom of Kongo, including detailed accounts of the region's animals and royal city.

50. As one scholar has noted, these three phenomena were so intertwined in Europeans' minds that "the presence of one could be adduced from the others." See Wyatt MacGaffey, "Dialogues of the Deaf: Europeans on the Atlantic Coast of Africa," in *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 261.

51. On the origins and development of the discipline of ethnography, see Hodgen, *Early Anthropology*.

Of all the works that circulated about Africa, none had the significance of a history of the continent written by al-Hassan Ibn Muhammed al-Wazzan. Known to Europeans as Leo Africanus, this Muslim native of Granada composed the most important account of Africa in the sixteenth century. Leo Africanus knew North Africa best, and he described it in ways that humbled the achievements of other observers. While technically not a travel report—he wrote his history while he was living at the Vatican in the early 1520s—Leo Africanus's tale included the kinds of observations that travelers routinely made. His English language editor John Pory added material to the narrative after Leo Africanus was dead. Pory's account of the "manifold Religions professed in Africa" included details about Jews, Christians, Muslims, and people he termed "Gentiles," whom he described as the most primitive of the continent. There was little question where Pory's sympathies lay, especially when he told his readers about the ways that Moors and Turks kept Christians as slaves and forced them to suffer "beggerie, nakednes, hunger, famine, blowes, reproches, and tortures" for believing Christianity was the only true faith. The converts to Islam enjoyed all the comforts of the world while the Christians suffered for their beliefs.

Yet if his history was less a routine travel account than reports offered by individuals who sailed from one place to another and then returned to tell their tales, Leo Africanus's writings nonetheless reflected the fact that he had seen much. He had made the *hajj* to his holy land; he had studied in Morocco; he

52. As the historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam has noted, there was no single group that dominated trade in the region: "We are dealing with a political and commercial network that was poly-centric in its organization; and there was no single epicentre that generated a pulse to which the entire 'system' responded—even in the western Indian Ocean." See Subrahmanyam, *The Career and Legend of Vasco da Gama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 94–112, quotation at 95.

had lived at the Vatican. The breadth of his experience made him a particularly reliable authority, or so it seemed to those who encountered a man who could offer information about African life spans and could describe in detail the horrors that locusts visited upon their victims. In an age when an ever larger number of Africans left the continent as slaves—Leo Africanus was himself a captive until he was freed by Pope Leo X (who then baptized him)—there were not many whose testimony about the continent has survived.

To outsiders, Africa was often a forbidding place. Most Europeans who traveled there in the sixteenth century knew little beyond the shoreline. Few went far inland, and hence many accepted the outrageous claims told about dense jungles filled with the inexplicable, from peacocks guarding a grave to human-imitating monsters. Though some observers described how people lived, the descriptions that survive mostly tell of primitives, often locked in mortal conflict with each other or with visitors. Though there had long been similarities between Christianity and some African belief systems, the church could not forever sustain links. Ethiopians, who had been seeking alliances with Europeans since the fourteenth century, in part to turn back the spread of Islam, turned away from Christianity in the early decades of the seventeenth century.[53] By the eighteenth century only Angola, a Portuguese colony, and Kongo (where the reigning kingdom collapsed in the seventeenth century) had large numbers of Christians. The slave trade took hold too; by 1600 more than 27,000 Africans had been deported to the Americas, and the number escalated sharply in the next two centuries.[54] Yet despite an increasing frequency of travel, especially along the continent's shores, the sixteenth-century texts provide a sketch of a continent that seemed still to be beyond the intellectual grasp of most outsiders. Even those who knew the place well, like Andrew Battel, could offer little beyond caricatures of those he met. Leo Africanus did better, though only for northern Africa. The interior of sub-Saharan Africa remained largely unknown to outsiders.

Travelers to Asia, by contrast, often left more vivid and distinctive impressions, the mark of careful observation. What emerges from these accounts

53. Northrup, *Africa's Discovery of Europe*, 28–29, 41–45.
54. Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 210–211; see also Ronald Segal, *Islam's Black Slaves: The Other Black Diaspora* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2001).

by western Europeans, Persians, and Russians—there are no known travel accounts to Asia left by Africans or Americans—stands in stark contrast to surviving European accounts of Africa despite the fact that Christianity, though growing in places, remained a minor religion.

Most Europeans who traveled to Asia sailed along the west coast of Africa, around the southern tip of the continent, and into the Indian Ocean. The Portuguese pioneered the route, following the course that da Gama had established. They had two principal motivations for these epic journeys, which took months and led through territory where violent encounters with native peoples remained a constant threat. First, they went for the cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg from the Moluccas—the Spice Islands—off Southeast Asia. Though spice merchants had arranged for the sale of their product long before the sixteenth century, the Portuguese recognized that transporting spices by ship instead of overland lowered costs by reducing the time and effort it took to get the spices from producer to consumer. Second, many Europeans participated in the global effort to spread Christianity. In the age of da Gama, all European missionaries shared the same faith. By the time Ferdinand Magellan (Magalhães) departed on his epic journey to East Asia by sailing west across the Atlantic in 1519, the church was in the early stages of its deepest crisis and division. The theologian Martin Luther had made his protests in Wittenberg two years before Magellan embarked. As a result, most sixteenth-century Europeans who hoped to spread the word did so as Catholics or as Protestants, competing not only against what they believed were the demonic forces of heathenism but also against the aggressive heresy of other Christians.

Our knowledge of what Magellan saw comes from the recollections of his companion Antonio Pigafetta who, unlike the captain himself, survived the circumnavigation. Pigafetta was not always the most discerning observer; many of the islands he described in the Southwest Pacific bore uncanny resemblances to each other, a sign that the overwhelming strangeness of the place left him unable to distinguish one land from another. Still, despite the fact that the peoples encountered by the Portuguese would have shocked Europeans, Pigafetta managed to offer at least some guidelines to allow his readers to tell the residents of one paradisaical atoll from another. For instance, the Portuguese chronicler realized the unique importance of Palawan, where the sailors revived themselves after suffering at sea from a lack of fresh food. This "Land of Promise," as he termed it, held many wonders for visitors, including (for those fortunate enough to establish positive ties to the locals) a ride on

an elephant into the realm's sacred compound, an elaborate system for passing messages to a king who would listen to others only if their words were relayed to him through a small tube, and abundance of precious cloves that could be purchased with goods the travelers had brought with them. Palawan also lacked the cannibals or pygmies found on other islands.

The nature of reports about Asia depended both on local circumstances and, as always, on the particular perspective of the observer. The missionary Luís Fróis's long 1565 letter about Japan offered the kind of details that might naturally flow from the pen of a cleric who believed that the people he lived among were "blinded with many superstitions and ceremonies." Yet Fróis's hostility did not prevent him from offering a detailed description of Buddhist monasteries, nor did his aversion to local religious custom stop him from depicting elaborate funerary customs.

Fróis witnessed much in Japan, but he died too soon to learn about what happened to the spread of Christianity there. The Portuguese had introduced Christianity to Japan in the mid-sixteenth century, and by the early seventeenth century there were perhaps 100,000 converts to the new religion. But a change in local political sensibilities led to the revival of traditional religion in the mid-seventeenth century and the persecution of many converts. Some abandoned the church for ancestral ways. Others refused to do so, and their perseverance brought the death penalty. For their faith they were killed, some of them crucified.[55]

Surviving accounts suggest that all Europeans hoped that they would one day alter religious practice in Asia. But not all visitors held to such views in equal measure. Consider, for example, Duarte de Sande's account of late-sixteenth-century China. Sande was less avowedly evangelical than other travelers. Rather than scorn customs he found repellent, he instead celebrated some of China's most unique attributes, including the Great Wall and the locals' advanced printing abilities. He recognized too that there were different kinds of schools devoted to "the greater progress and increase of learning," similar to educational institutions in Europe. The Chinese attention to matters of moral philosophy, astronomy, herbs and medicines, and "martial affairs" all demanded attention, if not outright respect. The Chinese themselves celebrated their urbanity, piety, respect for contracts, and wisdom, all traits that impressed travelers. Though Europeans could bemoan the fact that the Chinese lacked Christianity and thus "lived in great errors and ignorance

55. John E. Wills, Jr., *1688: A Global History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 154.

of the truth," Sande's report reflected his obvious admiration for prevailing religious and moral codes.

Accounts about China circulated far in the late sixteenth century, especially in clerical circles. By the end of the century, the brilliant Jesuit Matteo Ricci had begun his twenty-seven-year residence in the country, living near Canton and then in Nanjing and Beijing, a stay that produced one of the most detailed accounts of China in the early modern age.[56] But no single work in the sixteenth century describing this part of the world had the impact within Europe of a book written by an Augustinian monk named Juan González de Mendoza, who traveled to East Asia in 1583 after Pope Gregory XIII asked him to write a history "of the things that are known about the kingdom of China." First published in Rome in 1585, the book quickly circulated around the Continent. Within a year it could be found in translation in Spanish and Italian. By the turn of the century, according to one estimate, it had been translated into seven languages and been printed forty-six times. Its popularity could be attributed to many things, including enormous demand for information about Asia from an audience that had heard about the arrival of Japanese visitors in Rome. Mendoza was also an able synthesizer whose work provided a seemingly comprehensive view of East Asia. His popularity, it should be noted, was not ascribable to his originality: Mendoza, like many writers in the sixteenth century, was more concerned with spreading information than with recognizing that much of his report derived from unacknowledged authorities.[57]

By the end of the sixteenth century, the two generations of western European scholars whose writings had offered insight into a distant world had produced enough work to stock a small library about East Asia. But China and Japan were not the only Asian destinations of travelers. The Mughal emperor Babur wrote about Hindustan. 'Abd al-Razz ās al Samarqāndī Herat in eastern Afghanistan, and the Russian Athanasius Nikitin from Twer also wrote about India during the fifteenth century. Each of these reports predated what became the most substantial travel account of India, produced by the Dutch writer Jan Huygen van Linschoten, who lived in India from the time of his departure from Lisbon in 1583 until his return to Holland in 1592. Linschoten's account was perhaps the most authoritative European appraisal of any place

56. Jonathan Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent: China in Western Minds* (New York: Norton, 1998), 31–35; see also Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (New York: Viking, 1984).

57. For details about Mendoza's use of sources and the context of his account, see Lach, *Century of Discovery*, 2: 742–751.

in Asia published in the sixteenth century, though in some ways it paled in comparison with the massive historical account by Mahomed Kasim Hindoo Shah Ferishta completed in 1612. Yet though Ferishta, who was born sometime around 1570 in Ahmadnagar and traveled to Bijapoor to immerse himself in manuscripts that could inform him about the rise of Islam in India, also lived there, his work (which he hoped to disseminate "far and wide over the regions of the earth") mostly consisted of detailed accounts of particular kingdoms. Though it contained more information than Linschoten's book, it is the Dutchman's account that stuck more closely to the genre of travel literature.[58]

Linschoten was a reader of travel accounts before he was a traveler himself. He started reading histories "and strange adventures" when he was young, and the words on the printed pages captured his attention. "I found my mind so much addicted to see & travel into strange Countries," he wrote, "that in the end to satisfy myself I determined, & was fully resolved" to leave home, family, and friends to pursue opportunities abroad. He left his parents behind in Enkhuizen and sailed for Seville, where he had contacts who, he presumed, would teach him Spanish. From there he went to Lisbon, where his older brother's contacts in the court of Philip II enabled the young man to join Vicente de Fonseca, who was on his way to Goa to become the new archbishop. Eventually Linschoten made his way, as da Gama had done almost a century earlier, around Africa to Goa, a thriving city midway between Bombay and Magladore on the western coast of India, an urban entrepot teeming with Muslims, Christians, Jews, and "heathens." By the time he left for home, he had gathered material for an illustrated account that remains one of the most important ethnographic works of the early modern age. Among his writings were a vivid portrait of Goa itself, descriptions of seasons and diseases in India, and religious worship at temples in various locales. He also described the sacrificial burning of a Brahmin widow (for which he included a picture), details about mangoes and coconuts, and the ways that local physicians used certain spices and drugs.[59]

58. Ferishta, *History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India, till the year A.D. 1612*, trans. John Briggs, 4 vols. (London, 1829), quotation at I: xlix. As the historian Joan-Pau Rubiés has noted, Linschoten "produced an encyclopaedic regional account of Portuguese India—one which distinguished different ethnic groups and castes, and which was especially detailed and accurate when describing the society of Goa and its trade." See Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India through European Eyes, 1250–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 380. For Nikitin, see "The Travels of Athanasius Nikitin, of Twer," in *India in the Fifteenth Century. Being a Collection of Narratives of Voyages to India*, ed. R. H. Major (Hakluyt Society, 1st ser., 22 [London, 1857]).

59. For a summary of Linschoten's work, see Lach, *Century of Discovery*, I: 480–490.

Linschoten did not applaud everything that he saw in India. But while he and other Europeans might have welcomed the day when the locals would abandon their religious practices, there was much about South Asia that deserved praise. His description suggests that by the end of the sixteenth century, European visitors to the region were eager to wrestle with the territory's complexity on its own terms. The Indians whom Linschoten met were inhabitants of a different world that could be seen and understood by those who had been captivated, as he had been, by the descriptions of foreign places found in travel accounts. Those who ventured there had to treat the Chinese, Japanese, and Indians as equals, not as subordinates. Europeans' presence in these locales depended on their abilities to sustain positive ties to the merchants or monarchs who had the authority to remove any unwanted visitors.

Many of the travelers who ventured on long-distance journeys during the sixteenth century were like Linschoten—young, typically male, able to make the kinds of mercantile or clerical connections that provided them space and food on a ship or an income-producing appointment upon their arrival. But not all were so fortunate. Among the travelers were captives taken from their homes and hauled far away. Many of them, such as the indigenous Americans taken to Europe by Columbus and Martin Frobisher, left no record of their impressions abroad.[60] Even large groups could voyage and leave scant trace, like the fifty Brazilians who staged a mock battle for King Henri II of France as part of his elaborate entry into Rouen in 1550.[61]

Yet while travelers came from varied lands, over the course of the century certain peoples came to dominate the seas. The most successful were the Portuguese and the Spanish, whose *reconquista* (reconquest) of the Iberian peninsula—forcibly taking it back from Moors who had held it since the eighth century—and near-simultaneous expulsion of Jews provided the epic

60. See Michael Harbsmeier, "Bodies and Voices from Ultima Thule: Inuit Explorations of the Kablunat from Christian IV to Knud Rasmussen," in *Narrating the Arctic: A Cultural History of Nordic Scientific Practices*, ed. Michael Bravo and Sverker Sörlin, (Canton, Mass.: Science History Publications, 2002), 37–39.

61. *Cest La Deduction du sumpeux ordre plaisantz spectacles et magnifiques theatres dresses, et exhibes parles citoiens de Rouen* (1551; facsimile titled *L'Entrée de Henri II à Rouen 1550* [Amsterdam, 1977]), sig. [Kiᵛ-Kiiʳ];]. For an analysis, see Michael Wintroub, "Civilizing the Savage and Making a King: The Royal Entry Festival of Henri II (Rouen, 1550)," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29 (1998): 465–94; as Wintroub notes 250 Norman sailors dressed like Brazilians to participate in the mock battle between the Tupinambas and "Tabagarres."

backdrop for the most famous traveler of the age. When Columbus set sail on his history-making journey in the summer of 1492, he initiated a century of Spanish exploration that had permanent consequences for the peoples of the Atlantic basin. He also provided the first European account of one part of the Western Hemisphere, a place so varied in its peoples, resources, and landscapes that even scores of later visitors failed to master it in its entirety.

The narrative of Columbus's first journey testifies to the sense of wonder that he experienced. He knew that he had to describe in words a world that no European had yet seen. That meant capturing not only the sights but also the smells. It meant describing the actions of people whose language he could not speak. And it meant telling how to live in a place through frames of reference familiar to his readers but not designed for the West Indies. Yet amid these descriptions there is a persistent undercurrent. Columbus arrived in the Caribbean not merely as chronicler. He quickly became a conqueror as well. From that vantage point he argued that this new place should become the property of the monarchs who had sponsored his voyage. It was a fateful decision.

Columbus did not have a guide like Polo or Mandeville to counsel him when he left Palos on his journey, though he knew about Portuguese voyages and hoped to surpass their achievements. But he did have an idea about the probable size of the Atlantic. He based his knowledge on information that Europeans had gathered since antiquity. Prevailing theories taught him that the land masses of the Earth had to be in balance. There had to be, that is, as much land north of the Equator as south of it, and as much land to the east of the world's center (located at Jerusalem) as to the west. Using what he believed were the best estimates of the actual size of the Earth, Columbus argued that he could travel to Asia in a few weeks by sailing west. If he had been right, his sponsors would have precious knowledge of a sea route that promised to shorten the time it took to get from Europe to China and Japan.[62]

Columbus was surprised to discover that the Atlantic was much larger than he had anticipated. His journey across took weeks longer than he had planned, and the sailors grew restless. But on October 12, 1492, Columbus went ashore, possibly on modern-day San Salvador in the Bahamas. He and his shipmates labeled the people they met "Indians" in the mistaken belief that they had in fact reached the East Indies. Columbus proved himself ever

62. Columbus left a number of specific clues about what was in his mind when he planned his voyage; see Valerie Flint, *The Imaginative Landscape of Christopher Columbus* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

the opportunist. He claimed the land in the name of Ferdinand and Isabella, and he quickly set about renaming the islands.

The first report of Columbus's journey appeared in print soon after he arrived back in Spain in March 1493. The account, known now as the Barcelona Letter, quickly became perhaps the most widely disseminated travel narrative in history. By the end of 1493, ten versions had appeared in print, published in Barcelona, Rome, Antwerp, and Basel, where a printer added an illustration. That picture was the first visual depiction of any Native American population—a glimpse of naked Tainos huddled along a shore while Columbus and the other visitors arrive. That image became a poignant memorial to a people who quickly disappeared.

In the aftermath of Columbus's journey, Pope Alexander VI issued the Bull of the Donacion, which split the unchristianized portions of the world between the Spanish (who would own the western portion) and the Portuguese (who would own the eastern lands). The following year the monarchs of those imperial powers signed the Treaty of Tordesillas, establishing the boundary line somewhere west of the Azores and effectively granting to the Portuguese the territory of Brazil (which had not yet been seen by any Europeans). These twinned acts revealed much about European attitudes toward the larger world in this age. After 1494 Europeans who ventured westward presumed that they could lay claim to lands on the far side of the Atlantic. As a result, travel narratives relating to the Americas differed from those that described Africa or Asia. Linschoten, for example, could list the produce of India with a thought that merchants would want to acquire them for European consumers, but he knew that getting them would require negotiation. By contrast, Europeans who saw valuable goods in the Western Hemisphere enumerated nature's bounty with a sense that future colonists could own the land as well as draw on its resources.

Europeans' understanding of the Americas came in different forms. In some instances, observers who never left Europe might be able to see Native Americans who had been transported there, probably against their will. Though the documentary record of the Venetian explorer Sebastian Cabot's landfall in North America in 1497 remains scant, he brought back to his English sponsors three of the Americans he found. When they appeared in London, according to the records of the sixteenth-century English chronicler John Stowe, they were "clothed in Beastes Skinnes, and eate raw Flesh, but spake such a language, as no man could understand them." But only two years later they were dressed like Englishmen and walked the corridors of Westminster

Palace like other members of the royal court. They had become mobile spectacles and living proof of the fact that people, not monsters, inhabited the distant lands to which Europeans had recently found their way.[63]

But only the lucky European saw such natives on their side of the Atlantic. Most encountered America as readers. Although many authors tried to capture these societies in their texts or in pictures, few of them could have understood the significance of the European encounter with Native Americans. The mere arrival of these visitors had initiated changes that would eventually alter daily life from the Arctic reaches of modern-day Canada to Tierra del Fuego at the tip of South America.

Europeans who arrived in the Americas brought with them a variety of infectious diseases that devastated indigenous peoples who had never been exposed to them before and thus had acquired no immunities to ward off the contagions. The scale of death in the early modern age has never been paralleled and is beyond the human imagination. Smallpox, chicken pox, influenza, measles, and other ailments reduced American populations by perhaps 90 percent from 1492 to 1800. Some peoples, including populations described in the accounts in this volume, disappeared as distinct groups, though survivors invariably joined with the remnants of other afflicted nations. The fact of death was inescapable, and it made even the most sensitive of the surviving narratives incomplete accountings of what these societies had been like before 1492. In that sense the travel narratives that describe the Americas are different than those that describe Asia, Africa, or Europe, none of whose peoples experienced the so-called "virgin soil" epidemics and resulting demographic catastrophe. After 1492, no place in the Americas was ever stable again, at least not in the sense that its residents could experience life as they did before Europeans arrived with their deadly germs. Recent scholarship suggests that many of the indigenous peoples of the Americas might have survived despite the epidemiological assault, but the forces of colonization—notably the loss of land, declining supply of food, and often brutal treatment by the newcomers—made the infections even more lethal than they would otherwise have been.[64]

63. John Stowe, *The Chronicles of England* (London, 1580), 875.
64. Over the past generation scholars have paid extraordinary attention to the demographic catastrophe that unfolded in the Americas from 1492 to 1800. Among many works, see Noble David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492–1650* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1998); Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*; Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775–82* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001); David S. Jones, "Virgin Soils Revisited," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 60 (2003): 703–42; Daniel T. Reff, *Disease, Depopulation, and Culture Change in Northwestern New Spain, 1518–1764* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1991); Richard H. Steckel and Jerome C. Rose, eds., *The Backbone of History: Health and Nutrition in the Western Hemisphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Russell Thornton, *American Indian Holocaust and Survival: A Population History since 1492* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987); and John W. Verano and Douglas H. Ubelaker, eds., *Disease and Demography in the Americas* (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1992).

The earliest accounts of the Americas mention the force of disease, though descriptions of epidemics did not fill the pages of these narratives. Instead, as with the case of the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés, epidemics became part of the story. When Cortés arrived in Mexico in 1519 he had plans to seize land for the Spanish. By the time he had completed his siege of Tenochtitlan (modern-day Mexico City), much of the city bore the marks of his soldiers' brutality. The crimes perpetrated by his men did not escape notice; local chroniclers, using Nahua and then Spanish, recorded how Cortés's soldiers engaged in acts of sadistic murder and deliberate attempts to eradicate local religious practice. The Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas offered the most vivid portrayal of the violence deployed by Spaniards on the mainland and in the West Indies.[65]

Europeans who described American societies, especially in the first half century of contact, often wrote with contempt for the peoples they encountered. The Florentine explorer Amerigo Vespucci marveled at the physical beauty of native Brazilians, yet could not fathom why such handsome people would "nevertheless themselves destroy" with facial piercings so large that a single hole "was capable of holding a plum." The longer he remained, the more such behavior fit into a perceptible pattern. He believed that they were an irreligious people who participated in degrading sexual practices, waged war senselessly, and had a penchant for dismembering their enemies and salting down their flesh for a later meal. Each savage trait helped explain the others. This tone of condemnation of Tupinambas stands in stark contrast to Vespucci's description of the stars to be seen in Brazil or its wondrous landscape.

The consumption of human flesh was perhaps the aspect of American societies that Europeans found most horrifying. When the German captive Hans Stade spent weeks among the Tupinambas of eastern Brazil in 1557 he

65. For one indigenous account, see Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex: The General History of the Things of New Spain*, trans. Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, 13 parts (Santa Fe, N.M.: School of American Research, 1950–1982), *Book 12: The Conquest of Mexico*. For an edition that brings together various indigenous authorities, see Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962).

was traded from one group to another, constantly fearing for his life. At one point his captors even forced him to announce his arrival at a new place by shouting *"A junesche been ermi vramme"*—that is, "I, your food, have come." The fear of being eaten quite literally consumed his thoughts. Stade feared that the Tupinambas would kill him *"kawei pepicke,"* meaning that they would drink ritually at a feast while they ate him. He expressed his anxieties so clearly and so repeatedly that the artists who added illustrations to the printed versions of his account felt compelled to depict such scenes in graphic detail. The Flemish engraver Theodor de Bry placed an image of a man and a woman on the frontispiece to his edition of the narratives of Stade and Jean de Léry, a Huguenot missionary who also sailed to Brazil in the mid-sixteenth century. Of the thirty-two pictures in that volume, six depict Tupinamba cannibalism. The images are hardly subtle: men and women chow down with glee on severed arms and legs, while others roast limbs over open flames.

Cannibalism, which was practiced among certain peoples in the Americas but was more limited than early modern European observers believed, disgusted visitors but did not deter them from traveling to the Western Hemisphere. The potential rewards far outweighed the possible dangers, especially given the fact that many of the early travelers found much to be admired. Even Vespucci himself marveled at the Brazilian landscape and speculated, as had Columbus, that "if the terrestrial paradise be in any part of this earth, I esteem that it is not far distant from those parts" that he had already seen. More common was astonishment at what visitors saw and even outright delight at the thought of harvesting American flora and fauna. Léry marveled at the aquatic wonders encountered during the voyage across the Atlantic from France to Brazil. He was even more amazed by the Tupinambas themselves, whom he described in far more complimentary terms than Vespucci or Stade had managed earlier in the century. They "are not taller, fatter, or smaller in stature than we Europeans are," he wrote, "their bodies are neither monstrous nor prodigious with respect to ours. In fact, they are stronger, more robust and well filled-out, more nimble, less subject to disease; there are almost none among them who are lame, one-eyed, deformed or disfigured."[66] His report, based on a year of living among them, reflected his obsessive attention to the natives' bodies and customs. In its details about men, women, and children, Léry's account conjured up precise images about what the Tupinambas looked like, and thus provided the kinds of information that allowed talented illustrators who remained in Europe to craft similarly precise visual images. These pictures, like the accounts that artists used to make them, invariably reflected the cultural biases of their creators, especially since Léry was hardly an objective observer. Having arrived in Brazil as a missionary determined to spread the word of his gospel, he wanted to cure what he believed were the deficiencies in the Tupinambas' culture. Yet his evangelism could succeed only if he understood the potential converts. His report is the public face of his internal exploration.

66. Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil*, trans. Janet Whatley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 56.

Many of the Spaniards who went to the Western Hemisphere dwelled on aspects of the environment, what nature looked like, and how humans lived in these lands. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, a natural historian who became a Spanish imperial official in Hispaniola, was one of the more astute observers. Though Oviedo was directly involved in the maintenance of a growing colonial empire, he was more interested in indigenous species and customs ranging from the pearl divers harvesting their catch to the feathers of turtle doves and partridges in Cuba. Oviedo sensed that his words could convey what America looked like. In that way he had more confidence than the conquistador Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, who knew he needed help describing the Southwest of the modern-day United States, which he explored from 1539 to 1541. Coronado was so astonished by what he saw in the lands of the Pueblos that he ordered a native artist to paint a picture of the local birds, beasts, and fish onto cloth. The artist complied, but that did not prevent Coronado from later complaining that the pictures were "rudely done, because the painter spent but one day in drawing" them. Deep in the desert and far from navigable waterways, these Americans quickly realized what the Spanish were really looking for. They were right: Coronado had gone into the desert because he thought he would find Cíbola, a fabled city bedecked in precious metals and jewels.

Coronado failed to find the wealth he sought, but other Spaniards were more fortunate. In the decades after Cortés's conquest of the Aztec empire, emissaries of the Iberian monarchs traveled southward. The famed conquistador Francisco Pizarro and his fellow travelers were outnumbered by the Inkas they met on their way to Peru, but the invaders still managed to wrest control of the region and its vast resources from the natives. Their success hinged on the superiority of their weapons, the shock of their arrival to the natives, and the spread of infectious diseases that reduced the Inkas' ability to defend their homeland from invasion.[67]

67. Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 67–81.

Yet if the conquest of Peru was notable for its rapidity and its commander's brutality toward the Inkan emperor Atahualpa—whom Pizarro killed even after he received what may have been the largest ransom ever paid in human history—thousands of the region's conquered peoples survived the assault and diseases. Those survivors quickly became the subject of writers' speculation as information about Peru began to circulate across Europe by the middle of the century. Among those writers was Pedro de Cieza de León, whose work appeared widely in the sixteenth century, published first in Seville in 1553 and over the next two decades in Antwerp, Rome, and Venice. According to one twentieth-century commentator, the work "possesses the greatest objectivity of any history ever written about the Incas."[68]

Cieza de León claimed that he was moved to write his account after spending seventeen years in the West Indies. There "I saw the strange and wonderful things that exist in this New World of the Indies," he wrote, noting that "there came to me a great desire to write certain of them, those which I had seen with my own eyes, and also what I had heard from highly trustworthy persons." In listing his reasons for writing his account, he added that "I had taken notice wherever I went that nobody concerned himself with writing aught of what was happening. And time so destroys the memory of things that only by clues and inference can the future ages know what really took place." Of course, he had a more explicit agenda as well: he wanted the world to know that since "these Indians all have our origin in our common parents," it was crucial "that the world should know how so great a multitude as these Indians were brought into the lap of the church by the efforts of the Spanish, an undertaking so great that no other nation of all the universe could have accomplished it." Telling his story would also bring glory to the crown of Castile, under whose guidance "the rich and widespread kingdoms of New Spain and Peru were settled and other islands and vast provinces discovered." But Cieza de León knew that the gain for the Spanish came at the expense of Americans. As he put it after providing a survey of the city of Tomebamba, "Today all is cast down and in ruins, but still it can be seen how great they were."[69]

Peru and its splendors beckoned the Spanish because the rewards were so obvious: abundance of silver to be mined, countless natives to be won over to Christ. Yet travelers headed for less promising destinations too. Perhaps no

68. Victor Wolfgang von Hagen, in *The Incas of Pedro Cieza de León*, trans. Harriet de Onis (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959), vii.

69. *Incas of Pedro Cieza de León*, 3, 73.

target of European explorers was less enticing than modern-day Canada, a place known by the late sixteenth century to be surrounded by frigid waters and populated by natives who often seemed incapable of even the most rudimentary kinds of civilized behavior. However forbidding Canada appeared, early modern European travelers had been going there since the age of the Cabots. Many of them went in search of the so-called Northwest Passage, a water route that they hoped would take them to Asia more quickly than the well-known but lengthy journey around Africa and India (or the even longer journey overland). Among the earliest European travelers to the region was Jacques Cartier, the most important French explorer of the sixteenth century, who maneuvered his ship far into the St. Lawrence River in the 1530s. By the time he reemerged he had gathered plentiful details about indigenous life there that would eventually find an audience across Europe when his work was published (by 1580) in French, Italian, and English. The *Narration* of his second voyage included his extended reflections on the settlement at Hochelaga and provided his readers with an assessment of the indigenous Canadians' belief in a sacred spirit called Cudruiagni who foretold the weather and punished misbehaving humans. Cartier told the Indians that this spirit was the devil and then wrote that many sought Christian baptism to escape the demon's cruel ways. His remarks reflected his views, not those of the natives. But rather than be dismissed as idle fantasy, Cartier's notions instead reflected the reality of demonic forces to early modern Europeans. Given the large number of surviving accounts about seemingly all variety of demonism across Europe, Cartier's assumptions made perfect sense. If the indigenous peoples he met did not understand the ubiquity of the Devil, that was but one more sign of their ignorance of how the world functioned.[70]

As the century wore on an ever larger number of European travelers explored North America, from the tepid waters of southern Florida to the frozen shores of the continent's northeastern coastline and nearby islands. Not surprisingly, visitors paid careful attention to the peoples who came to meet them. Traveling with Martin Frobisher on a search for the Northwest Passage in 1577, Dionyse Settle had little praise for the Inuit he saw. They subsisted on

70. One sign of the ubiquity of ideas about demonism was the widespread publication of books that dealt with the phenomenon; such thinking not only influenced thoughts about religion but also politics, science, history, and even the language that Europeans used in daily life. For a masterful survey of the subject, see Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

raw flesh, a sign of their savagery. They lived in dwellings covered with the skins of animals and with doorways held open by whalebones. Still, however awful those people appeared, the English entertained hopes that these natives could use pen, ink, and paper to provide information about five men left behind on Frobisher's expedition a year earlier. They were wrong. The fate of those men remained a mystery to the English, who believed that the Inuit had killed them, until a nineteenth-century whaling captain met a local woman who knew the fate of those long-lost men. Ookijoxy Ninoo, sharing part of her people's history that had been maintained orally for almost four hundred years, told how the men had grown impatient and made their own small boat to sail back to England even before the chill of winter had left those waters. It was a fatal choice, something that Settle and others on Frobisher's voyages would have known.[71]

Yet if the northeast coast of North America was dangerous, the west coast held promise. That, at least, was the impression that readers of an account of Francis Drake's journey would have learned. When the English captain sailed northward up the Pacific coast of South America and into the waters off modern-day California, he found places that were anything but forbidding. During his successful circumnavigation, which began in 1577 and ended three years later, Drake had more problems with the Spanish who had already colonized portions of the west coast than he did with either native peoples or the environment. He found the local customs bizarre at times, but he seemed to appreciate a place where gender rules dictated the subordination of women. He also paid close attention to the welcoming rituals of the California natives. During one ceremony he even laid claim to the entire area, "wishing that the riches & treasure" of the region could be "transported to the inriching" of his queen's realm. Before he departed, Drake left a marker in place telling when he had arrived and the date on which, he claimed, the locals had voluntarily given up the region to Elizabeth I. Drake then sailed off to the west, seeking the Spanish treasure ships hauling American silver to the Philippines.

Although Europeans acquired much information about parts of the interior of South and North America over the course of the century, some travelers never saw what they claimed to have observed. Journeys might take weeks and still not get far inland. Walter Ralegh's search for Guiana, for example, took him no farther than the meandering tributaries of the Orinoco. Though what he claimed to see and hear there provided insight into unfamiliar environments, he had in fact barely penetrated the continent. The limited wanderings of many of those who wrote accounts meant that the surviving narratives about the Americas, as the selections in this volume demonstrate, often made only vague distinctions between different groups of Americans. Coronado saw different Pueblo settlements, but spent little time demarcating differences among them. Columbus and Ralegh encountered natives who seemed friendly, but each heard stories about the more savage and monstrous creatures who roamed just beyond the reach of European explorations. Cartier recognized differences among communities in the St. Lawrence Valley, but he never saw the Americans who lived in more temperate climes. Too often America's indigenous peoples existed in travel accounts as foils to superior Europeans—examples of primitive societies, idol-worshiping cults, and lustful individuals who sated their uncivilized passions by parading naked, swapping sexual partners, or eating their enemies.

71. The story can be found in Susan Rowley, "Frobisher Miksanut: Inuit Accounts of the Frobisher Voyages," in *Archaeology of the Frobisher Voyages*, ed. William W. Fitzhugh and Jacqueline S. Olin (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1993), 30.

Fortunately for later readers, America had its own version of India's Linschoten: two talented and perceptive men who traveled from England to the middle of the North Atlantic coast together in the 1580s, bound for the nascent colony at Roanoke. One was a young writer and mathematician named Thomas Harriot, the other a supremely talented painter named John White. Together they created an ethnographic masterpiece that described one particular North American population. Published first in unillustrated editions in London in 1588 and 1589, *The Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* had such promise that it appeared in 1590 in an illustrated edition, with Theodor de Bry's engravings of White's watercolors. The fact of its publication speaks volumes about its importance at the time. In an age when accounts of travel were sometimes kept secret and when even published versions typically appeared to serve a particular audience, the Harriot/White/de Bry collaboration appeared simultaneously in Latin, German, English, and French. It became the most famous book ever published about any specific American population, and it remains the most authoritative guide to the appearance, customs, architecture, beliefs, economy, and customs of a people who disappeared soon after the book's publication. The Carolina Algonquians described in those pages became victims of the forces that travel itself had unleashed: infectious diseases, missionaries bent on eradicating natives' cosmos, and land-hungry colonizers who used descriptions in travel accounts to plan their conquest of new territory.

Anyone who held the *Briefe and True Report* in his or her hands in the sixteenth century would have turned each page with anticipation. One short chapter after another detailed local plants and their uses, the extraordinary plenty to be found in nearby waterways, intricate religious beliefs and even mortuary practices. The thirty-four pages of text preceded twenty-three pictures, each with text describing what the image depicted. It is hard now to imagine the wonder that many readers must have felt as they ran their hands along those pages, perhaps touching the visual depiction of one marvel after another. But after the final image of the Algonquians, which depicted a local man with a tattoo on his back and explained the meaning of certain other forms of ritual scarification, the reader came face to face with images that had nothing to do with the Americas. Instead, he or she saw a naked man, himself heavily tattooed and holding a head still dripping blood (another head lies at his feet), and then another figure, and another, until the reader had seen five distinct images of the ancient inhabitants of Britain known as Picts. The verbal descriptions that appeared here were briefer than the text that had accompanied the images of Roanoke. Instead, the pictures themselves tell a story of humans in Europe in their savage state, before the redemptive power of civilization had brought out their innate potential. The Picts had dominated northern Britain when the Romans arrived fifteen centuries earlier, but now they were long gone. Located at the end of the most perceptive American travel account of the century, these pictures existed to make a single point: Western Europe had once been populated by individuals as savage as any to be found in the Americas. Over time they had become "reduced" to civilization, as early modern writers often referred to the process of eradicating indigenous culture and replacing it with Protestant or Catholic forms of Christianity, European gender roles, and the benefits of a market economy. The account of Roanoke became a tool for potential conquerors and colonists.

Before Columbus's arrival, the peoples of the Americas tended to live in discrete communities and shared only limited experiences. Like residents of settlements in other parts of the world, any individual's knowledge of what lay beyond the confines of his or her particular community was often a mystery. Travelers broached those boundaries, as did merchants, sailors, soldiers, and delegates of powerful polities. But most people lived and died in the region of their birth, and hence their mental worlds remained circumscribed by what they learned locally. Though many Native Americans traveled long distances during their lives, the hemisphere contained hundreds of distinct

peoples, but no common culture, language, or set of shared experience. For them there was no concept of an "America."

But infectious diseases and imperial-minded conquerors broke through the boundaries that had made the experiences of one indigenous population different from another. Though knowledge of particular groups might not have traveled far—residents of an Iroquois community near the St. Lawrence River might not know anything of the Aztecs or the Inkas—the native peoples of the Americas came to share a common and often tragic fate. Neither Europeans nor the Old World diseases they inadvertently carried reached into every indigenous community in the Americas by 1600. But by the end of the sixteenth century, the course of events had become predictable. In the decades that followed, virtually all Americans came to know the tragedies that epidemics wrought, and many of them found their beliefs and everyday practices challenged by uninvited visitors.

The indigenous peoples of other continents did not face such challenges in the sixteenth century. To be sure, Europeans influenced other societies, either by persuading thousands to convert to Christianity (as occurred in parts of Asia and Africa) or by participating in a slave trade that transported men, women, and children far from their homes (as happened in Africa), or by establishing trade with non-Europeans that altered traditional economies. But the American situation was different because of the unprecedented devastations wrought by the combination of deadly pathogens and opportunistic conquerors.

The stories generated by European travelers to the Americas filled hundreds of thousands of printed pages in Europe by the end of the sixteenth century. Details about what or who could be found in particular places, and what happened when Europeans met America's native peoples, appeared in books, pamphlets, and broadsides. Printers produced this mountain of information because they knew there was a market for news of the Western Hemisphere, an audience of readers eager to make their own discoveries about what lay on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. By 1600, European knowledge of the Americas gleaned through travel accounts had led to sustained speculation about the location of precious goods and even the route to the promised land. In the minds of the most capable and thoughtful writers, understanding America and its peoples came to be a way to understand Europe and Europeans too.

Among those who read travel accounts and ruminated on their meaning was the famed late sixteenth-century French courtier Michel de Montaigne,

whose *Essais* (written mostly in the 1570s) analyze such phenomena as human emotions, war horses, and drunkenness. He never sailed across the Atlantic Ocean, yet one of his most famous essays treated the subject of cannibalism and made explicit reference to man-eaters found in the Americas. Humans who ate other humans had long been a fixture of the European imagination, but actual knowledge of such peoples had faded until Europeans who went to the Americas brought the fact of cannibalism back into common discourse, as the accounts of Stade and others had made so abundantly obvious. But unlike other writers, Montaigne wrote about American cannibalism not because it was so shocking to his sensibilities and not because he feared it. Instead, he used an account of cannibalism provided by "a simple and rough-hewn fellow," who was (Montaigne argued) too stupid to have made up what he reported, to contrast American primitiveness with European savagery, particularly the treatment of those accused or convicted of crimes. "I think there is more barbarism to eating men alive," he wrote, "then to feed up them being dead; to mangle by tortures and torments a body full of lively sense, to roast him in pieces," or to let dogs and swine gnaw on the body. Montaigne believed that the Americans he wrote about could use some improvement, but in his mind their existence had much to teach Europeans about the proper ways to live with each other.[72]

Readers of this volume may be disappointed to discover that virtually all of the travel narratives that appear here were written by Europeans and published in Europe. It is regrettable that there are few surviving sixteenth-century African travel accounts and no published accounts across South or East Asia that described sixteenth-century travels. To make up for this gap, this volume includes several fifteenth-century travel narratives. These include the extraordinary writing of the Ming chronicler Ma Huan, whose *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan* (*The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores*), written in 1433 and published in 1451, included descriptions of Calicut, Ceylon, Mecca, and such places in the oceans as "the country of naked people" where residents had "naked bodies, all without a stitch of clothing, like the bodies of brute beasts."[73] There are also two accounts of early observers of India: 'Abd al-

72. Montaigne, "Of the Caniballes," in *The Essayes or Morall, Politike and Militarie Discourses*, trans. John Florio (London, 1603), 100–107, quotations at 101, 104.
73. Ma Huan, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan*, 124–25.

Razzāq al-Samarqandī, an emissary from Herat to Calicut; and the Emperor Babur to Hindustan, part of the territory that he conquered in the formation of the Mughal Empire.

Yet despite these texts, the silences in the historical record remain. Though Asians and Americans traveled to Europe, none left accounts that were printed in the sixteenth century. The gap is notable in part because no account was left by any members of a small group of Japanese travelers who came to Europe under the auspices of Pope Gregory XIII in 1585. Their visit produced an extraordinary number of reports about them—49 in 1585 alone—but not by them.[74] Nor did the journeys of scores of Native Americans to Europe leave much trace other than glimpses in the record.[75] Many Native American peoples preserved their own histories, of course, often in precise stories told from one generation to the next. Such indigenous sources should not be ignored. The details in some of the Mesoamerican chronicles provide crucial insights into the ways that Europeans took control of much of the Western Hemisphere. Like Las Casas's accounting of Spanish atrocities, they provide portraits of extraordinary human cruelty. But while they tell us much about the sixteenth century, they are in fact the opposite of travel accounts. They are depictions of peoples by themselves, not by outsiders. One notable exception was Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, a Peruvian; this anthology contains his account of his return home after an absence of thirty years.

This volume does include accounts left by Europeans who traveled to other parts of their own continent and such relatively nearby territory as the modern-day Middle East. Such ventures were, as some of the surviving writing reveals, just as replete with life's many mysteries. The English gentleman traveler Fynes Moryson first left his native land in 1591 and spent the next decade traveling through such well-known locales as Germany, Switzerland, and Poland. Part of his memorable journey took him through Venice and Jerusalem. His shipmates included his brother, a Greek crew, and some Italians, Persians, Turks, and Indians, all of them jostling together on the waves and coming on deck to recite their daily prayers when they heard the ship's bell. Moryson studied Jerusalem's architecture and spent enough time there to find out how most of the residents earned a living. But he did not like them

74. See Adriana Boscaro, *Sixteenth-Century European Printed Works on the First Japanese Mission to Europe: A Descriptive Bibliography* (Leiden: Brill, 1973).
75. According to the anthropologist Harald E. L. Prins, there were at least fifty-five journeys by perhaps 1,600 Native Americans to Europe by the early seventeenth century. See Prins, "To the Land of the Mistigoches: American Indians Traveling to Europe in the Age of Exploration," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 17, 1 (1993): 175–95.

very much. The city's inhabitants, he wrote, "are as wicked, as they were when they crucified our Lord, gladly taking all occasions to use Christians despitefully." He must have been happy to resume his journey, though his account bore witness to the kinds of routine troubles that hampered travelers—the need to provide for their own food, being held out of a port until the proper permissions had been received, sharing his cabin with the wares being hauled from one city to another, beating off would-be pirates and thieves. Moryson's is a curiously detailed sixteenth-century report. Although he himself prepared it for publication, he never hesitated to mix the mundane with the marvelous, which makes his book a particularly useful account since it merges the realities of travel together with the goals of the traveler.

As Europeans traveled from one nation to another, they often paid careful attention to formal elements of ritual. At times, Christian observers excoriated the practices of non-Christians, such as the people of Turkey whom the French geographer Nicholas Nicholay encountered in the 1550s. He described "the religious Hermites and Pilgrimes, both Turkes and Moores Mahometistes" as having a manner of living that was "so beastly and farre from the true religion under colour of their fained holinesse and vaine devotion, that by comparable reason it might better be called a life of brute beastes then of reasonable men."[76] But travelers within Europe did not always condemn those they met. When the German lawyer Paul Hentzner journeyed through Elizabethan England near the end of the century, he took note of the country's agricultural successes and even English sheep. Yet his account is most engaging when he turned his attention to the rituals of a state procession. He described the queen in language that would have been familiar to any reader of travel literature, emphasizing how she spoke to each ambassador in his own language, how she pulled off her glove to reveal a jewel-bedecked hand that needed to be kissed by the most fortunate, how her female assistants attended her, and how the royal court feasted. His keen eye for detail provides glimpses into a world that has slipped into oblivion.

The act of travel itself spawned more than a genre of literature. It also supported Europeans' obsessive desire to own and display fragments of the natural world. Thomas Platter's account of his journey to England in 1599 includes his enumeration of the contents of a cabinet of curiosity. There is no better way to measure the acquisitive impulses of this age of discovery

76. Nicholas Nicholay, *The Navigations, peregrinations and voyages, made into Turkie by Nicholas Nicholay Daulphinois, Lord of Arfeuile, Chamberlaine and Geographer ordinarie to the King of France*, trans. T. Washington the younger (London, 1585), f. 99^{r}.

than to imagine how an Arabian cloak, a necklace of teeth from Africa, the mummy of an infant, pitchers and boxes from China, and various parts of animals and insects came to lie together in the same room where its owner displayed them for invited visitors.

Yet as Europeans traveled far in their desire to acquire material goods—in addition to colonies and souls—they knew that they ran real risks. Ships often went down and countless numbers of men, women, and children drowned. Moryson's hope for a smooth voyage was not a casual part of his journey; he and the others on board knew the risks. Though tales of shipwrecks undoubtedly passed from mouth to mouth, especially in seaside communities where friends and relatives never returned from voyages, some sixteenth-century printers also realized there was a market for published accounts of disasters. The wreck of one Portuguese captain near the Azores resulted in an extraordinary narrative titled (in translation) *Shipwreck Suffered by Jorge D'Albuquerque Coelho*, published in Lisbon in 1601. The horrors experienced by those on board are almost beyond imagination. Even Afonso Luīs, the author of the account, recognized that his words could not do justice to the primal fear that the men and women of that journey endured. The storm drove the ship hundreds of miles northward, from 43 degrees north latitude to 47 degrees. The terror escaped articulation. "One thing I can affirm," the author wrote after offering up some of the most harrowing details, "and that is that what little is written here is as different from what we actually endured as a painting is from real life."

This collection contains hundreds of pages of accounts as they appeared in the sixteenth century or soon after, most drawn from the sixteenth-century (or early-seventeenth-century) English printings (though there are a few modern translations). It also includes three groups of pictures that appeared in print then too—visual portfolios depicting the Brazil that Hans Stade and Jean de Léry saw, the India described by Jan Huygen van Linschoten, and Roanoke as it appeared to Thomas Harriot and John White. These pictures appeared in texts originally published in German, French, Dutch, Latin, and English, though images of distant lands also appeared in books printed in other languages, notably Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. To understand the world that travelers described and their readers encountered, it is crucial to look at these images in context. Printers borrowed words from one another, and they also reprinted the same pictures. Sometimes an enterprising artist such as the

Flemish engraver Theodor de Bry would take old texts and pictures and create new versions of them, as is evident here in the pictures that accompany the texts of Stade and Léry. But more frequently printers would use old plates or commission artists to reprint old images without any changes.

Too often scholars have analyzed these sixteenth-century images as if they were unique. But just as readers considered the reliability of accounts in the context of other reports, so viewers of images saw them in context too. The selection that appears here represents a small fraction of the available visual material, just as the reports represent a tiny proportion of the surviving accounts. The pictures are not here to illustrate points made in the text. Instead, they provide clues to earlier mentalities by revealing how artists depicted what they saw or the images that appeared in their minds after reading evocative texts. Pictures, along with words, told stories. They too need to be read to understand how peoples 400 years ago shared information about the world they inhabited. These pictures cannot be taken to be any more accurate than the texts themselves. As one modern ethnographer has noted, European "engravers sat comfortably in their workshops" when they created pictures to fit the words that appeared in the accounts, and the results often "showed some consideration for the text, but just as often originated wholly in the imagination of the artist himself."[77]

Words and images together conveyed distant worlds to the individuals fortunate enough to acquire travel accounts. Scattered references in the surviving documents reveal that books often traveled far. One example will suffice. In the mid-1580s, the editor Richard Hakluyt's older cousin—who was also named Richard Hakluyt—suggested that the English explorers Arthur Pet and Charles Jackman take to China a copy of "the book of the attire of all nations." In all likelihood that book was the one that Hans Weigel produced in Germany in 1577. If the book made this journey, it would have been carried onto a ship that departed from London and sailed northward toward the hoped-for Northeast Passage. It would have been stowed under decks, probably in a packing crate, while the ship edged through the frozen seas that encrusted the northern edges of the Eurasian landmass. If the captain managed to steer his vessel through the ice and cold of those waters north of Russia without water flooding the cargo hold, the book would have made it to the Pacific. Having thus passed through the Northeast Passage, these images on paper would have remained secure, bound together inside a leather or wooden cover, as the ship hugged the east coast of Asia until it reached the kingdom of the great Chan.

77. Kaj Birket-Smith, "The Earliest Eskimo Portraits," *Folk* 1 (1959): 5.

Those who hauled the book through those hundreds of perilous miles would then have presented the book to the emperor since, as Hakluyt put it, "such a booke carried with you and bestowed in gift, would be much esteemed."[78] But that book never made it to its intended destination. Like countless travelers on the seas and on land, it disappeared without a trace.

Certain themes run through the accounts in this volume. Travelers routinely commented on religious practice, and almost invariably found the spiritual beliefs of others inferior to their own. They wrote about physical appearance and clothing. They described architecture. They rendered in words what places looked like, sounded like, even how they smelled. They also worried about what would happen next. Would a storm blow up and capsize their vessel? Would some unknown wild animal attack? Would the people they met decide to kill them? Such fears were reasonable. Yet the dominant tone of these accounts is not trepidation, but wonder at the marvels being witnessed and glee at the possibility of making a profit from new discoveries. What constituted profit differed from group to group, of course. American silver shipped to Spain or the Philippines made many Spaniards rich. But missionaries promoting Christianity also profited when they managed to persuade others to accept their views.

Less obvious in travelers' writings and pictures is another theme: the desire to record what the voyagers had experienced for posterity. Like the writers and painters of other generations, those of the sixteenth century battled oblivion. They all knew the risks of travel, and few if any embraced martyrdom for the sake of their discoveries. These intrepid travelers and others who left accounts found ways to preserve their observations. The printing press aided their struggle against the darkness of forgetting. It proved in the long run a more effective technology for the dissemination of information than oral history or *khipu*. Those who wrote the accounts printed here might not have "held up the sky," to borrow the indigenous American Rarámuris phrase for the preservation of culture through memory,[79] but

78. Hakluyt to Pet and Jackman, in *The Principall Navigations, Voiages, and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589), 464.

79. Susan M. Deeds, "Legacies of Resistance, Adaptation, and Tenacity: History of the Native Peoples of Northwest Mexico, in *Mesoamerica*, vol. 2 of *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, ed. Richard E. W. Adams and Murdo J. Macleod (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 2: 44.

they handed down details of a world that would otherwise be invisible to us now.

When the English collector of travel accounts Samuel Purchas put together a large collection of narratives in the mid-1620s, he included an indigenous chronicle known as the "Codex Mendoza." Unlike the thousands of words that spilled across the pages of his four folio-sized volumes, this fifty-page section consisted mostly of images. It was, as Purchas called it, "The History of the Mexican Nation, described in pictures." He knew its value, terming the images "the choisest of my Jewels."[80] The indigenous Mexicans whose history was captured in the Codex suffered when uninvited visitors arrived on their shores in April 1519, though a series of prophecies had warned them that something ominous was on its way. In other parts of the Americas, indigenous groups heard rumors of newcomers. They too realized that the visitors would change their world.

Tragically, many non-Europeans' stories of this formative period of contact were lost in subsequent catastrophes. The travel narratives here will not revive or replace their accounts. But at least we can listen to the echoes of their stories in the tales that their visitors told.

80. Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 4 vols. (London, 1625), 3: 1065–1066.

A Note on Sources and Suggestions for Further Reading

This anthology contains excerpts from thirty-seven fifteenth- and sixteenth-century travel accounts. Yet despite this accumulation of evidence, these narratives represent a small fraction of the available travel literature for the early modern era. Given the enormous interest in travel writing, much of this literature, as well as scholarly studies that provide context and analysis, is now available. This note is intended to suggest avenues into this scholarship. Given the exciting work going on in this field, a moment of caution is in order: this note will provide an overview of the existing scholarship, but there is material beyond what is mentioned here. New research appears regularly in books and scholarly journals, including *Studies in Travel Literature*, an entire journal devoted to the subject.

Published collections of travel narratives have existed since the sixteenth century. Among the earliest and most important was Giovanni Battista Ramusio's *Navigationi e Viaggi*, published in three volumes in Venice from 1550 to 1559. There is a splendid modern Italian edition of Ramusio's work, edited by Marica Milanesi, published in six volumes in Torino by Giulio Einaudi (1978–1988). (Ramusio's volumes have never been translated in full into English, though many of the individual accounts have been translated into English and other modern languages.) Richard Hakluyt, who was inspired by Ramusio and whose efforts feature prominently in this volume, began his systematic collection of travel accounts with the first book to appear under his own name, *Divers Voyages touching the discoverie of America, and the Ilands adjacent* (London, 1582), and leading to his first grand effort, *The Principall Navigations, Voiages, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, first published in London in 1589; a facsimile edition of this work was published by Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society in two volumes in 1965. Nine years

Document 7

Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan—The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores (1433)

Ma Huan, Ying-Yai Sheng-Lam: The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores, trans. J. V. G. Mills (Cambridge, England: Hakluyt Society Extra Series no. 42, 1970), 77–85, 137–46, 173–78

Ma Huan was probably born around 1380 in a family from Kuei chi, about seven miles from Hang chou bay. Scholars know little about his life. He was in all likelihood of humble origin, but he gained sufficient education to be appointed to join some, but not all, of the voyages led by Cheng Ho (c. 1371–1435), the Ming admiral who led perhaps the most substantial fleet in the world at the time from China to the east coast of Africa. He returned from his final voyage in 1433. Eighteen years later he published Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan—The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores.

The excerpts here testify to the range of Ming travel expertise and to Ma Huan's ability, often in a very few pages, to render telling portraits of the peoples whom he met and the places that he saw. The material here comes from his encounters with three very different places: Champa (in central Vietnam), Calicut, and Mecca. In each of these places he described the economy, especially local agricultural practices, and dominant religious patterns. His eye for detail is especially apparent in his description of keeping track of time in Champa or the architecture of the central mosque in Mecca. His writing tended to be less overtly judgmental than that of other travelers of this age. He was also a very precise writer, repeatedly providing the values of goods and the distances from one place to another. Though his text occasionally erred in statements of fact, as his modern editor J. V. G. Mills has pointed out in a superb series of gloss notes to the translation used here, such occasional inaccuracy does not detract from the obvious effort to provide a guide to others who would presumably follow in the future. Cheng Ho led seven expeditions from his initial departure in 1405 to his final return in 1433; Ma Huan accompanied him on three of them.

There are no known surviving copies of the original 1451 printing of the Overall Survey. *For the text that follows, Mills used three variant editions, relying on one published around 1617 (known as "Version C"), but also referring frequently to an edition published in 1824 (known as "Version S"),*

and on occasion to a third (and rarer) version composed sometime between 1451 and 1644 (known as "Version K"; the text here removes many of the brackets Mills used when creating a singular text with material from these variant editions). Ma Huan died around 1460. As Mills has noted, "His book was never widely read, he never achieved fame, and he had been forgotten before 1773, when the imperial library of the Ch'ien-lung emperor was being formed." It is a tragedy that the text was not better known for so many generations because its contents, as the excerpts here reveal, provide a necessary corrective to European and American notions about much of the world that was, for Ma Huan and Cheng Ho, the "West," not the "East."[1]

The Country of Chan City [Champa, Central Vietnam]

This is the country called Wang she ch'eng in the Buddhist records. It lies in the south of the great sea which is south of the sea of Kuang tung. Starting from Wu hu strait in Ch'ang lo district of Fu chou prefecture in Fu chien province and traveling south-west, the ship can reach this place in ten days with a fair wind. On the south the country adjoins Chen la [Cambodia]; on the west it connects with the boundary of Chiao chih [Tonking]; and on both east and north it comes down to the great sea.

At a distance of one hundred *li* to the north-east from the capital, there is a port named New Department Haven. On the shore they have a stone tower which constitutes a land-mark. Ships from all places come here for the purpose of mooring and going ashore. On the shore there is a fort, named by the foreigners She pi-nai; they have two headmen in charge of it; and inside the fort live fifty or sixty families of foreigners, to guard the harbour.

Going south-west for one hundred *li* you come to the city where the king resides; its foreign name is Chan city. The city has a city-wall of stone, with openings at four gates, which men are ordered to guard. The king of the country is a So-li man, and a firm believer in the Buddhist religion. On his head he wears a three-tiered elegantly-decorated crown of gold filigree, resembling that worn by the assistants of the *ching* actors in the Central Country. On his body he wears a long robe of foreign cloth with small designs worked in

1. Ma Huan, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan: "The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores" [1433]*, trans. J. V. G. Mills (Hakluyt Society, extra ser., 42 [Cambridge, 1970]), 34–41, quotation at 36.

threads of the five colours, and round the lower part of his body a kerchief or coloured silk; and he has bare feet. When he goes about, he mounts an elephant, or else he travels riding in a small carriage with two yellow oxen pulling in front.

The hat worn by the chiefs is made of *chiao-chang* leaves, and resembles that worn by the king, but has gold and coloured ornamentation; and differences in the hats denote the gradations of rank. The coloured robes which they wear are not more than knee-length, and round the lower part of the body the wear a multi-coloured kerchief of foreign cloth.

The house in which the king resides is tall and large. It has a roof of small oblong tiles on it. The four surrounding walls are ornately constructed of bricks and mortar, and look very neat. The doors are made of hard wood, and decorated with engraved figures of wild beasts and domestic animals.

The houses in which the people live have a covering made of thatch; the height of the eaves from the ground cannot exceed three ch'ih; people go in and out with bent bodies and lowered heads; and to have a greater height is an offence.

As to the colour of their clothing: white clothes are forbidden, and only the king can wear them; for the populace, black, yellow, and purple coloured clothes are all allowed to be worn; but to wear white clothing is a capital offence.

The men of the country have unkempt heads; the women dress the hair in a chignon at the back of the head. Their bodies are quite black. On the upper part of the body they wear a short sleeveless shirt, and round the lower part a coloured silk kerchief. All go bare-footed.

The climate is pleasantly hot, without frost or snow, always like the season in the fourth or fifth moon. The plants and trees are always green.

The mountains produce ebony, *ch'ieh-lan* incense, Kuan yin bamboo, and laka-wood. The ebony is a very glossy black, and decidedly superior to the produce of other countries. The *ch'ieh-lan* incense is produced only on one large mountain in this country, and comes from no other place in the world; it is very expensive, being exchanged for its own weight in silver.

The Kuan yin bamboo resembles a small rattan stick; it is one *chang* seven or eight *ch'ih* in length, and iron black in colour; it has two or three joints to every one inch; it is not produced elsewhere.

Rhinoceros' and elephants' teeth are very abundant. The rhinoceros resembles a water-buffalo in shape; a large one weighs seven or eight hundred *chin*; the whole body is hairless, black in colour, and all covered with scale;

the skin is lined, mangy, and thick; the hoof has three digits; and the head has one horn which grows in the middle of the bridge of the nose, a long horn being one *ch'ih* four or five *ts'un* [in height]. It does not eat grass, but it eats prickly trees and prickly leaves; it also eats large pieces of dry wood. It drops excrement which resembles the sumach-refuse of a dyer's shop.

Their horses are short and small, like donkeys. Water-buffaloes, yellow oxen, pigs and goats—all these they have. Geese and ducks are scarce. The fowls are small; the largest ones do not exceed two *chin* [in weight]; and their legs are one and a half *ts'un* and at the most two *ts'un*, in height. The cock birds have red crowns and white ears, with small waists and high tails; they crow, too, when people tame them up in their hands; they are very likeable.

For fruits they have such kinds as the plum, orange, water-melon, sugar-cane, coconut, jack-fruit and banana. The jack-fruit resembles the gourd-melon; the outside skin is like that of the litchi from Ch'uan [Szechuan]; inside the skin there are lumps of yellow flesh as big as a hen's egg, which taste like honey; inside these lumps there is a seed resembling a chicken's kidney; and when roasted and eaten, it tastes like a chestnut.

For vegetables, they have the gourd-melon, cucumber, bottle-gourd, mustard plant, onion and ginger, and that is all; other fruits and vegetables are entirely lacking.

Most of the men take up fishing for a livelihood; they seldom go in for agriculture, and therefore rice and cereals are not abundant. In the local varieties of rice the kernel is small, long, and reddish. Barley and wheat are both wanting. The people ceaselessly chew areca-nut and betel-leaf.

When men and women marry, the only requirement is that the man should first go to the woman's house, and consummate the marriage. Ten days or half a moon later, the man's father and mother, with their relatives and friends, to the accompaniment of drums and music escort husband and wife back to the paternal home; then they prepare wine and play music.

As to their wine: they take some rice and mix it with medicinal herbs, seal the mixture in a jar, and wait till it has matured. When they wish to drink it, they take a long-joined small bamboo tube three or four *ch'ih* in length, insert it into the wine-jar, and sit around; then theyput in some water according to the number of persons, and take it in turns to suck up the wine and drink it; when the jar is sucked dry, they again add water and drink; this they do until there is no more taste of wine; and then they stop.

As to their writing: they have no paper or pen; they use either goat-skin beaten thin or tree-bark smoked black; and they fold it into the form of a classical book, in which, with white chalk, they write characters which serve for records.

As to the punishable offences in this country: for light offences, they employ thrashing on the back with a rattan stick; for serious offences, they cut off the nose; for robbery, they sever a hand; for the offence of adultery, the man and the woman are branded on the face so as to make a scar; for the most heinous offences, they take a hard wood stick, cut a sharp point to it, and set it up on a log of wood which resembles a small boat; this they put in the water; and they make the offender sit on the wood spike; the wood [stick] protrudes from his mouth and he dies; and then the corpse is left on the water as a warning to the public.

In the determination of time they have no intercalary moon, but twelve moons make one year. One day and night are divided into ten watches, which they signal by beat of a drum. As to the four seasons: they take the opening of the flowers as spring, and the falling of the leaves as autumn.

On the day of the New Year holiday the king takes the gall of living persons, mixes it with water, and bathes in it; the chiefs of every locality collect this gall and offer it to him as a ceremonial presentation of tribute.

When the king of the country has reigned for thirty years, he abdicates and becomes a priest, directing his brothers, sons, and nephews to administer the affairs of the country. The king goes into the depths of the mountains, and fasts and does penance, or else he merely eats a vegetarian diet. He lives alone for one year. He takes an oath by Heaven and says "When formerly I was the king, if I transgressed while on the throne, I wish wolves or tigers to devour me, or sickness to destroy me." If, after the completion of one whole year, he is not dead, he ascends the throne once more and administers the affairs of the country again. The people of the country acclaim him, saying "His-li Ma-ha-la-cha," this is the most venerable and most holy designation.

The so-called "corpse-head barbarian" is really a woman belonging to a human family, her only peculiarity being that her eyes have no pupils; at night, when she is sleeping, her head flies away and eats the tapering faeces of human infants; this infant, affected by the evil influence which invades its abdomen, inevitably dies; and the flying head returns and unites with its body, just as it was before. If people know of this and wait till the moment when the head flies away, and then remove the body to another place, the returning head cannot unite with the body, and then the woman dies. If the existence of such a woman in a household is not reported to the authorities, in addition to the killer the whole family become parties to an offence.

Again, there is a large pool connected with the sea, called "the crocodile pool"; if in litigation between persons there is a matter which is difficult to elucidate and the officials cannot reach a decision, they make the two litigants ride on water-buffaloes and cross through this pool; the crocodiles come out and devour the man whose cause is unrighteous; but the man whose cause is righteous is not devoured, even if he crosses ten times; this is most remarkable.

In all the mountains beside the sea there are wild water-buffaloes, very fierce; originally they were domestic plough-oxen which ran away into the mountains; there they lived and grew up by themselves, and in the course of long years they developed into herds; but if they see a strange man wearing blue clothes, they will certainly pursue him and gore him to death; they are most vicious.

The foreigners are very particular about their heads; and if anyone touches them on the head, they feel the same hatred against him as we in the Central Country feel against a murderer.

In their trading transactions they currently use pale gold which is seventy per cent pure, or else they use silver.

They very much like the dishes, bowls, and other kinds of blue porcelain articles, the hemp-silk, silk-gauze, beads, and other such things from the Central Country, and so they bring their pale gold and give it in exchange. They constantly bring rhinoceros' horns, elephants' teeth, *ch'ieh-lan* incense, and other such things, and present them as tribute to the Central Country.

The Country of Ku-Li [Calicut]

This is the great country of the Western Ocean.

Setting sail from the anchorage in the country of Ko-chih, you travel north-west, and arrive here after three days. The country lies beside the sea. Traveling east from the mountains for five hundred, or seven hundred, *li*, you make a long journey through to the country of K'an-pa-li. On the west [the country of Ku-li] abuts on the great sea; on the south it joins the boundary of the country of Ko-chih; and on the north side it adjoins the territory of the country of Hen-nu-erh.

"The great country of the Western Ocean" is precisely this country.

In the fifth year of the Yung-lo [period] the court ordered the principal envoy the grand eunuch Cheng Ho and others to deliver an imperial mandate to the king of this country and to bestow on him a patent conferring a title of

honour, and the grant of a silver seal, also to promote all the chiefs and award them hats and girdles of various grades.

So Cheng Ho went there in command of a large fleet of treasure-ships, and he erected a table with a pavilion over it and set up a stone which said "Though the journey from this country to the Central Country is more than a hundred thousand *li*, yet the people are very similar, happy and prosperous, with identical customs. We have here engraved a stone, a perpetual declaration for ten thousand ages."

The king of the country is a Nan-k'un man [Brahman or Kshatriya?]; he is a firm believer in the Buddhist religion [N.B., Ma Huan's mistake; the king was a Hindu]; and he venerates the elephant and the ox.

The population of the country includes five classes, the Muslim people, the Nan-k'un people, the Che-ti people, the Ko-ling people, and the Mu-kua people.

The king of the country and the people of the country all refrain from eating the flesh of the ox. The great chiefs are Muslim people; and they all refrain from eating the flesh of the pig. Formerly there was a king who made a sworn compact with the Muslim people, saying "You do not eat the ox; I do not eat the pig; we will reciprocally respect the taboo"; and this compact has been honoured right down to the present day.

The king has cast an image of a Buddha in brass; it is named Nai-na-erh; he has erected a temple of Buddha and has cast tiles of brass and covered the dais of Buddha with them; and beside the dais a well has been dug. Every day at dawn the king goes to the well, draws water, and washes the image of Buddha; after worshipping, he orders men to collect the pure dung of yellow oxen; this is stirred with water in a brass basin until it is like paste; then it is smeared all over the surface of the ground and walls inside the temple. Moreover, he has given orders that the chiefs and wealthy personages shall also smear and scour themselves with ox-dung every morning.

He also takes ox-dung, burns it till it is reduced to a white ash, and grinds it to a fine powder; using a fair cloth as a small bag, he fills it with the ash, and regularly carried it on his person. Every day at dawn, after he has finished washing his face, he takes the ox-dung ash, stirs it up with water, and smears it on his forehead and between his two thighs—thrice in each place. This denotes his sincerity in venerating Buddha and in venerating the ox.

There is a traditional story that in olden times there was a holy man named Mou-hsieh [Moses], who established a religious cult; the people knew that he was a true man of Heaven, and all men revered and followed him. Later the

holy man went away with others to another place, and ordered his younger brother named Sa-mo-li [the Samaritan] to govern and teach the people.

But his younger brother the holy man returned; he saw that the multitude, misled by his younger brother Sa-mo-li, were corrupting the holy way; thereupon he destroyed the ox and wished to punish his younger brother; and his younger brother mounted a large elephant and vanished.

Afterwards, the people thought of him and hoped anxiously for his return. Moreover, if it was the beginning of the moon, they would say "In the middle of the moon he will certainly come," and when the middle of the moon arrived, they would say once more "At the end of the moon he will certainly come"; right down to the present day they have never ceased to hope for his return.

This is the reason why the Nan-k'un people venerate the elephant and the ox.

The king has two great chiefs who administer the affairs of the country; both are Muslims.

The majority of the people in the country all profess the Muslim religion. There are twenty or thirty temples of worship, and once in seven days they go to worship. When the day arrives, the whole family fast and bathe, and attend to nothing else. In the *ssu* [9 to 11 A.M.] and *wu* [11 A.M. to 1 P.M.] periods, the menfolk, old and young, go to the temple to worship. When the *wei* [1 to 3 P.M.] period arrives, they disperse and return home; thereupon they carry on with their trading, and transact their household affairs.

The people are very honest and trustworthy. Their appearance is smart, fine, and distinguished.

Their two great chiefs received promotion and awards from the court of the Central Country.

If a treasure-ship goes there, it is left entirely to the two men to superintend the buying and selling; the king sends a chief and a Che-ti Wei-no-chi [chetty broker?] to examine the account books in the official bureau; a broker comes and joins them; and a high officer who commands the ships discusses the choice of a certain date for fixing prices. When the day arrives, they first of all take the silk embroideries and the open-work silks, and other such goods which have been brought there, and discuss the price of them one by one; and when the price has been fixed, they write out an agreement stating the amount of the price; this agreement is retained by these persons.

The chief and the Che-ti, with his excellency the eunuch, all join hands together, and the broker then says, "In such and such a moon on such and such a day, we have all joined hands and sealed our agreement with a hand-clasp; whether the price be dear or cheap, we will never repudiate it or change it."

After that, the Che-ti and the men of wealth then come bringing precious stones, pearls, corals, and other such things, so that they may be examined and the price discussed; this cannot be settled in a day; if done quickly, it takes one moon; if done slowly, it takes two or three moons.

Once the money-price has been fixed after examination and discussion, if a pearl or other such article is purchased, the price which must be paid for it is calculated by the chief and the Wei-no-chi who carried out the original transaction; and as to the quantity of the hemp-silk or other such article which must be given in exchange for it, goods are given in exchange according to the price fixed by the original hand-clasp—there is not the slightest deviation.

In their method of calculation, they do not use a calculating-plate abacus; for calculating, they use only the two hands and two feet and twenty digits on them; and they do not make the slightest mistake; this is very extraordinary.

The king uses gold of sixty per cent purity to cast a coin for current use; it is named a *pa-nan*; the diameter of the face of each coin is three *fen* eight *li* in terms of our official *ts'un*; it has lines characters on the face and on the reverse; and it weighs one *fen* on our official steelyard. He also makes a coin of silver; it is named a *ta-erh*; each coin weighs about three *li*; and this coin is used for petty transactions.

In their system of weights, each one *ch'ien* on their foreign steelyard equals eight *fen* on our official steelyard; and each one *liang* on their foreign steelyard, being calculated at sixteen *ch'ien*, equals one *liang* two *ch'ien* eight *fen* on our official steelyard. On their foreign steelyard twenty *liang* make one *chin*, equal to one *chin* nine *liang* six *ch'ien* on our official steelyard. Their foreign weight is names a *fan-la-shih*.

The fulcrum of their steelyard is fixed at the end of the beam, and the weight is moved along to the middle of the beam; when the beam is raised to the level, that is the zero position; when you weigh a thing, you move the weight forward; and according as the thing is light or heavy, so you move the weight forward or backward. You can weigh only ten *chin*, which is equivalent to sixteen *chin* on our official steelyard.

In weighing such things as aromatic goods, two hundred *chin* on their foreign steelyard make one *po-ho*, which is equivalent to three hundred and twenty *chin* on our official steelyard. If they weigh pepper, two hundred and fifty chin make one *po-ho*, which is equivalent to four hundred *chin* on our official steelyard.

Whenever they weigh goods, large and small alike, they mostly use a pair of scales for testing comparative weights. As to their system of measurement: the authorities make a brass casting, which constitutes a *sheng*, for current use; the foreign name for it *tang-chia-li*; and each *sheng* equals one *sheng* six *ko* in terms of our official *sheng*. "Western Ocean" cloth, named *ch'e li* cloth in this country, comes from the neighboring districts of K'an-pa-í and other such places; each roll is four *ch'ih* five *ts'un* broad, and two *chang* five *ch'ih* long; and it is sold for eight or ten of their local gold coins.

The people of the country also take the silk of the silk-worm, soften it by boiling, dye it all colors, and weave it into kerchiefs with decorative stripes at intervals; the breadth is four or five *ch'ih*, and the length one *chang* two or three *ch'ih*; and each length is sold for one hundred gold coins.

As to the pepper: the inhabitants of the mountainous countryside have established gardens, and it is extensively cultivated. When the period of the tenth moon arrives, the pepper ripens; and it is collected, dried in the sun, and sold. Of course, big pepper-collectors come and collect it, and take it up to the official storehouse to be stored; if there is a buyer, an official gives permission for the sale; the duty is calculated according to the amount of the purchase price and is paid in to the authorities. Each one *po-ho* of pepper is sold for two hundred gold coins.

The Che-ti mostly purchase all kinds of precious stones and pearls, and they manufacture coral beads and other such things.

Foreign ships from every place come there; and the king of the country also sends a chief and a writer and others to watch the sales; thereupon they collect the duty and pay it to the authorities.

The wealthy people mostly cultivate coconut trees—sometimes a thousand trees, sometimes two thousand or three thousand—;this constitutes their property.

The coconut has ten different uses. The young tree has a syrup, very sweet, and good to drink; and it can be made into wine by fermentation. The old coconut has flesh, from which they express oil, and make sugar, and make a foodstuff for eating. From the fiber which envelops the outside of the nut they make ropes for ship-building. The shell of the coconut makes bowls and makes cups; it is also good for burning to ash for the delicate operation of inlaying gold or silver. The trees are good for building houses, and the leaves are good for roofing houses.

For vegetables they have mustard plants, green ginger, turnips, caraway seeds, onions, garlic, bottle-gourds, egg-plants, cucumbers, and gourd-melons—

all these they have in all the four seasons of the year. They also have a kind of small gourd which is as large as one's finger, about two *ts'un* long, and tastes like a green cucumber. Their onions have a purple skin; they resemble garlic; they have a large head and small leaves; and they are sold by the *chin* weight.

The *mu-pieh-tzu* tree is more than ten *chang* high; it forms a fruit which resembles a green persimmon and contains thirty or forty seeds; it falls of its own accord when ripe; and the bats, as large as hawks, all hang upside down and rest on this tree.

They have both read and white rice, but barley and wheat are both absent; and their wheat-flour all comes from other places as merchandise for sale here.

Fowls and ducks exist in profusion, but there are no geese. Their goats have tall legs and an ashen hue; they resemble donkey-foals. The water-buffaloes are not very large. Some of the yellow oxen weigh three or four hundred *chin*; the people do not eat their flesh; but consume only the milk and cream. The people never eat rice without butter. Their oxen are cared for until they are old; and when they die, they are buried. The price of all kinds of sea-fish is very cheap. Deer and hares from up in the mountains are also for sale.

Many of the people rear peafowl. As to their other birds: they have crows, green hawks, egrets, and swallows; but of other kinds of birds besides these they have not a single one, great or small. The people of the country can also play and sing; they use the shell of a calabash to make a musical instrument, and copper wires to make the strings; and they play this instrument to accompany the singing of their foreign songs; the melodies are worth hearing.

As to the popular customs and marriage- and funeral-rites, the So-li people and the Muslim people each follow the ritual forms of their own class, and these are different.

The king's throne does not descend to his son, but descends to his sister's son; descent is to the sister's son because they consider that the offspring of the woman's body alone constitutes the legal family. If the king has no elder or younger sister, the throne is yielded up to some man of merit. Such is the succession from one generation to another.

The king's laws do not include the punishment of flogging with the bamboo. If the offence is slight, they cut off a hand or sever a foot; if it is serious, they impose a money-fine or put the offender to death; and if it is very heinous, they confiscate his property and exterminate his family. A person who offends against the law is taken under arrest to an official, whereupon he accepts his punishment.

If there is perhaps something unjust about the circumstances and he does not admit the sentence, then he is taken before the king or before a great chief; there they set up an iron cooking-pot, fill it with four or five *chin* of oil and cook it to the boil; first they throw in some tree-leaves to test whether they make a crackling noise; then they make the man take two fingers of his right hand and scald them in the oil for a short time; he waits till they are burnt and then takes them out; they are wrapped in a cloth on which a seal is affixed; and he is kept in prison at the office.

Two or three days later, before the assembled crowd, they break open the seal and examine him; if the hand has a burst abscess, then there is nothing unjust about the matter and a punishment is imposed; but if the hand is undamaged, just as it had been before, then he is released.

The chief and other men, with drums and music, ceremonially escort this man back to his family; all his relations, neighbors, and friends give him presents and there are mutual congratulations; and they drink wine and play music by way of mutual felicitation. This is a very extraordinary matter.

On the day when the envoy returned, the king of the country wished to send tribute; so he took fifty *liang* of fine red gold and ordered the foreign craftsmen to draw it out into gold threads as fine as hair; these were strung together to form a ribbon, which was made into a jeweled girdle with incrustations of all kinds of precious stones and large pearls; and the king sent a chief, Nai-peng, to present it as tribute to the Central Country.

The Country of the Heavenly Square [Mecca]

This country is the country of Mo-ch'ieh. Setting sail from the country of Ku-li [Calicut], you proceed towards the south-west—the point *shen* on the compass; the ship travels for three moons, and then reaches the jetty of this country. The foreign name for it is Chih-ta [Jidda]; and there is a great chief who controls it. From Chih-ta you go west, and after traveling for one day you reach the city where the king resides; it is named the capital city of Mo-ch'ieh.

They profess the Muslim religion. A holy man first expounded and spread the doctrine of his teaching in this country, and right down to the present day the people of the country all observe the regulations of the doctrine in their actions, not daring to commit the slightest transgression.

The people of this country are stalwart and fine-looking, and their limbs and faces are of a very dark purple color.

The menfolk bind up their heads; they wear long garments; on their feet they put leather shoes. The women all wear a covering over their heads, and you cannot see their faces.

The speak the A-la-pi [Arabic] language. The law of the country prohibits wine-drinking. The customs of the people are pacific and admirable. There are no poverty-stricken families. They all observe the precepts of their religion, and law-breakers are few. It is in truth a most happy country.

As to the marriage- and funeral-rites: they all conduct themselves in accordance with the regulations of their religions.

If you travel on from here for a journey of more than half a day, you reach the Heavenly Hall mosque; the foreign name for this Hall is K'ai-a-pai.

All round it on the outside is a wall; this wall has four hundred and sixty-six openings; on both sides of the openings are pillars all made of white jade-stone; of these pillars there are altogether four hundred and sixty-seven—along the front ninety-nine, along the back one hundred and one, along the left-hand side one hundred and thirty-two, and along the right-hand side one hundred and thirty-five.

This Hall is built with layers of five colored stones; in shape it is square and flat-topped. Inside, there are pillars formed of five great beams of sinking incense wood, and a shelf made of yellow gold. Throughout the interior of the Hall, the walls are all formed of clay mixed with rosewater and ambergris, exhaling a perpetual fragrance. Over the Hall is a covering of black hemp-silk. They keep two black lions to guard the door.

Every year on the tenth day of the twelfth moon all the foreign Muslims—in extreme cases making a long journey of one or two years—come to worship inside the Hall. Everyone cuts off a piece of the hemp-silk covering as a memento before he goes away. When it has been completely cut away, the king covers over the Hall again with another covering woven in advance; this happens again and again, year after year, without intermission.

On the left of the Hall is the burial-place of Ssu-ma-i, a holy man; his tomb is all made with green *sa-pu-ni* gem-stones; the length is one *chang* or two *ch'ih*, the height three *ch'ih*, and the breadth five *ch'ih*; the wall which surrounds the tomb is built with layers of purple topaz, and is more than five *ch'ih* high.

Inside the wall of the mosque, at the four corners, are built four towers; at every service of worship they ascend these towers, to call the company, and chant the ceremonial. On both sides, left and right, are the halls where all the patriarchs have preached the doctrine; these, too, are built with layers of stone, and are decorated most beautifully.

As to the climate of this place: during all the four seasons it is always hot, like summer, and there is no rain, lightning, frost, or snow. At night the dew is very heavy; plants and trees all depend on the dew-water for nourishment; and if at night you put out an empty bowl to receive it until day-break, the dew-water will be three *fen* [0.3 inches deep] in the bowl.

As to the products of the land: rice and grain are scarce; [and] they all cultivate such things as unhusked rice, wheat, black millet, gourds, and vegetables. They also have water-melons and sweet melons; and in some cases it takes two men to carry each single fruit. Then again they have a kind of tree with twisted flowers, like the large mulberry-tree of the Central Country; it is one or two *chang* approximately ten to twenty feet in height; the flowers blossom twice a year; and it lives to a great age without withering. For fruits, they have turnips, Persian dates, pomegranates, apples, large pears, and peaches, some of which weigh four or five *chin* [approximately five to six pounds].

Their camels, horses, donkeys, mules, oxen, goats, cats, dogs, fowls, geese, ducks, and pigeons are also abundant. Some of the fowls and duck weigh over ten *chin* [approximately 13 pounds].

The land produces rose-water, *an-pa-erh* [ambergris] incense, *ch'i-lin* [giraffe], lions, the "camel-fowl" [ostrich], the antelope, the "fly-o'er-the-grass" [lynx], all kinds of precious stones, pearls, corals, amber, and other such things.

The king uses gold to cast a coin named a *t'ang-chia*, which is in current use; each has a diameter of seven *fen* [approximately .8 inches], and weighs one *ch'ien* [approximately 3.73 grams] on our official steelyard; compared with the gold of the Central Country it is twenty per cent purer.

If you go west again and travel for one day, you reach a city named Mo-ti-na [Medina]; the tomb of their holy man Ma-ha-ma [Muhammad] is situated exactly in the city; and right down to the present day a bright light rises day and night from the top of the grave and penetrates into the clouds. Behind the grave is a well, a spring of pure and sweet water, named A-pi San-san; men who go to foreign parts take this water and store it at the sides of their ships; if they meet with a typhoon at sea, they take this water and scatter it; and the wind and waves are lulled.

In the fifth year of the Hsüan-te [period: 1430] an order was respectfully received from our imperial court that the principal envoy the grand eunuch Cheng Ho and others should go to all the foreign countries to read out the imperial commands and to bestow rewards.

When a division of the fleet reached the country of Ku-li, the grand eunuch Hung [probably Hung Pao] saw that this country was sending men to travel there; whereupon he selected an interpreter and others, seven men in all, and sent them with a load of musk, porcelain articles, and other such things; and they joined a ship of this country and went there. It took them one year to go and return.

They bought all kinds of unusual commodities, and rare valuables, *ch'i-lin*, lions, "lion-fowls," and other such things; in addition they painted an accurate representation of the "Heavenly Hall" and they returned to the capital [Beijing].

The king of the country of Mo-ch'ieh also sent envoys who brought some local articles, accompanied the seven men—the interpreter and others—who had originally gone there, and presented the articles to the court.

Document 8

Narrative of a Journey to Hindustan (1442–1444)

By 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Samarqandī, "Narrative of a Journey to Hindustan," in *India in the Fifteenth Century*, trans. R. H. Major (London: Hakluyt Society, 1857)

In June 1442, the Timurid leader Shahrukh sent 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Samarqandī to be an ambassador to Vijayanagara. Born in Herat in 1413, he left a detailed record of his journey to the Asian subcontinent and his return to Herat in 1445. His account shared similarities with European accounts of India. As the historian Joan-Pau Rubiés has noted, "While the Europeans established comparisons with Paris or Milan, 'Abd al-Razzāq referred to Herat, the Khorasani capital." Like European observers, Abdul-Razzaq took careful note of the structure of politics, the local economy, and the army's use of elephants. Much of the narrative focuses on the politics of the court at Vijayanagara, a reflection of the ambassador's interests in affairs at home.[2]

In 1462, 'Abd al-Razzāq was elected sheikh of the monastery of Mirza Shahrukh. He died there two decades later, having left behind a travel account that included details of his journey from Herat to Calicut, Magalore, Beloor, and Vijayanagara, and back home again. That return journey did not go

2. Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India through European Eyes, 1250–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 23–25.

road. The animal, who dreaded the contrivances of this man (like a gazelle which has escaped from the net of the hunter), took up with his trunk a block of wood like a beam, placed it before him at short distances, on the surface of the ground, as he proceeded; and thus testing the road, he reached the watering place. The keepers of the elephant had lost all hope of retaking him, and yet the king had a very strong desire to gain possession of this animal again. One of the keepers hid himself in the branches of a tree under which the elephant had to pass. At the moment when the elephant came up, this man threw himself upon the back of the animal, who still had about his body and chest one of the thick cords with which the elephants are bound. This cord he laid strong hold of. Do what the elephant would to shake himself and twist about, and to strike blows with his trunk both right and left, he could not get free. He rolled himself on his side, but every time he did so the man leapt cleverly to the opposite side, and at the same time gave him some heavy blows upon his head. At length the animal, worn out, gave up the contest, and surrendered his body to the chains and his neck to the fetters. The keeper led the elephant into the presence of the king, who rewarded him with a noble generosity.

Even the sovereigns of Hindustan take part in hunting the elephant. They remain a whole month, or even more, in the desert or in the jungles, and when they have taken any of these animals they are very proud of it. Sometimes they cause criminals to be cast under the feet of an elephant, that the animal may crush them to pieces with his knees, his trunk, and his tusks. The merchants who trade in elephants go to seek them in the island of Ceylon, and export them to different countries, where they sell them according to the tariff, which varies by the *gaz*.

Document 9

Magellan's Voyage

By Antonio Pigafetta, *Magellan's Voyage*, trans. R. A. Skelton (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1969), 97–101, 136–141

On September 20, 1519, Ferdinand Magalhães (Magellan; 1480?–1521) led five ships out of the Portuguese port at San Lucar de Barrameda near Seville on a journey across the Atlantic toward the Spice Islands, territory that the Portuguese already knew from earlier voyages. Magellan passed near the Brazilian region of Pernambuco in late November of that year on his way around the southern tip of South America and through the straits that now bear his name. He reached the Philippines in March 1521. Three years after the journey began, the Victoria, *the only surviving vessel, sailed into the port where the expedition had begun. Among the eighteen Europeans on board was Antonio Pigafetta (1491?–1534?), who had kept careful notes of the journey. Magellan himself did not survive; he had been killed in a skirmish in the Philippines on April 27, 1521. Residents of the island of Mattan "rushed upon him with lances of iron and of bamboo," Pigafetta wrote, "and with these javelins, so that they slew our mirror, our light, our comfort, and our true guide." Though he never made it back to Europe, Magellan still got credit for arranging perhaps the most important journey in the sixteenth century—the first circumnavigation of the earth. The event, the English translator of travel narratives Richard Eden wrote a generation later, "is one of the greatest and moste marveylous thynges that hath bynne knowen to owre tyme."*[6]

Soon after his return Pigafetta began to prepare the report of the journey. He had gone on the expedition, he wrote in the prologue, after "reading of divers books and from the report of many clerks and learned men" about "the great terrible things of the Ocean Sea." The journey would be difficult, he knew, but he wanted it told that he had "made the voyage and saw with my eyes the things hereafter written, and I might win a famous name with posterity." There are four surviving manuscripts, including a beautifully rendered work in the Beinecke Library at Yale University. Unlike some of the other travel accounts of the age, the first printed versions came out more slowly, appearing in French, Italian, and English between 1526 and 1555.[7]

Pigafetta's report was somewhat vague on details of exact locations, but the survival of several derroteros *(pilots' logs) have made it possible for modern scholars to identify the locales where the ships landed. This reconstruction is particularly important for the islands of the South-West Pacific, many of which blended together in Pigafetta's telling. In the passages here, Pigafetta offers details about what he saw in the Spice Islands. By the time he made these observations, Magellan was already dead.*

6. Richard Eden, *The Decades of the newe worlde or west India* (London, 1555), 214v.
7. For details about the manuscripts and the location of places mentioned in the text, see the superb scholarly apparatus in Antonio Pigafetta, *Magellan's Voyage: A Narrative Account of the First Circumnavigation*, trans. R. A. Skelton (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press 1969).

Chapter 30: Arrival at Pulaoan

Leaving that place on a course between west and southwest, we came to an island, not very large and almost uninhabited, whose people are Moors, and they were banished from an island called Burne [Borneo]. They go naked like the others. They have bows with quivers at their side full of arrows poisoned with herbs. They have daggers with hafts enriched with gold and precious stones, lances, bucklers. And they called us holy bodies. In that island little food is found, but plenty of large trees. And it is in latitude seven and a half degrees toward the Arctic Pole, and distant from Chippit forty-three leagues. And it is called Caghaian [Cayagan Island]

About twenty-five leagues from that island, between west and northwest, we discovered a large island, where grow rice, ginger, swine, goats, poultry, figs half a cubit long and as thick as the arm, which are good, and some others much smaller, which are better than all the others. There are also coconuts, sweet potato, sugarcanes, roots like turnips, and rice cooked under the fire in bamboos or wood, which lasts longer than that cooked in pots. We could well call that land the Land of Promise, because before finding it we suffered very great hunger, so that many times we were ready perforce to abandon our ships and go ashore that we might not starve to death. The king of that island made peace with us, making a small cut in his chest with one of our knives, and with his finger marked with blood his tongue and his brow as a sign of truest peace. And we did likewise. That island is in latitude toward the Arctic Pole nine and a third degrees, and in longitude from the line of demarcation one hundred and sixty and a third. And it is named Pulaoan [Palawan].

Chapter 31: On Pulaoan

The people of Pulaoan go naked like the others, and they all work their fields. They have bows with wooden and tipped arrows longer than a palm, some having long and sharp fishbones poisoned with venomous herbs, and others tipped with poisoned points of bamboo. They have at the head a piece of soft wood fixed instead of feathers. To the end of their bows they fasten a piece of iron like a mace, with which they fight after shooting all their arrows. They prize brass rings and chains, knives, and even more copper wire for binding their fishhooks. They have very large domestic cocks, which they do not eat for a certain veneration they have for them. Sometimes they make them joust and fight against one another, and each man takes a wager on his own; then he whose cock is victorious takes the other man's cock and wager. They have wine distilled from rice, stronger and better than that of the palm.

Ten leagues thence to the southwest, we came to an island, and as we coasted it, it seemed to me that we went upward. And after we entered the port, the holy body appeared to us in very dark weather. And from the beginning of that island to the port are fifty leagues. The following day, the ninth of July, the king of that island sent us a very fair ship, having the prow and the poop worked in gold, and at the prow was a white and blue banner with peacock's feathers at the point. Some men played instruments like drums. And with this ship came to *Almadies*, which are their fishing boats. And this ship was called *Prao*, which is like a foist. Then eight old men, among the chief of them, entered the ships, and seated themselves on a carpet in the stern, and they presented to us a painted wooden jar full of betel and areca, which are the fruits that they always chew, with orange flowers. The said jar was covered with a cloth of yellow silk. Also they gave us two cages full of poultry, a pair of goats, three jars full of distilled rice wine, and some bundles of sugarcane. And they did likewise for the other ship. Then they embraced us, and we took leave. The said rice is clear as water, but so strong that some of our men became intoxicated, and they call it *Arach*.

Six days later, the king sent again three ships in great pomp, playing instruments and tambourines, and they came about our ships, and saluted us with their cloth caps, which cover only the top of their head. And we greeted them with our artillery without shot. Then they gave us a present of divers viands of rice, some wrapped in leaves and made into fairly long pieces, others like sugar loaves, and others made after the manner of tarts with eggs and honey. And they told us that the king was content that we should take water and wood, and should do as we wished. Hearing that, seven of us went aboard the ship and took a present to the king, which was a green velvet robe after the Turkish fashion, a chair of violet velvet, five cubits of red cloth, a red cap, a covered cup, three quires of paper, and a gilt writing case. We gave to the queen three cubits of yellow cloth, a pair of silver shoes, and a silver needle case full of needles. To the governor, three cubits of red cloth, a cap, and a gilt cup. To the herald who had come to the ship we gave a robe of red and green cloth after the Turkish fashion, a cap, and a quire of paper. And to the seven other chief men, to one a piece of cloth, to others caps, and to each a quire of paper. Then forthwith we departed.

When we arrived at the city, we remained about two hours in the ship un-

til two elephants covered with silk came, and twelve men, each with a porcelain jar covered with silk, to carry our gifts. Then we mounted the elephants, and the twelve men marched ahead with the jars and gifts. And so we went to the governor's house, where we were given a supper of divers viands, and at night we slept on cotton mattresses. Next day we remained in the house until noon. Then we went to the king's palace on the said elephants, with the gifts ahead, as on the previous day.

Between the house and the king's palace all the streets were full of people with swords, spears, and targets, for the king had willed it thus. And we entered the palace courtyard on the elephants. Then we mounted by steps, accompanied by the governor and other notables. And we entered a large hall full of barons and lords, where we were seated on a carpet with the gifts and vessels with us. At the head and end of this hall was another one, higher but not so large, and all hung with silk drapery, and from it two windows with crimson curtains opened, by which light entered the hall. Three hundred naked men were standing there, with swords and sharp stakes posed at their thigh to guard the king. And at the end of this hall was a window, and when a crimson curtain was drawn, we perceived within the king seated at a table, with one of his little sons, and they were chewing betel. Behind him were only many ladies. Then one of the chief men told us that we could not speak to the king, but that if we desired anything we should tell him, and he would tell a more notable man, who would communicate it to one of the governor's brothers, who was in the smaller hall, and he would speak through a speaking tube by a hole in the wall to the one who was inside with the king. And he instructed us that we were to make three obeisances to the king with hands clasped above our head, raising our feet one after the other, since we had to kiss them.

All this was done, after the manner of their royal obeisance. And we told him that we were servants of the King of Spain, who desired peace with him and required no more than to do trade. The king caused us to be told that, since the King of Spain was his friend, he was very willing to be his, and he ordered that we should be allowed to take water and wood and merchandise at our will. This done, we gave him presents, to which at each thing we made a little bow with his head. Then on his behalf were given to each of us cloths of crimson and gold and silk, which they put on our left shoulders. And they forthwith gave us a collation of cloves and cinnamon. Then the curtains were quickly drawn and the windows closed.

All the men in the palace had cloth of gold and of silk round their shameful parts, daggers with gold handles, adorned with pearls and precious stones, and many rings on their fingers. After this we returned on the elephants to the governor's house, whither seven men carried the king's gift ahead. And when we arrived there, they gave to each of us his gift, and they put it on our left shoulders, in return for which we gave each of them for their trouble a pair of knives.

While we were at the governor's house, nine men came from the king with as many very large wooden trays, and in each tray were ten or twelve porcelain plats filled with flesh of calf, capons, chickens, peacocks, and other animals, with fish. And we supped there on the ground (on a palm mat) from thirty-two kinds of meat, besides the fish and other things, and at each mouthful we drank from a porcelain cup as big as an egg the aforesaid distilled wine. We ate rice and other sweetmeats with golden spoons, after our fashion. Where we slept two nights, there were two torches of white wax burning in two rather tall silver candlesticks, and two large lamps filled with oil, each having four wicks, and two men were continually snuffing them. After that we went on the elephants to the seashore, where two of their boats were ready and took us to our ships.

That city [Brunei] is all built in salt water, except the king's house, and the houses of certain chief men. And it was twenty or twenty-five thousand hearths. All their houses are of wood, and built on great beams raised from the ground. And when the tide is high, the women go ashore in boats to sell and buy the things necessary for their food. In front of the king's houses is a thick wall of brick, with towers in the manner of a fortress, and in it were fifty-six large brass cannon, and six of iron. And in the two days that we were there they discharged many of them. That king is a Moor, and he is named Raia Siripada, and aged forty years. He was fat, and no one rules him except the ladies and daughters of the chief men. He never leaves his palace save when he goes hunting. And one cannot speak to him but through a speaking tube. He keeps two scribes who write down all his state and business on very thin tree bark. And they are called *Xiritoles*. . . .

Chapter 44: In the Sunda Islands

Departing from that island of Buru, on a course southwest by west over about eight degrees of longitude, we came to three islands close to one another, called Zolot, Nocemanor, and Galiau [Solor, Nobokemor Rus, Lomblen]. And as we sailed through the midst of them, a great storm assailed and struck

us, wherefore we made a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Guidance. And with the gale on our poop we anchored at a high island, but before reaching it we were in great travail for the very strong winds and currents of water which came down from their mountains. The men of this island are savage and bestial. They eat human flesh, and have no king. And they go naked, with that bark like the others; but when they go to war, they wear certain pieces of oxhide before, behind, and at the sides, decorated with small shells and swine's teeth, and with tails of goatskins fastened before and behind. They wear their hair high, with some pins of bamboo which pass through it from side to side, and so keep it high. They wear their beards wrapped in leaves and thrust into small bamboos, which is a thing ridiculous to see. And they are the ugliest people who are in those Indies. Their bows and arrows are of bamboo, and they have certain sacks of leaves of trees, in which they carry their food and drink. And when their women saw us, they came to meet us with their bows. But after we had given them some presents, we were immediately their friends. And we remained there fifteen days to refit our ships. In this island are poultry, goats, coconuts, and wax. There is found also long pepper, the tree of which is like ivy, which twists itself and clings like it to trees. But the leaves are like those of the mulberry, and they call it *Luli*. Round pepper grows like it, but in ears like Indian corn, from which it is shelled off; and they call it *Lada*. And in those countries the fields are all full of this pepper. There we took a man to guide us to some island where there would be provisions. The said island is in the latitude of eight and a half degrees toward the Antarctic Pole, and in the longitude of one hundred and sixty-nine and two-thirds degrees from the line of partition; and it is named Mallua [Alor].

Chapter 45: On Timor

Our old pilot of Molucca told us that nearby was an island named Aruchete, where the men and women are no taller than a cubit and have ears so large that of one they make their bed, and with the other they cover themselves. They are shaven and quite naked, and run swiftly, and have shrill and thin voices. They live in caves underground. They eat fish and a thing which grows between the barks of trees, which is white and round like a sugarplum and which they call *Ambulon*. We could not go thither by reason of the strong currents and many reefs which are there.

On Saturday the twenty-fifth of January, one thousand five hundred and twenty-two, we departed from the island of Mallua. And on the Sunday following we came to a large island [Timor] five leagues distant from the other, between south and southwest. And I went ashore alone to speak to the chief man of a town named Amabau, that he might give us provisions. He answered that he would give us oxen, pigs, and goats; but we could not agree together, because he desired, for an ox, too many things of which we had little. Wherefore, since hunger constrained us, we retained in our ships one of their principal men with a son of his, who was from another town called Balibo. And, fearing lest we kill them, they gave us six oxen, five goats, and two pigs, and to complete the number of ten pigs and ten goats they gave us an ox, for we had set them to this ransom. Then we sent them ashore very well pleased, for we gave them linen, cloths of silk and of cotton, knives, scissors, mirrors, and other things.

This lord of Amabau, to whom I spoke, had only women to serve him. They go all naked like the others, and wear in their ears little gold rings hanging from silk threads, and on their arms, up to the elbow, they have many bracelets of gold and of cotton. And the men go like the women, but that they have and wear on their neck certain gold rings as large and round as a trencher, and set in their hair bamboo combs garnished with gold. And some of them wear other gold ornaments. In this island, and nowhere else, is found white sandalwood, besides ginger, oxen, swine, goats, poultry, rice, figs, sugarcanes, oranges, lemons, wax, almonds, and other things, and parrots of divers sorts and colors.

On the other side of this island are four brothers, its kings. And where we were there are only towns, and some chiefs and lords of them. The names of the habitations of the four kings are: Oibich, Lichsana, Suai, and Cabanazza. Oibich is the largest town. In Cabanazza (as we were told) a quantity of gold is found in a mountain, and they purchase all their things with certain small gold pieces which they have. All the sandalwood and the wax which is traded by the people of Java and Malacca comes from this place, where we found a junk of Lozzon [Luzon] which has come to trade for sandalwood.

Document 15

The Letter of Columbus to Luis de Santángel, Announcing His Discovery (1493)

By Christopher Columbus, *The Letter of Columbus to Luis de Santángel, Announcing His Discovery*, trans. Albert Bushnell Hart and Edward Channing, 1892

No early modern travel account had the power of Christopher Columbus's first letter describing what he found after he embarked from Spain in 1492 on his journey to find a quicker route to East Asia. Though later reports, including others from Columbus (1451–1506), offered far more detail about the Americas, it was this account announcing the European discovery of the Western Hemisphere that had an impact probably greater than any other contemporary report of a journey across the Atlantic Ocean.

When Columbus set sail, he believed that he would have little trouble reaching Asia by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean. By his estimate, Japan was only 2,400 nautical miles from the Canary Islands. His estimate, based on his reading of ancient authorities, was wrong; the real distance was 10,600 miles. But the fact that he could not accurately estimate the size of the world or the breadth of the Atlantic turned out to be far less important than his accidental "discovery" of America.

Columbus claimed that he wrote the letter on February 15, while he was on his caravel near the Canary Islands, though he added a postscript once he had landed in Lisbon a month later. Perhaps the report's most shocking moment occurred in the first paragraph when Columbus announced to his royal sponsors Ferdinand and Isabella that he had claimed possession of the islands he found and at once began the process of renaming them. What followed from that moment of arrogance was the kind of material that can be found in other travel accounts. Specifically, Columbus described the people he encountered and the environment they inhabited. The place was remarkable: its trees reached into the sky; the weather was always pleasant; there were inviting commodities to be harvested. He was so confident of his possession that he matter-of-factly stated that he kidnapped some of the local inhabitants so that they could bear witness to his claims once he reached Spain. Though he felt some disdain for those he met since they were naked and thus (by European standards) primitive, he was pleased that he encountered no monsters, some-

thing he had expected given his understanding of the kinds of creatures that roamed lands along the margins of Europeans' imaginations. Still, news that there were islanders who were cannibals did not sit well with him, even if it confirmed one aspect of the inherited wisdom of antiquity.

After he set sail on his return to Europe, Columbus had an experience that was entirely common: he encountered a storm. The storm delayed him for two weeks, but when he landed in Lisbon he learned that he was not alone in experiencing the ferocity of the Atlantic. Other sailors in port told him that it had been the worst winter they had ever experienced and that many ships had sunk.

Within weeks of his arrival, the Barcelona printer Pedro Posa had produced a printed version of Columbus's letter. Almost immediately, printers across Europe rushed to put out versions of the letter. Twelve editions appeared in three languages within a year; one printer in Basel even included woodcuts providing images of the mariner's ships and the peoples he met. There is only one known copy of Posa's first edition.[1]

The quick distribution of Columbus's report around Europe suggests that printers knew there would be an audience for his news. There were many marvels to be found on the far side of the Atlantic, these European readers quickly learned. But getting there would remain difficult. Only the fortunate could expect to reap the rewards that Columbus's letter told them existed.

The translation here appeared in January 1892, one of the many efforts by Americans (and others) to honor the four hundredth anniversary of Columbus's first voyage. The text and extracts from Columbus's journals made up the contents of the first of a series of small pamphlets, each selling for 10 cents; other documents provided information about the Norse voyages to Vinland, John Cabot's 1497 journey, and selected state papers (such as extracts from the Treaty of Paris in 1783 that ended the American Revolution). Though scholarly efforts to mark the anniversary of the events of 1492 were less dramatic than the creation of the World's Fair in Chicago, Columbus remained a popular figure. One hundred years later the situation was almost entirely the opposite: those who analyzed Columbus on the quincentennial of his journey tended to vilify him, seeing in his actions the origins of environmental degradation and slavery in the Western Hemisphere.[2]

1. For its initial publishing history, see Mauricio Obregón, *The Columbus Papers: The Barcelona Letter of 1493, the Landfall Controversy, and the Indian Guides* (New York: Macmillan, 1991), 6–8.

Sir:

As I know you will be rejoiced at the glorious success that our Lord has given me in my voyage, I write this to tell you how in thirty-three days I sailed to the Indies with the fleet that the illustrious King and Queen, our Sovereigns, gave me, where I discovered a great many islands, inhabited by numberless people; and of all I have taken possession for their Highnesses by proclamation and display of the Royal Standard without opposition. To the first island I discovered I gave the name of San Salvador, in commemoration of His Divine Majesty, who has wonderfully granted all this. The Indians call it Guanaham. The second I named the Island of Santa Maria de Concepcion; the third, Fernandina; the fourth, Isabella; the fifth, Juana; and thus to each one I gave a new name. When I came to Juana, I followed the coast of that isle toward the west, and found it so extensive that I thought it might be the mainland, the province of Cathay; and as I found no towns nor villages on the sea-coast, except a few small settlements, where it was impossible to speak to the people, because they fled at once, I continued the said route, thinking I could not fail to see some great cities or towns; and finding at the end of many leagues that nothing new appeared, and that the coast led northward, contrary to my wish, because the winter had already set in, I decided to make for the south, and as the wind also was against my proceeding, I determined not to wait there longer, and turned back to a certain harbor whence I sent two men to find out whether there was any king or large city. They explored for three days, and found countless small communities and people, without number, but with no kind of government, so they returned.

I heard from other Indians I had already taken that this land was an island, and thus followed the eastern coast for one hundred and seven leagues, until I came to the end of it. From that point I saw another isle to the eastward, at eighteen leagues' distance, to which I gave the name of Hispaniola. I went

2. See, for example, Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Conquest of Paradise: Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1990), esp. 3–216. For a review of the literature of the quincentennial that contrasts modern treatments with earlier assessments, see Peter C. Mancall, "The Age of Discovery," in *The Challenge of American History*, ed. Louis Masur (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 26–53.

thither and followed its northern coast to the east, as I had done in Juana, one hundred and seventy-eight leagues extensive. It has many ports along the sea-coast excelling any in Christendom—and many fine, large, flowing rivers. The land there is elevated, with many mountains and peaks incomparably higher than in the center isle. They are most beautiful, of a thousand varied forms, accessible, and full of trees of endless varieties, so high that they seem to touch the sky, and I have been told that they never lose their foliage. I saw them as green and lovely as trees are in Spain in the month of May. Some of them were covered with blossoms, some with fruit, and some in other conditions, according to their kind. The nightingale and other small birds of a thousand kinds were singing in the month of November when I was there. There were palm trees of six or eight varieties, the graceful peculiarities of each one of them being worthy of admiration as are the other trees, fruits, and grasses. There are wonderful pine woods, and very extensive ranges of meadow land. There is honey, and there are many kinds of birds, and a great variety of fruits. Inland there are numerous mines of metals and innumerable people. Hispaniola is a marvel. Its hills and mountains, fine plains and open country, are rich and fertile for planting and for pasturage, and for building towns and villages. The seaports there are incredibly fine, as also the magnificent rivers, most of which bear gold. The trees, fruits, and grasses differ widely from those in Juana. There are many spices and vast mines of gold and other metals in this island. They have no iron, nor steel, nor weapons, nor are they fit for them, because although they are well-made men of commanding stature, they appear extraordinarily timid. The only arms they have are sticks of cane, cut when in seed, with a sharpened stick at the end, and they are afraid to use these. Often I have sent two of three men ashore to some town to converse with them, and the natives come out in great numbers, and as soon as they saw our men arrive, fled without a moment's delay although I protected them from all injury.

At every point where I landed and succeeded in talking to them, I gave them some of everything I had—cloth and many other things—without receiving anything in return, but they are a hopelessly timid people. It is true that since they have gained more confidence and are losing this fear, they are so unsuspicious and so generous with what they possess, that no one who had not seen it would believe it. They never refuse anything that is asked for. They even offer it themselves, and show so much love that they would give their very hearts. Whether it be anything of great or small value, worthless things being given to them, such as bits of broken bowls, pieces of glass, and old straps, although they were as much pleased to get them as if they were

the finest jewels in the world. One sailor was found to have got for a leathern strop, gold of the weight of two and a half castellanos, and others for even more worthless things much more; while for a new *blancas* they would give all they had, were it two or three castellanos or pure gold or an arroba or two of spun cotton. Even bits of the broken hoops of wine casks they accepted, and gave in return what they had, like fools, and it seemed wrong to me. I forbade it, and gave a thousand good and pretty things that I had to win their love, and to induce them to become Christians, and to love and serve their Highnesses and the whole Castilian nation, and help to get for us things they have in abundance, which are necessary to us. They have no religion, nor idolatry, except that they all believe power and goodness to be in heaven. They firmly believed that I, with my ships and men, came from heaven, and with this idea I have been received everywhere, since they lost fear of me. They are, however, far from being ignorant. They are most ingenious men, and navigate these seas in a wonderful way, and describe everything well, but they never before saw people wearing clothes, nor vessels like ours. Directly I reached the Indies in the first isle I discovered, I took by force some of the natives, that from them we might gain some information of what there was in these parts; and so it was that we immediately understood each other, either by words or signs. They are still with me and still believe that I come from heaven. They were the first to declare this wherever I went, and the others ran from house to house, and to the towns around, crying our, "Come! come! and see the men from heaven!" Then all, both men and women, as soon as they were reassured about us, came, both small and great, all bringing something to eat and to drink, which they presented with marvelous kindness. In these isles there are a great many canoes, something like rowing boats, of all sizes, and most of them are larger than an eighteen-oared galley. They are not so broad, as they are made of a single plank, but a galley could not keep up with them in rowing, because they go with incredible speed, and with these they row about among all these islands, which are innumerable, and carry on their commerce. I have seen some of these canoes with seventy and eighty men in them, and each had an oar. In all the islands I observed little difference in the appearance of the people, or in their habits and language, except that they understand each other, which is remarkable. Therefore I hope that their Highnesses will decide upon the conversion of these people to our holy faith, to which they seem much inclined. I have already stated how I sailed on hundred and seven leagues along the sea-coast of Juana, in a straight line from west to east. I can therefore assert that this island is larger than England and Scotland together, since beyond these one

hundred and seven leagues there remained at the west point two provinces where I did not go, one of which they call Avan, the home of men with tails. These provinces are computed to be fifty or sixty leagues in length, as far as can be gathered from the Indians with me, who are acquainted with all these islands. This other, Hispaniola, is larger in circumference than all Spain from Catalonia to Fuentarabia in Biscay, since upon one of its four sides I sailed one hundred and eighty-eight leagues from west to east. This is worth having, and must on no account be given up. I have taken possession of all these islands, for their Highnesses, and all may be more extensive than I know, or can say, and I hold them for their Highnesses, who can command them as absolutely as the kingdoms of Castile. In Hispaniola, in the most convenient place, most accessible for the gold mines and all commerce with the mainland on this side or with that of the great Khan, on the other, with which there would be great trade and profit, I have taken possession of a large town, which I have named the City of Navidad. I began fortifications there which should be completed by this time, and I have left in it men enough to hold it, with arms, artillery, and provisions for more than a year; and a boat with a master seaman skilled in the arts necessary to make others; I am so friendly with the king of that country that he was proud to call me his brother and hold me as such. Even should he change his mind and wish to quarrel with my men, neither he nor his subjects know what arms are, nor wear clothes, as I have said. They are the most timid people in the world, so that only the men remaining there could destroy the whole region, and run no risk if they know how to behave themselves properly. In all these islands, the men seem to be satisfied with one wife, except they allow as many as twenty to their chief or king. The women appear to me to work harder than the men, and so far as I can hear they have nothing of their own, for I think I perceived that what one had others shared, especially food. In the islands so far, I have found no monsters, as some expected, but, on the contrary, they are people of very handsome appearance. They are not black as in Guinea, though their hair is straight and coarse, as it does not grow where the sun's rays are too ardent. And in truth the sun has extreme power here, since it is within the twenty-six degrees of the equinoctial line. In these islands there are mountains where the cold this winter was very severe, but the people endure it from habit, and with the aid of the meat they eat with very hot spices.

As for monsters, I have found no trace of them except at the point in the second isle as one enters the Indies, which is inhabited by a people considered in all the isles as most ferocious, who eat human flesh. They possess many

canoes, with which they overrun all the isles of India, stealing and seizing all they can. They are not worse looking than the others, except that they wear their long hair like women, and use bows and arrows of the same cane, with a sharp stick at the end for want of iron, of which they have none. They are ferocious compared to these other races, who are extremely cowardly; but I only hear this from the others. They are said to make treaties of marriage with the women in the first isle to be met with coming from Spain to the Indies, where there are no men. These women have no feminine occupation, but use bows and arrows of cane like those before mentioned, and cover and arm themselves with plates of copper, of which they have a great quantity. Another island, I am told, is larger than Hispaniola, where the natives have no hair, and where there is countless gold; and from them all I bring Indians to testify to this. To speak, in conclusion, only of what has been done during this hurried voyage, their Highnesses will see that I can give them as much gold as they desire, if they will give me a little assistance, spices, cotton, as much as their Highnesses may command to be shipped, and mastic as much as their Highnesses choose to send for, which until now has only been found in Greece, in the isle of Chios, and the Signoria can get its own price for it; as much lign-aloe as they command to be shipped, and as many slaves as they choose to send for, all heathens. I think I have found rhubarb and cinnamon. Many other things of value will be discovered by the men I left behind me, as I stayed nowhere when the wind allowed me to pursue my voyage, except in the City of Navidad, which I left fortified and safe. Indeed, I might have accomplished much more, had the crews served me as they ought to have done. The eternal and almighty God, or our Lord, it is Who gives to all who walk in His way, victory over things apparently impossible, and in this case signally so, because although these lands had been imagined and talked of before they were seen, most men listened incredulously to what was thought to be but an idle tale. But our Redeemer has given victory to our most illustrious King and Queen, and to their kingdoms rendered famous by this glorious event, at which all Christendom should rejoice, celebrating it with great festivities and solemn Thanksgivings to the Holy Trinity, with fervent prayers for the high distinction that will accrue to them from turning so many peoples to our holy faith; and also from the temporal benefits that not only Spain but all Christian nations will obtain. Thus I record what has happened in a brief note written on board the *Caravel*, off the Canary Isles, on the 15th of February, 1493.

Since writing the above, being in the Sea of Castile, so much wind arose south southeast, that I was forced to lighten the vessels, to run into this port

of Lisbon today which was the most extraordinary thing in the world, from whence I resolved to write to their Highnesses. In all the Indies I always found the temperature like that of May. Where I went in thirty-three days I returned in twenty-eight, except that these gales have detained me fourteen days, knocking about in this sea. Here all seamen say that there has never been so rough a winter, nor so many vessels lost. Done the 14th day of March.

Document 16

Mondus Novus (1504)

By Amerigo Vespucci, *Mondus Novus*, trans. G. Northrup (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1916)

The experiences of Amerigo Vespucci (1451–1512) did not mirror those of Columbus. Columbus's initial report has barely a critical word to offer about his journey and is bathed instead in triumphal rhetoric. Vespucci's report, by contrast, is more down to earth. Vespucci first sailed across the Atlantic to Brazil in 1499, following the eastern coast of South America northward and passing the mouths of the Amazon and the Orinoco. He returned in 1501, and wrote the report here to describe what he saw on that journey. Near the beginning he complained about the weather: it rained forty-four of the sixty-seven days he was at sea, with storms full of lightning and thunder and conditions so bleak and "so dark that never did we see sun by day or fair sky by night." Still, despite the problems, he knew the significance of the journey: he had sailed to what "we may rightly call a new world" because no one in antiquity had ever imagined that such a place could exist.

Vespucci filled his account with details about the people he met in Brazil, who were naked from the day of their birth to the day of their death. He found the women, as he put it, "tolerably beautiful and cleanly," and he was impressed too at the "well formed and proportioned" bodies of everyone he encountered. That praise gave way to condemnation when he described the ways that these native Brazilians pierced their bodies, making them appear more monstrous than human. Still, even as he condemned the way they abused their own bodies, Vespucci came to believe (as did Columbus) that the terrestrial paradise must be somewhere close by.

The report that follows takes the form of a letter from Vespucci to his patron Lorenzo Pietro di Medici, one of the famed Florentine bankers of that family.

He wrote it after his third voyage but viewed it as a work in progress, a preliminary report while he waited for support for yet another journey. It was not Vespucci's only observation on the Western Hemisphere, and he believed, as he mentions here, that this report was destined to reside with others in his own cabinet, perhaps a place where he kept other physical evidence of the world that existed far from Italy. But the letter and his other descriptions of the "novo mondo retrovati" (new found world) did not remain private for long. After an initial printing in French in 1503, publishers across Europe issued versions of this report. In 1504 it was printed in Venice, Augsburg, and Rome. The next year, publishers in Nuremberg, Strasburg, Augsburg, Rostock, Florence, Cologne, Antwerp, Leipzig, Basel, Munich, and Pilsen (where an abbreviated version was published in Czech) issued editions. Printers published versions almost every year until 1510 (including ten separate editions in 1506), and by then it was available in the common languages of Latin, Italian, German, and French. Then the interest in Vespucci's views, or at least new printings of his work, dissipated. Only in 1550, when Giovanni Battista Ramusio included the account in his Navigationi e Viaggi, *did it become available again, though that printing led to a new French translation in 1556. Eventually extracts from Vespucci appeared in* Catalogus scriptorium florentinarum, *published in Florence in 1589, a sign that what had once been a project supported by the elite of that city-state had now become yet another glimpse of its storied past.*

The printers who arranged for translations of Vespucci's tract no doubt believed that there existed an eager audience for any news about the Western Hemisphere. For that audience, Vespucci's narrative of a journey that began in Lisbon on May 1, 1501, fit the bill. His account of native peoples who lived without well-defined marital customs and who inhabited a world in which women chewed poisonous animals and then transferred their toxicity to their male partners to enlarge their erections (even at the risk of their penises becoming so fragile they could break off) would have held anyone's attention. The fact that Vespucci believed that the natives lived to be 150 years old because there were no diseases in that land made Brazil seem even more inviting, though some may have recoiled at his reporting that cannibalism was widespread.

Fortunately for posterity, Vespucci was able to avert his gaze from the salted limbs hanging from the rafters. When he did so, he paid attention to the evening skies. His account described what he saw, and printers tried to render

Figure 6. Vespucci's Constellation

"The sky is adorned with the most beautiful constellations and forms among which I noted about twenty stars as bright as we ever saw Venus or Jupiter," Vespucci wrote in Mondus Novus. *He then provided a brief description of what he saw, noting that, among other unusual celestial phenomena, the "Antarctic pole is not figured with a Great and a Little Bear as this Arctic pole of ours is seen to be, nor is any bright star to be seen near it" (Vespucci,* Mondus Novus: Letter to Lorenzo Pietro Di Medici, *Paris, 1503?, 9). The picture here represents Vespucci's effort to set into the pages of a book what he saw in the skies above.*

Vespucci's diagram of the stars. The pictures differ from one edition to the next, revealing how difficult it could be to represent accurately even what appeared the simplest kinds of visual information generated abroad.

As the closing paragraph of this letter reveals, Vespucci thought it crucial to have the letter printed in Latin, not in the Italian in which he wrote it, so that it would reach a larger audience and hence let them realize the "vastness of the earth" that had never been known before. Though his report was eventually superseded by more elaborate and detailed European accounts of Brazil, notably those of Hans Stade and Jean de Léry, it remains vivid testimony to the kinds of information that could be found in European travel accounts at the dawn of the sixteenth century.

On a former occasion I wrote to you at some length concerning my return from those new regions which we found and explored with the fleet, at the cost, and by the command of this Most Serene King of Portugal. And these we may rightly call a new world. Because our ancestors had no knowledge of them, and it will be a matter wholly new to all those who hear about them. For this transcends the view held by our ancients, inasmuch as most of them hold that there is no continent to the south beyond the equator, but only the sea which they named the Atlantic; and if some of them did aver that a continent there was, they denied with abundant argument that it was a habitable land. But that this their opinion is false and utterly opposed to the truth, this my last voyage has made manifest; for in those southern parts I have found a continent more densely peopled and abounding in animals than our Europe or Asia or Africa, and, in addition, a climate milder and more delightful than in any other region known to us, as you shall learn in the following account wherein we shall set succinctly down only capital matters and the things more worthy of comment and memory seen or heard by me in this new world, as will appear below.

On the fourteenth of the month of May, one thousand five hundred and one we set sail from Lisbon under fair sailing conditions, in compliance with the commands of the aforementioned king, with these ships for the purpose of seeking new regions toward the south; and for twenty months we continuously pursued this southern course. The route of this voyage is as follows: Our course was set for the Fortunate Isles, once so called, but which are now termed the Grand Canary Islands; these are in the third climate and on the border of the inhabited west. Thence by sea we skirted the whole African coast and part of Ethiopia as far as the Ethiopic Promontory, so called by Ptolemy, which we now call Cape Verde and the Ethiopians Beseghice. And that region, Mandingha, lies within the torrid zone fourteen degrees north of the equator; it is inhabited by tribes and nations of blacks. Having there recovered our strength and taken on all that our voyage required, we weighed

anchor and made sail. And directing our course over the vast ocean toward the Antarctic we for a time bent westward, owing to the wind called Vulturnus; and from the day when we set sail from the said promontory we cruised for the space of two months and three days before any land appeared to us. But what we suffered on that vast expanse of sea, what perils of shipwreck, what discomforts of the body we endured, with what anxiety of mind we toiled, this I leave to the judgment of those who out of rich experience have well learned what it is to seek the uncertain and to attempt discoveries even though ignorant. And that in a word I may briefly narrate all, you must know that of the sixty-seven days of our sailing we had forty-four of constant rain, thunder and lightning so dark that never did we see sun by day or fair sky by night. By reason of this such fear invaded us that we soon abandoned almost all hope of life. But during these tempests of sea and sky, so numerous and so violent, the Most High was pleased to display before us a continent, new lands, and an unknown world. At sight of these things we were filled with as much joy as anyone can imagine usually falls to the lot of those who have gained refuge from varied calamity and hostile fortune. It was on the seventh day of August, one thousand five hundred and one that we anchored off the shores of those parts, thanking our God with formal ceremonial and with the celebration of a choral mass. We knew that land to be a continent and not an island both because it stretches forth in the form of a very long and unbending coast, and because it is replete with infinite inhabitants. For in it we found innumerable tribes and peoples and species of all manner of wild beasts which are found in our lands and many others never seen by us concerning which it would take long to tell in detail. God's mercy shone upon us much when we landed at that spot, for there had come a shortage of fire-wood and water, and in a few days we might have ended our lives at sea. To Him be honor, glory, and thanksgiving.

We adopted the plan of following the coast of this continent toward the east and never losing sight of it. We sailed along until at length we reached a bend where the shore made a turn to the south; and from that point where we first touched land to that corner it was about three hundred leagues, in which sailing distance we frequently landed and had friendly relations with those people, as you will hear below. I had forgotten to write you that from the promontory of Cape Verde to the nearest part of that continent is about seven hundred leagues, although I should estimate that we sailed more than eighteen hundred, partly through ignorance of the route and the ship-master's want of knowledge, partly owing to tempests and winds which kept us from

the proper course and compelled us to put about frequently. Because, if my companions had not heeded me, who had knowledge of cosmography, there would have been no ship-master, nay not the leader of our expedition himself, who would have known where we were within five hundred leagues. For we were wandering and uncertain in our course, and only the instruments for taking the altitudes of the heavenly bodies showed us our true course precisely; and these were the quadrant and the astrolabe, which all men have come to know. For this reason they subsequently made me the object of great honor; for I showed them that though a man without practical experience, yet through the teaching of the marine chart for navigators I was more skilled than all the shipmasters of the whole world. For these have no knowledge except of those waters to which they have often sailed. Now, where the said corner of land showed us a southern trend of the coast we agreed to sail beyond it and inquire what there might be in those parts. So we sailed along the coast about six hundred leagues, and often landed and mingled and associated with the natives of those regions, and by them we were received in brotherly fashion; and we would dwell with them too, for fifteen or twenty days continuously, maintaining amicable and hospitable relations, as you shall learn below. Part of this new continent lies in the torrid zone beyond the equator toward the Antarctic pole, for it begins eight degrees beyond the equator. We sailed along this coast until we passed the tropic of Capricorn and found the Antarctic pole fifty degrees higher than that horizon. We advanced to within seventeen and a half degrees of the Antarctic circle, and what I there have seen and learned concerning the nature of those races, their manners, their tractability and the fertility of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, the position of the heavenly bodies in the sky, and especially concerning the fixed stars of the eighth sphere, never seen or studied by our ancestors, these things I shall relate in order.

First then as to the people. We found in those parts such a multitude of people as nobody could enumerate (as we read in the Apocalypse), a race I say gentle and amenable. All of both sexes go about naked, covering no part of their bodies; and just as they spring from their mothers' wombs so they go until death. They have indeed large square-built bodies, well formed and proportioned, and in color verging upon reddish. This I think has come to them, because, going about naked, they are colored by the sun. They have, too, hair plentiful and black. In their gait and when playing their games they are agile and dignified. They are comely, too, of countenance which they nevertheless themselves destroy; for they bore their cheeks, lips, noses and ears. Nor

think those holes small or that they have one only. For some I have seen having in a single face seven borings any one of which was capable of holding a plum. They stop up these holes of theirs with blue stones, bits of marble, very beautiful crystals of alabaster, very white bones, and other things artificially prepared according to their customs. But if you could see a thing so unwonted and monstrous, that is to say a man having in his cheeks and lips alone seven stones some of which are a span and a half in length, you would not be without wonder. For I frequently observed and discovered that seven such stones weighed sixteen ounces, aside from the fact that in their ears, each perforated with three holes, they have other stones dangling on rings; and this usage applies to the men alone. For women do not bore their faces, but their ears only. They have another custom, very shameful and beyond all human belief. For their women, being very lustful, cause the private parts of their husbands to swell up to such a huge size that they appear deformed and disgusting; and this is accomplished by a certain device of theirs, the biting of certain poisonous animals. And in consequence of this many lose their organs which break through lack of attention, and they remain eunuchs. They have no cloth either of wool, linen or cotton, since they need it not; neither do they have goods of their own, but all things are held in common. They live together without king, without government, and each is his own master. They marry as many wives as they please; and son cohabits with mother, brother with sister, male cousin with female, and any man with the first woman he meets. They dissolve their marriages as often as they please, and observe no sort of law with respect to them. Beyond the fact that they have no church, no religion and are not idolaters, what more can I say? They live according to nature, and may be called Epicureans rather than Stoics. There are no merchants among their number, nor is there barter. The nations wage war upon one another without art or order. The elders by means of certain harangues of theirs bend the youths to their will and inflame them to wars in which they cruelly kill one another, and those whom they bring home captives from war they preserve not to spare their lives, but that they may be slain for food; for they eat one another, the victors the vanquished, and among other kinds of meat human flesh is a common article of diet with them. Nay be the more assured of this fact because the father has already been seen to eat children and wife, and I knew a man whom I also spoke to who was reputed to have eaten more than three hundred human bodies. And I likewise remained twenty-seven days in a certain city where I saw salted human flesh suspended from beams between the houses, just as with us it is the custom to hang bacon and pork. I

say further: they themselves wonder why we do not eat our enemies and do not use as food their flesh which they say is most savory. Their weapons are bows and arrows, and when they advance to war they cover no part of their bodies for the sake of protection, so like beasts are they in this matter. We endeavored to the extent of our power to dissuade them and persuade them to desist from these depraved customs, and they did promise us that they would leave off. The women as I have said go about naked and are very libidinous; yet they have bodies which are tolerably beautiful and cleanly. Nor are they so unsightly as one perchance might imagine; for, inasmuch as they are plump, their ugliness is the less apparent, which indeed is for the most part concealed by the excellence of their bodily structure. It was to us a matter of astonishment that none was to be seen among them who had a flabby breast, and those who had borne children were not to be distinguished from virgins by the shape and shrinking of the womb; and in the other parts of the body similar things were seen of which in the interest of modesty I make no mention. When they had the opportunity of copulating with Christians, urged by excessive lust, they defiled and prostituted themselves. They live one hundred and fifty years, and rarely fall ill, and if they do fall victims to any disease, they cure themselves with certain roots and herbs. These are the most noteworthy things I know about them. The climate there was very temperate and good, and as I was able to learn from their accounts, there was never there any pest or epidemic caused by corruption of the air; and unless they die a violent death they live long. This I take to be because the south winds are ever blowing there, and especially that which we call Eurus, which is the same to them as the Aquilo is to us. They are zealous in the art of fishing, and that sea is replete and abounding in every kind of fish. They are not hunters. This I deem to be because there are there many sorts of wild animals, and especially lions and bears and innumerable serpents and other horrid and ugly beasts, and also because forests and trees of huge size there extend far and wide; and they dare not, naked and without covering and arms, expose themselves to such hazards.

The land in those parts is very fertile and pleasing, abounding in numerous hills and mountains, boundless valleys and mighty rivers, watered by refreshing springs, and filled with broad, dense and wellnigh impenetrable forests full of every sort of wild animal. Trees grow to immense size without cultivation. Many of these yield fruits delectable to the taste and beneficial to the human body; some indeed do not, and no fruits there are like those of ours. Innumerable species of herbs and roots grow there too, of which they

make bread and excellent food. They have, too, many seeds altogether unlike these of ours. They have there no metals of any description except gold, of which those regions have a great plenty, although to be sure we have brought none thence on this our first voyage. This the natives called to our attention, who averred that in the districts remote from the coast there is a great abundance of gold, and by them it is in no respect esteemed or valued. They are rich in pearls as I wrote you before. If I were to seek to recount in detail what things are there and to write concerning the numerous species of animals and the great number of them, it would be a matter all too prolix and vast. And I truly believe that our Pliny did not touch upon a thousandth part of the species of parrots and other birds and the animals, too, which exist in those same regions so diverse as to form and color; because Policletus, the master of painting in all its perfection would have fallen short in depicting them. There all trees are fragrant and they emit each and all gum, oil, or some sort of sap. If the properties of these were known to us, I doubt not but that they would be salutary to the human body. And surely if the terrestrial paradise be in any part of this earth, I esteem that it is not far distant from those parts. Its situation, as I have related, lies toward the south in such a temperate climate that icy winters and fiery summers alike are never there experienced.

The sky and atmosphere are serene during the greater part of the year, and devoid of thick vapors the rains there fall finely, last three or four hours, and vanish like a mist. The sky is adorned with most beautiful constellations and forms among which I noted about twenty stars as bright as we ever saw Venus or Jupiter. I have considered the movements and orbits of these, I have measured their circumferences and diameters by geometric method, and I ascertained that they are of greater magnitude. I saw in that sky three Canopi, two indeed bright, the third dim. The Antarctic pole is not figured with a Great and a Little Bear as this Arctic pole of ours is seen to be, nor is any bright star to be seen near it, and of those which move around it with the shortest circuit there are three which have the form of an orthogonous triangle, the half circumference, the diameter, has nine and a half degrees. . . .

I observed many other very beautiful stars, the movements of which I have diligently noted down and have described beautifully with diagrams in a certain little book of mine treating of this my voyage. But at present this Most Serene King has it, which I hope he will restore to me. In that hemisphere I saw things incompatible with the opinions of philosophers. A white rainbow was twice seen about midnight, not only by me but by all the sailors. Likewise we have frequently seen the new moon on that day when it was in

conjunction with the sun. Every night in that part of the sky innumerable vapors and glowing meteors fly about. I said a little while ago respecting that hemisphere that it really cannot properly be spoken of as a complete hemisphere comparing it to ours, yet since it approaches such a form, such may we be permitted to call it. . . .

These have been the more noteworthy things which I have seen in this my last voyage which I call my third chapter. For two other chapters consisted of two other voyages which I made to the west by command of the most Serene King of Spain, during which I noted down the marvelous works wrought by that sublime creator of all things, our God. I kept a diary of noteworthy things that if sometime I am granted leisure I may bring together these singular and wonderful things and write a book of geography or cosmography, that my memory may live with posterity and that the immense work of almighty God, partly unknown to the ancients, but known to us, may be understood. Accordingly I pray the most merciful God to prolong the days of my life that with His good favor and the salvation of my soul I may carry out in the best possible manner this my will. The accounts of the other two journeys I am preserving in my cabinet and when this Most Serene King restores to me the third, I shall endeavor to regain my country and repose. There I shall be able to consult with experts and to receive from friends the aid and comfort necessary for the completion of this work.

Of you I crave pardon for not having transmitted to you this my last voyage, or rather my last chapter, as I had promised you in my last letter. You have learned the reason when I tell you that I have not yet obtained the principal version from this Most Serene King. I am still privately considering the making of a fourth journey, and of this I am treating; and already I have been promised two ships with their equipment, that I may apply myself to the discovery of new regions to the south along the eastern side following the wind-route called Africus. In which journey I think to perform many things to the glory of God, the advantage of this kingdom, and the honor of my old age; and I await nothing but the consent of this Most Serene King. God grant what is for the best. You shall learn what comes of it.

Jocundus, the translator, is turning this epistle from the Italian into the Latin tongue, that Latinists may know how many wonderful things are daily being discovered, and that the audacity of those who seek to scrutinize heaven and sovereignty and to know more than it is licit to know may be held in check. Inasmuch as ever since that remote time when the world began the vastness of the earth and what therein is contained has been unknown.

in every way brought it so high, as those of us here see from this and other greater things. . . .

Document 22

The Captivity of Hans Stade of Hesse Among the Wild Tribes of Eastern Brazil (1547–1555)

By Hans Stade, *The Captivity of Hans Stade of Hesse, in A.D. 1547–1555, Among the Wild Tribes of Eastern Brazil,* trans. Albert Tootal (London: Hakluyt Society, 1874), 51–53, 56–69

Most individuals who left travel accounts went places by choice. But some found themselves in circumstances well beyond their control. This was the case for Hans Stade (fl. 1547–1557?), a German who agreed to join a Portuguese mission to Brazil in the mid-1540s and then was taken captive by the Tupinambas of eastern Brazil. Stade's captivity testified to the one great fear in his life: that someone would not only kill him but would then eat his body. The terror of such a fate permeated the account of his years in captivity in Brazil.

Stade's tale was first published in German in Marpurg in 1557 with the title Warhaftig historia und beschreibung eyner landschafte der Wilden/ Nacketen/ Grimmigen Menschstresser Leuten in der Newenwelt America gelegen—Truthful History and Description of a Landscape of Wild, Naked, Cruel Man-Eating People in the New World of America. *Over the years the book was translated and published in Dutch (1558) and Latin (1592). The Flemish engraver Theodor de Bry, aware of the power of the sensational, chose to embellish the title page to one volume of his* America *series with depictions of what Europeans termed anthropophagi: consumers of human flesh. Here a naked Tupinamba man chews on a human leg and a naked Tupinamba woman nibbles on an arm, while an infant on her back, perhaps wanting a snack, reaches toward the hand. De Bry's book, published in Frankfurt-Am-Main in 1592, included a series of illustrations based on the writings of both authors, with the details of local cannibalism drawn directly from Stade's account. (See the chapter "Pictures of Brazil.")*

As the selection here reveals, Stade learned much about the society of his captors. Yet as a German in Brazil who had come there with the Portuguese, he was not necessarily an ally of every European in the vicinity. As his hopes for rescue dimmed, Stade believed that he would ultimately be redeemed by the kind word of any Christian from Europe. But when he encountered a Frenchman who spoke to Stade in French, a language he did not know, the other European told the Tupinambas to kill the German. Far from home, danger could come even from those who seemed most familiar.

How I was captured by the savages, and the way in which this happened.

I had a savage man, of a tribe called Carios; he was my slave, who caught game for me, and with him I also went occasionally into the forest.

Now it happened once upon a time, that a Spaniard from the island of Sancte Vincente came to me in the island of Sancte Maro, which is five miles (leagues) therefrom, and remained in the fort wherein I lived, and also a German by name Heliodorus, from Hesse, son of the late Eoban of Hesse, the same who was in the island of Sanect Vincente at an ingenio, where sugar is made, and the ingenio belonged to a Genoese named Josepe Ornio [Adorno]. This Heliodorus was the clerk and manager of the merchants to whom the ingenio belonged. (Ingenio, are called houses in which sugar is made.) With the said Heliodorus I had before had some acquaintance, for when I was shipwrecked with the Spaniards in that country, I found him in the island of Sancte Vincente, and he showed me friendship. He came again to me, wanting to see how I got on, for he had perhaps heard that I was sick.

Having sent my slave the day before into the wood to catch game, I purposed going the next day to fetch it, so that we might have something to eat. For in that country one has little else beyond what comes from the forests.

Now as I with this purpose walked through the woods, there arose on both sides of the path loud yells such as the savages are accustomed to make, and they came running towards me; I knew them, and found that they had all surrounded me, and levelling their bows with arrows, they shot in upon me. Then I cried, "Now God help my soul." I had scarcely finished saying these words when they struck me to the ground and shot (arrows) and stabbed at me. So far they had not (thank God!) wounded me further than in one leg, and torn my clothes off my body; one the jerkin, the other the hat, the third the shirt and so forth. Then they began to quarrel about me, one said he was the first who came up to me, the other said that he had captured me. Meanwhile the others struck me with their bows. But at last two of them raised me

from the ground where I lay naked, one took me by one arm, another by the other, and some went behind me, and others before. They ran in this manner quickly with me through the wood towards the sea, where they had their canoes. When they had taken me to the shore, I sighted their canoes which they had drawn up from the sea on to the land under a hedge, at the distance of a stone's throw or two, and also a great number more of them who had remained with their canoes. When they, ornamented with feathers according to their custom, saw me being led along they ran towards me, and pretended to bite into their arms, and threatened as though they would eat me. And a king paraded before me with a club wherewith they despatched the prisoners. He harrangued and said how they had captured me their slave from the Perot (so they call the Portuguese), and they would now thoroughly revenge on me the death of their friends. And when they brought me to the canoes, several of them struck me with their fists. Then they made haste among one another, to shove their canoes back into the water, for they feared that an alarm would be made at Brikioka, as also happened.

Now before they launched the canoes, they tied my hands together, and not being all from the same dwelling-place, those of each village were loath to go home empty-handed, and disputed with those who held me. Some said that they been just as near as the others, and that they would also have their share of me, and they wanted to kill me at once on that very spot.

Then I stood and prayed, looking round for the blow. But at last the king, who desired to keep me, began and said they would take me living homewards, so that their wives might also see me alive, and make their feast upon me. For they purposed killing me "*Kawei Pepicke*," that is, they would brew drinks and assemble together, to make a feast, and then they would eat me among them. At these words they left off disputing, and tied four ropes round my neck, and I had to get into a canoe, whilst they still stood on the shore, and bound the ends of the ropes to the boats and pushed them off into the sea, in order to sail home again. . . .

How they behaved to me on the day when they brought me to their habitations

On that day about vesper time, reckoning by the sun, we beheld their habitations, having therefore been three days on the return voyage. For the place I was let to was thirty miles (leagues) distant from Brikioka.

Now when we arrived close to their dwellings, these proved to be a village which had seven huts, and they called it Uwattibi. We ran up on a beach which borders the sea, and close to it were their women in the plantations of the root which they call Mandioka. In this said plantation walked many of their women pulling up the roots: to these I as made to call out in their language: "*A junesche been ermi vramme*," that is: "I, your food, have come."

Now when we landed, all young and old ran out of their huts (which lay on a hill), to look at me. And the men with their bows and arrows entered their huts, and left me in the custody of their women, who took me between them and went along, some before me and others behind, singing and dancing in unison, with the songs which they are accustomed to sing to their own people when they are about to eat them.

Now they brought me before the *Iwara* huts, that is the fort which they make round about their huts with great long rails, like the fence of a garden. This they do on account of their enemies.

As I entered, the women ran to me, and struck me with their fists, and pulled my beard, and spoke in their language: "*Sche innamme pepicke a e*." That is as much as to say: "with this blow I revenge my friend, him whom those among thou hast been, have killed."

Thereupon they led me into the huts, where I had to lie in a hammock, whilst the women came and struck and pulled me before and behind, and threatened me how they would eat me.

And the men were together in a hut, and drank the beverage which they call Kawi, and had with them their gods, called Tammerka, and they sang in praise of them, for their having so prophesied that I should be captured by them.

This song I heard, and for half an hour none of the men came near me, but only women and children. . . .

How my two masters came to me and told me that they had presented me to one of their friends, who was to keep me and kill me, when I was to be eaten

I knew not then their customs so well as I have since learned them, and I thought "Now they prepare to kill thee." After a little while those who had captured me, named Jeppipo (Yeppipo) Wasu, and his brother Alkindar Miri, came to me and told me how they had, from friendship, presented me to their father's brother Ipperu Wasu, who was to keep me, and also to kill me, when I was to be eaten, and thus to gain a new name with me.

For this same Ipperu Wasu had a year before also captured a slave, and

had as a sign of friendship presented him to Alkindar Miri. Him he had killed and thereby he had gained a name; so that Alkindar Miri had in return promised to present Ipperu Wasu with the first whom he might capture. And I was the first.

Further the two above-mentioned who had taken me said, "Now will the women lead thee out to the *Aprasst*." This word I understood not then, but it means dancing. Thus they dragged me along with the ropes, which were round my neck, from out of the huts on to an open place. Then came all the women who were in the seven huts, and seized hold of me, and the men went away. Several of the women led me along by the arms, and several by the ropes which were bound round my neck, so roughly and tightly that I could hardly breathe. In this manner they went along with me, and I knew not what they intended doing to me, upon which I remembered the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and how he suffered innocently at the hands of the vile Jews, whereby I consoled myself and became the more resigned. Then they brought me before the huts of the king, who was called Vratinge Wasu, which means in German, the Great White Bird. Before his huts lay a heap of freshly dug earth, whither they led me and sat me down thereon, and some held me, when I thought nothing else but that they would dispatch me at once. I looked round for the *Iwara Pemme*, wherewith they club men, and asked whether they were going to kill me then, when they answered, "not yet." Upon which a woman came from out of the crowd towards me, holding a fragment of a crystal, set in a thing like a bent ring, and with this same piece of crystal shaved off my eyebrows, and would also have cut the beard from my chin, but this I would not suffer, and said, that they should kill me with my beard. Then they replied, that for the present they would not kill me, and left me my beard. But after some days they cut it off with a pair of scissors, which the Frenchmen had given them.

How they danced with me before the huts, wherein they keep their idols the Tamerka

Then they led me from the place where they had shaved off my eyebrows, to before the huts wherein the Tamerka their idols were, and I made round about me a circle in the middle of which I stood. Two women were with me, and they tied to one of my legs strings of object, which rattled and they also tied an ornament made of birds' tails, and of square shape, behind my neck, so that it projected above my head; it is called in their language *Arasoya*. Thereupon the womenkind all began together to sing, and to their time I was

obliged to stamp with the leg to which they had tied the rattles, so that they rattled in harmony. But the leg in which I was wounded pained me so badly that I could hardly stand, for I had not yet been bandaged.

How, after the dance, they took me home to Ipperu Wasu, who was to kill me

Now when the dance came to an end, I was handed over to Ipperu Wasu, who kept me in careful custody. Then he told me that I still had some time to live. And they brought all their gods that were in the huts, and placed them round about me and said, that these had prophesied, that they would capture a Portuguese. Then said I, These things have no power, and also cannot speak. And they lie (in asserting) that I am Portuguese, for I am one of the Frenchmen's allies and friends, and the country where I am at home (to which I belong), is called Allemanien. Then they said that I must lie, for if I was the Frenchmen's friend, what was I doing among the Portuguese? They knew full well that the Frenchmen were just as much the enemies of the Portuguese as they. For the Frenchmen came every year with ships, and brought them knives, axes, looking-glasses, combs, and scissors, and for these they gave them Brazilwood, cotton and other goods, such as featherwork and (red) pepper. Therefore they were their good friends, which the Portuguese had not been. For these had in former years come into the country, and had, in the parts where they were still settled, contracted friendship with their enemies. After that time, they (i.e., the Portuguese) had also come to them, and they had in good faith gone to their ships and entered them, in the same manner in which they to the present day did with the French ships. They said moreover that when the Portuguese had collected enough of them in the ship, they had then attacked them and bound them, and delivered them up to their enemies who had killed and eaten them. Some of them also they had shot dead with their guns, and much more had the Portuguese in their haughty presumption done to them, having also joined with their enemies for the purpose of capturing them in war.

How those who had captured me bewailed in angry mood, how the Portuguese had shot their father; this they would revenge on me

And they further said that the Portuguese had shot the father of the two brothers who had captured me, in such manner that he died, and that they would now revenge their father's death on me. Thereupon I asked why they

would revenge this upon me? I was not a Portuguese; (adding that) I had lately arrived there with the Castilians: I had suffered shipwreck, and I had from this cause remained among them.

It happened that there was a young fellow of their tribe, who had been a slave of the Portuguese; and the savages among whom the Portuguese live had gone into the Tuppin Imba's country to make war, and had taken a whole village, and had eaten the elder inhabitants, and had sold those who were young to the Portuguese for goods. So that this young fellow had also been bartered by the Portuguese, and had lived in the neighborhood of Brikioka with his master who was called Anthonio Agudin, a Gallician.

Those who had captured me had retaken the same slave about three months before.

Now as he was of their tribe, they had not killed him. The said slave knew me well and they asked him who I was. He said it was true, that a vessel had been lost on the shore, and the people who had come therein were called Castilians, and they were friends of the Portuguese. With these I had been, further he knew nothing of me.

Now when I heard, and having also understood that there were Frenchmen among them, and that these were accustomed to arrive there in ships, I always persisted in the same story, and said that I belonged to the allies of the French, that they were to let me remain unkilled, until such time as the Frenchmen came and recognized me. And they kept me in very careful confinement, as there were several Frenchmen among them who had been left by the ships to collect pepper.

How one of the Frenchmen who had been left by the ships among the savages came thither to see me, and advised them to eat me, as I was a Portuguese

There was a Frenchman living four miles distant from the huts where I was. Now when he heard the news he proceeded thither, and went into another hut opposite to that wherein I was. Then the savages came running towards me, and said, "Now a Frenchman has arrived here, and we shall soon see if you also are a Frenchman or not." I felt glad of this, and I thought, at all events he is a Christian, and he will say anything for the best.

Then they took me in to him naked as I was, and I saw that he was a young fellow, the savages called him Karwattu ware. He addressed me in French, and I of course understood him not. The savages stood round about us and listened. Now when I could not answer him, he said to the savages in their language, "Kill and eat him, the villain, he is a true Portuguese, my enemy and yours." And this I understood well. I begged him therefore for God's sake, that he would tell them not to eat me. Then he said: "They want to eat you," upon which I remembered the words of Jeremiah (chapter xvii) who says: "Cursed is he who putteth his trust in man." And herewith I again went away from them very sorrowful at heart; and I had at the time a piece of linen tied around my shoulders (where could they have obtained it?). This I tore off and threw it before the Frenchman's feet, and then the sun had scorched me severely, and I said to myself, "If I am to die, why should I preserve my flesh for another?" Then they conducted me back to the huts where they confined me. I then went to lie down in my hammock. God knows the misery I endured, and thus I tearfully began to sing the hymn,

Now beg we of the Holy Ghost
The true belief we wish for most.
That he may save us at our end
When from this vale of tears we wend. . . .

The above-mentioned Frenchman remained two days there in the huts: on the third day he went on his way. And they had agreed that they would prepare everything, and kill me on the first day after they had collected all things together, and they watched me very carefully, and both young and old mocked and derided me.

Document 23

History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil (1578)

By Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil*, trans. Janet Whatley (Berkeley: University of California Press 1992), 15–19, 64–68

Hans Stade was no fan of Tupinamba society, and his constant fear of being eaten shaped his writings about these Brazilian people. By contrast, the French Huguenot missionary Jean de Léry (1534–1613) offered readers a much more complete assessment of the Tupinambas. Though both witnessed many of the same customs and local behaviors, Léry was a far more sympathetic observer. Of course, he did not spend his entire time in Brazil wondering if he was about to be eaten.[10]

10. Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil*, trans. Janet Whatley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 142.

In the excerpts here, Léry described his experiences at sea, including his astonishment at some of the creatures he observed, and his views of Tupinamba women. He contrasted crucial aspects of the natives' society, notably the nakedness of women and girls, with what he deemed proper female modes of dress in France at the time. His views may have shocked some of his readers, but they reveal Léry to be both an able (if amateur) ethnographer as well as a cleric able to use his experiences abroad to make a pointed critique about social organization at home.

The extraordinary precision of Léry's text identifies it as one of the most important printed works of European ethnography of the sixteenth century. Its only real rivals are Linschoten's description of India and Thomas Harriot's account of the Carolina Algonquians. Each of these reports suggests that it was possible—though not common—for Europeans to offer detailed accounts of very different kinds of peoples. This is not to suggest that the visitors shared a modern anthropologist's desire to observe a society without introducing changes to it. Harriot wrote quite clearly that he believed the natives he met would eventually come to live and behave like Europeans once they fell under the control of colonists, and Linschoten and Léry (himself a missionary) aimed to alter indigenous peoples' religious beliefs. It would be a mistake to assume that any of these observers could put aside such powerful agendas or sets of beliefs. It would be perhaps more accurate to state that Léry was something of an ethnographic pioneer whose works, which were available in print by the late 1570s, the others may or may not have read; and that all three of them left published accounts crucial for understanding the peoples of disparate parts of the world before many of their traditions disappeared.

Léry's account of his time crossing the Atlantic is invaluable, particularly on two crucial points. First, while voyages across the open ocean always involved risk, many crews also knew how to keep themselves alive and well fed by harvesting the abundant riches of the sea. (See the section "Pictures of Brazil" for one memorable image of flying fish.) His description of the way that the sailors tortured a shark is an example, if not an explanation, of an earlier sense of humor that is as distant to modern readers as the societies that talented travelers described. Second, he paid careful attention to different gender roles and behaviors, as can be seen here in his depiction of Tupinamba girls and women.

Léry's Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre du Bresil autrement dite Amerique *was first published in French in Geneva in 1578, and it was sufficiently popular for subsequent editions to appear there in 1580, 1585, 1594, 1599, and 1600; a Dutch edition was printed in Amsterdam in 1597. But his ideas reached a much greater audience when the Flemish engraver Theodor de Bry used the text, along with Stade's, as the basis for one of the volumes of his America series in 1592. It is in that volume that the pictures of Tupinamba society reproduced here can be found.*

Of the bonitos, albacore, gilt-fish, porpoises, flying fish, and others of various kinds that we saw and took in the torrid zone.

From that time on we had a frothy sea and so fair a wind that we were pushed to three or four degrees this side of the Equator. There we caught a great many porpoises, dorado, albacore, bonitos, and a large quantity of several other kinds of fish. I had always thought that the sailors who spoke of flying fish were telling us tall tales; however, experience showed me that they really did exist.

We began to see big schools of them jump out of the water and soar into the air (just as larks and starlings do on land), flying almost as high as a pike's length, and sometimes to a distance of more than a hundred paces. Since often it even happened that some would hit against the masts and fall into our ships, we could easily catch them in our hands. Now to describe this fish (and I have seen and held any number of them going and coming from Brazil): it is something like a herring in form, but a little longer and rounder, with little barbells under the throat, and wings like those of a bat, almost as long as the whole body; it is very flavorful and good to eat. Since I have not seen any of them this side of the tropic of Cancer, I am of the Opinion (although I am not completely sure) that, liking a warm climate, they remain in the Torrid Zone, and do not venture out of it in the direction of either of the poles. There is still another thing that I have observed: these poor flying fish, whether they are in the water or in the air, are never at rest. For when they are in the sea, the albacore and other big fish, pursuing them to eat them, wage continual war; and if they try to escape by flight, there are certain sea-birds that seize and feed on them.

These sea-birds, which live as predators, are so tame that often, when

they light on the coamings, rigging and spars of our ships, they let themselves be caught by hand. Since I have eaten some—and therefore seen both the inside and the outside—here is a description. They are of gray plumage, like sparrow-hawks; although they seem from the outside to be as big as crows, when they are plucked, you see that they have hardly more flesh than a sparrow, so it is a wonder that, being so small of body, they can still seize and eat fish bigger than they are. They have only one bowel, and their feet are flat like those of ducks.

To get back to the other fish that I have mentioned just now: the bonito, who is one of the best to eat that can be found, is very much like our common carp; however, it has no scales. I have seen a great many of them, for during the whole six weeks of our voyage they hardly left our ships, which they apparently followed because of the pitch and tar that the ships were rubbed with.

As for the albacore, they resemble the bonitos, but in size, there is no comparison between the two kinds, for I have seen and eaten my share of albacore that were almost five feet long and as big as a man's body. The albacore is not at all viscous; its flesh is as flaky as a trout's. With only one bone in its whole body and very little in the way of entrails, it must rank as one of the best seafish. Indeed, since we didn't have on hand everything necessary to prepare it well (nor do any passengers who make these long voyages), we did nothing but salt it and put big round slices of it on the coals, and we found it wonderfully good and flavorful even cooked in this fashion.

Those gentlemen who are so fond of delicacies, who refuse to venture onto the sea, and yet want fish to eat (as one says of cats who want the same without getting their feet wet)—if they could obtain this fish on land as easily as they do other seafood, and could have it prepared with a German sauce or in some other way, do you doubt that they would lick their fingers? I say expressly, if they could have it at their disposal on land: for as I have said of the flying fish, I don't think that these albacore, whose habitat is mainly in the deep ocean between the two tropics, come close enough to the shore for the fishermen to be able to get them home before they spoil. However, this holds only for us who live in this climate; as for the Africans to the east, and those of Peru and the regions on the west, it may well be that they have plenty.

The dorado—which I think bears that name because in the water it appears yellow, and shines like gold—has a shape something like that of a salmon; nonetheless, it is different in that it has a sort of hollow place in the

back. But from having tasted it, I maintain that this fish is better than all those I have just mentioned; neither in salt water nor in fresh water is there a more delicate one.

Concerning porpoises, there are two kinds. While some have a face almost as pointed as a goosebeak, in others it is so rounded and blunt that when they lift their nose out of the water it looks like a ball. Because of the resemblance between these and hooded monks, when we were on the sea we called them "monks'-heads." I have seen some of both kinds that were five to six feet long, with a wide, forked tail; they all had an opening on the head, through which they not only took in wind and breathed, but also sometimes sprayed out water. But especially when the sea begins to stir itself up, these porpoises, appearing suddenly on the water in the midst of the waves and billows that toss them about, even at night turn the sea green, and indeed seem themselves to be all green. It is a great amusement to hear them blow and snort; you would think that they really were ordinary pigs, such as we have on land. When the mariners see them swim about and bestir themselves in this way, they take it as a sure sign of an approaching storm, which I have often seen borne out. In moderate weather, when the sea was only frothy, we sometimes saw them in such great abundance that all around us, as far as our view could extend, it seemed that the sea was all porpoises; however, since they did not let themselves be caught as easily as did many other kinds of fish, we didn't have them as often as we wished.

Since we are on the subject, to better satisfy the reader, I want to describe the means I saw the sailors use to catch them. The one among them who is most expert and experienced in this kind of fishing lies in wait along the bowsprit, holding an iron harpoon hefted with a pole of the thickness and about half of the length of a pike, tied to four or five fathoms of line. When he sees a school of porpoises approach, he picks out one to aim for, and throws this weapon with such force that if it reaches its target it does not fail to pierce it. Once he has struck it, he lets out the rope, still firmly holding on to the end. The porpoise, in struggling, works the harpoon deeper into himself, and loses blood in the water. When he has lost a little strength, the other mariners, to help their companion, come with an iron hook called a "gaff" (also hafted with a long wooden pole), and by the strength of their arms they haul the porpoise into the ship. On the voyage over we caught about twenty-five of them in this fashion.

As for the insides of a porpoise: its four flippers are lifted off, just as

you would remove the four hams from a pig; it is split, and the tripes (the backbone too if so desired) and the ribs are removed; open and hung in that fashion you would say that it is an ordinary pig—indeed, his liver has the same taste, although it is true that the fresh meat is too sweetish in smell and is not good. As for the lard, all those that I have seen had only an inch of it, and I think there are none that have more than two inches. Therefore no longer be duped when those merchants and fishwives, both in Paris and elsewhere, say that their Lenten bacon, which is four fingers thick, is porpoise: for it is certainly whale fat. There were little ones in the bellies of some that we caught (which we roasted like sucking pigs), and therefore, whatever others may have written to the contrary, I think that porpoises, like cows, carry their litters in their bellies instead of multiplying by eggs, as almost all the other fishes do. Even though I would not make any decision here, lest anyone would argue the point by citing to me those who have firsthand experience—rather than those who have only read books—, no one will meanwhile prevent my believing what I have seen.

We also caught many sharks; found in the sea even when it is calm and quiet, they seem all green. Some are more than four feet long, and proportionately thick. Still, since their flesh is not very good, the mariners don't eat it unless they are forced to it by lack of better fish. They have a skin almost as coarse and rough as a file, and a flat, wide head with the mouth as deeply cleft as that of a wolf or an English mastiff. These sharks, moreover, are not only monstrous in appearance but also, since they have very sharp and cutting teeth, are so dangerous that if they grab a man by the leg or some other part of the body, they either carry that member off, or drag him to the bottom. When the sailors, in time of calm, bathe in the sea, they are much afraid of them; when we fished for them (as we often did with fishhooks as thick as a finger) and got them on to the deck of the ship, we had to be as careful as you would have to be on land with ill-tempered and dangerous dogs. Not only are these sharks no good for eating, but whether they are caught or whether they are in the water, they do only harm. So, just as you do with dangerous beasts, after we had stabbed and tormented those that we could catch, as if they were mad dogs, either we beat them with great blows of iron clubs, or else, having first cut their flippers and tied a barrel ring to their tails, we threw them back into the sea. Since they floated and struggled a long time on the surface of the water before sinking, we had much-good sport watching them.

Although the sea tortoises in this Torrid Zone are far from being so

huge and monstrous that you could roof a whole house or make a navigable ship from a single shell (as Pliny claimed for the ones from the Indies and the islands of the Red Sea), nevertheless, because you see some that are so long, wide, and thick as to be scarcely believable for those who haven't seen them, I will mention them here in passing. And without making a longer discourse on the subject, I will let the reader judge what they can be like by the following sample. One that was caught by the ship of our Vice-Admiral was so big that eighty people in the ship had a good meal off it (at least by the standards of shipboard life). The oval upper shell, which was given to our captain the Sieur de Sainte-Marie, was more than two and a half feet wide, and proportionately strong and thick. Moreover, the flesh is so much like veal that, especially when it is larded and roasted, it has almost the same taste.

This is how I saw them caught on the sea. During fair and calm weather (you rarely see them otherwise), when they come up out of the water, the sun warms their backs and their shells until they can no longer stand it, and to cool off they flip over and lie belly up. The mariners who see them in that state approach in their boat as quietly as they can; when they are near they hook them between two shells with the iron gaffs I have mentioned. Then it is as much as four or five men can do with the strength of their arms to haul them into the boat. This, in brief, is what I wanted to say about the tortoises and fish that we caught at that time; for I will speak later about dolphins, as well as whales and other sea monsters. . . .

Of the natural qualities, strength, stature, nudity, disposition and ornamentation of the body of the Brazilian savages, both men and women, who live in America, and whom I frequented for about a year

[F]or now let us leave a little to one side our Tupinamba in all their magnificence, frolicking and enjoying the good times that they know so well how to have, and see whether their wives and daughters, whom they call *quoniam* (and in some parts, since the arrival of the Portuguese, *Maria*) are better adorned and decked out.

First, besides what I said at the beginning of this chapter—that they ordinarily go naked as well as the men—they also share with them the practice of pulling out all body hair, as well as the eyelashes and eyebrows. They do not follow the men's custom regarding the hair of the head: for while the latter, as I have said above, shave their hair in front and clip it in the back, the

women not only let it grow long, but also (like the women over here), comb and wash it very carefully; in fact, they tie it up sometimes with a red-dyed cotton string. However, they more often let it hang on their shoulders, and go about wearing it loose.

They differ also from the men in that they do not slit their lips or cheeks, and so they wear no stones in their faces. But as for their ears, they have them pierced in so extreme a fashion for wearing pendants that when they are removed, you could easily pass a finger through the holes; what is more, when they wear pendants made of that big scallop shell called *vignol*, which are white, round, and as long as a medium-sized tallow candle, their ears swing on their shoulders, even over their breasts; if you see them from a little distance, it looks like the ears of a bloodhound hanging down on each side.

As for their faces, this is how they paint them. A neighbor woman or companion, with a little brush in hand, begins a small circle right in the middle of the cheek of the one who is having her face painted; turning the brush all around to trace a scroll or the shape of a snail-shell, she will continue until she has adorned and bedizened the face with various hues of blue, yellow, and red; also (as some shameless women in France likewise do), where the eyelashes and eyebrows have been plucked, she will not neglect to apply a stroke of the brush.

Moreover, they make big bracelets, composed of several pieces of white bone, cut and notched like big fish-scales, which they know how so closely to match and so nicely to join—with wax and a kind of gum mixed together into a glue—that it could not be better done. When the work is finished, it is about a foot and a half long; it could be best compared to the cuff used in playing ball over here. Likewise, they wear the white necklaces (called *boüre* in their language) that I have described above, but they do not wear them hung around the neck, as you have heard that the men do; they simply twist them around their arms. That is why, for the same use, they find so pretty the little beads of glass that they call *mauroubi*, in yellow, blue, green, and other colors, strung like a rosary, which we brought over there in great number for barter. Indeed, whether we went into their villages or they came into our fort, they would offer us fruits or some other commodity from their country in exchange for them, and with their customary flattering speech, they would be after us incessantly, pestering us and saying *"Mair, deagatorem, amabé mauroubi"*: that is, "Frenchman, you are good; give me some of your bracelets of glass beads." They would do the same thing to get combs from us, which they call *guap* or *kuap*, mirrors, which they call *aroua*, and all the other goods and merchandise we had that they desired.

But among the things doubly strange and truly marvelous that I observed in these Brazilian women, there is this: although they do not paint their bodies, arms, thighs, and legs as often as the men do, and do not cover themselves with feathers or with anything else that grows in their land, still, although we tried several times to give them dresses and shifts (as I have said we did for the men, who sometimes put them on), it has never been in our power to make them wear clothes: to such a point were they resolved (and I think they have not changed their minds) not to allow anything at all on their bodies. As a pretext to exempt themselves from wearing clothes and to remain always naked, they would cite their custom, which is this: whenever they come upon springs and clear rivers, crouching on the edge or else getting in, they throw water on their heads with both hands, and wash themselves and plunge in with their whole bodies like ducks—on some days more than a dozen times; and they said that it was too much trouble to get undressed so often. Is that not a fine and pertinent excuse? But whatever it may be, you have to accept it, for to contest it further with them would be in vain, and you would gain nothing by it.

This creature delights so much in her nakedness that it was not only the Tupinamba women of the mainland, living in full liberty with their husbands, fathers, and kinsmen, who were so obstinate in refusing to dress themselves in any way at all; even our women prisoners of war, whom we had bought and whom we held as slaves to work in our fort—even they, although we forced clothing on them, would secretly strip off the shifts and other rags, as soon as night had fallen, and would not be content unless, before going to bed, they could promenade naked all around our island. In short, if it had been up to these poor wretches, and if they had not been compelled by great strokes of the whip to dress themselves, they would choose to bear the heat and burning of the sun, even the continual skinning of their arms and shoulders carrying earth and stones, rather than to endure having any clothes on.

And there you have a summary of the customary ornaments, rings, and jewelry of the American women and girls. So, without any other epilogue here, let the reader, by this narration, contemplate them as he will.

When I treat the marriage of the savages, I will recount how their children

are equipped from birth. As for the children above the age of three or four years, I especially took great pleasure in watching the little boys, whom they call *conomi-miri*; plump and chubby (much more so than those over here), with their bodkins of white bone in their split lips, the hair shaved in their style, and sometimes with their bodies painted, they never failed to come dancing out in a troop to meet us when they saw us arrive in their villages. They would tag behind us and play up to us, repeating continually in their babble, *"Contoüassat, amabé pinda"*: that is, "My friend and my ally, give me some fishhooks." If thereupon we yielded (which I have often done), and tossed ten or twelve of the smallest hooks into the sand and dust, they would rush to pick them up; it was great sport to see this swarm of naked little rascals stamping on the earth and scratching it like rabbits.

During that year or so when I lived in that country, I took such care in observing all of them, great and small, that even now it seems to me that I have them before my eyes, and I will forever have the idea and image of them in my mind. But their gestures and expressions are so completely different from ours, that it is difficult, I confess, to represent them well by writing or by pictures. To have the pleasure of it, then, you will have to go see and visit them in their own country. "Yes," you will say, "but the plank is very long." That is true, and so if you do not have a sure foot and a steady eye, and are afraid of stumbling, do not venture down that path.

We have yet to see more fully, as the matters that I treat present themselves, what their houses are like, and to see their household utensils, their ways of sleeping, and other ways of doing things.

Before closing this chapter, however, I must respond both to those who have written and to those who think that the frequenting of these naked savages, and especially of the women, arouses wanton desire and lust. Here, briefly, is what I have to say on this point. While there is ample cause to judge that, beyond the immodesty of it, seeing these women naked would serve as a predictable enticement to concupiscence; yet, to report what was commonly perceived at the time, this crude nakedness in such a woman is much less alluring than one might expect. And I maintain that the elaborate attire, paint, wigs, curled hair, great ruffs, farthingales, robes upon robes, and all the infinity of trifles with which the women and girls over here disguise themselves and of which they never have enough, are beyond comparison the cause of more ills than the ordinary nakedness of the savage women—whose natural beauty is by no means inferior to that of the others. If decorum allowed me

to say more, I make bold to say that I could resolve all the objections to the contrary, and I would give reasons so evident that no one could deny them. Without going into it further, I defer concerning the little that I have said about this to those who have made the voyage to the land of Brazil, and who, like me, have seen both their women and ours.

I do not mean, however, to contradict what the Holy Scripture says about Adam and Eve, who, after their sin, were ashamed when they recognized that they were naked, nor do I wish in any way that this nakedness be approved; indeed, I detest the heretics who have tried in the past to introduce it over here, against the law of nature (which on this particular point is by no means observed among our poor Americans).

But what I have said about these savages is to show that, while we condemn them so austerely for going about shamelessly with their bodies entirely uncovered, we ourselves, in the sumptuous display, superfluity, and excess of our own costume, are hardly more laudable. And, to conclude this point, I would to God that each of us dressed modestly, and more for decency and necessity than for glory and worldliness.

Pictures of Brazil

From the time that Vespucci arrived in Brazil, images of that land began to circulate in Europe. Those pictures included a 1505 broadside that purported to show a Tupinamba settlement, with individuals dressed in feathers in the foreground engaging in a variety of activities (including a mother nursing an infant) while European sailing vessels arrive in the background. The Tupinambas are gathered under what appears to be a hut with a thatched roof, with beams holding various human body parts, apparently drying before being consumed. Images that appeared in Sebastian Münster's Cosmographia Univeralis, *published in 1552, also demonstrate cannibalism: in one memorable image two Tupinambas stand alongside a table happily chopping up some unfortunate victim.*

The pictures that appear here illustrated the accounts of Hans Stade and Jean de Léry. Each corresponds to particular segments of their travel accounts. The artist who created the first image is unknown; the rest were engraved by Theodor de Bry, who was also responsible for the images that appeared in other illustrated books in the late sixteenth century. The images from his America series, including these pictures of Brazil, are among the most well-known visual images of any sixteenth-century population.

The pictures depict memorable scenes in the narratives: Stade witnessing cannibal acts; the title page of de Bry's book, in which cannibalism can be found in three distinct scenes; the flying fish that Léry described; a Tupinamba ritual; Brazilian mourning customs; and a vivid depiction of the roasting and eating of human body parts.

Figure 7. Stade and the Cannibals

Hans Stade was obsessed with the fear that he was going to be killed and eaten. The picture here represents a composite of scenes described in his text. Stade, the bearded figure, can be seen being held on his knees as one Tupinamba prepares to hit him, and gesticulating toward a decapitated corpse; limbs roast over open fires. This image can be found in the earliest published version of Stade's account: Warhaftig historia und beschreibung eyner landschafte der Wilden/ Nacketen/ Grimmigen Menschstresser Leuten in der Newenwelt America gelegen *(Marpurg, 1557).*

Figure 8. Tupinamba Cannibals

Figure 9. Tupinamba Cannibals

Almost forty years after the first publication of Stade's account, the Flemish engraver Theodor de Bry offered another version. He coupled the account with the narrative of Jean de Léry in Americae Tertia Pars, *published in Frankfurt am Main in 1592. The title page for that volume was among the most notable of the sixteenth century, featuring three Tupinamba cannibals: a man chewing on a human leg, a woman gnawing on a forearm, and a toddler perched on her shoulder apparently waiting for a piece of flesh. At the bottom of the title page and on the picture from the inside of the book, the viewer can see such behavior in its own setting, with Tupinamba men and women alike consuming human body parts roasting over an open fire. The child from the cover can be seen in the lower right corner, eating a human finger.*

Léry offered his readers a detailed account of how the Tupinambas prepared the body. They sliced the body open and "in order to incite their children to share their vengefulness, take them one at a time and rub their bodies, arms, thighs, and legs with the blood of their enemies." Once they had cut the body into pieces—"no butcher" in France "could more quickly dismember a sheep"—the "old women (who, as I have said, have an amazing appetite for human flesh) are all assembled beside it to receive the fat that drips off along the posts of the big, high wooden grills, and exhort the men to do what it takes to provide them always with such meat. Licking their fingers, they say 'Yguatou': that is, 'It is good'" [(image) De Bry, Americae Tertia Pars, *Frankfurt, 1592; (text) Léry,* History of a Voyage, *126].*

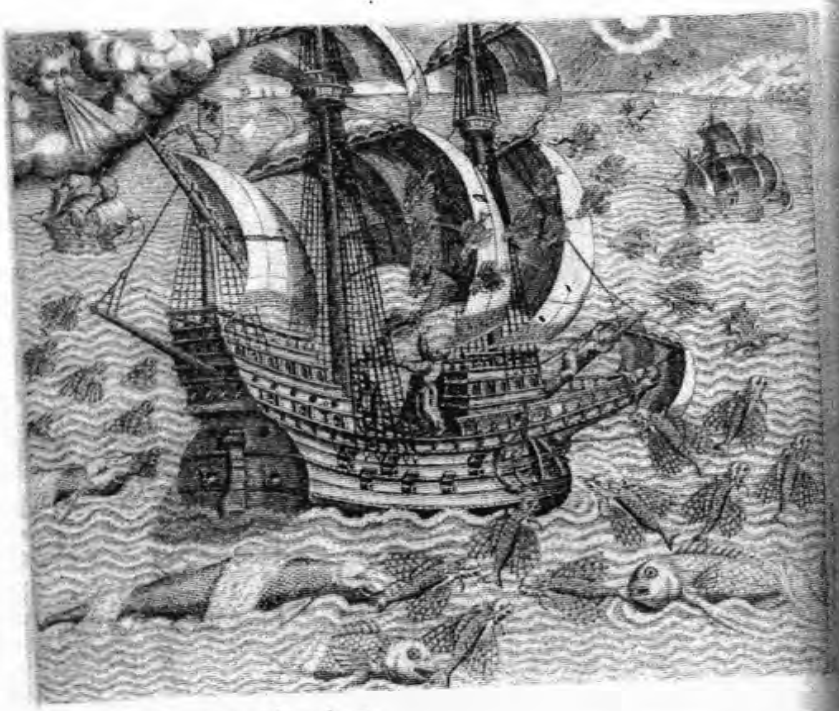

Figure 10. Flying Fish in the Atlantic

The missionary Jean de Léry's account included fantastic scenes of flying fish leaping out of the sea while his ship crossed the Atlantic. Some of those fish landed on the decks of the Europeans' vessels, providing welcome sustenance to the travelers. These "poor flying fish, whether they are in the water or in the air, are never at rest," Léry wrote. "For when they are in the sea, the albacore and other big fish, pursuing them to eat them, wage continual war; and if they try to escape by flight, there are certain sea-birds that seize and feed on them" (Léry, History of a Voyage, 15). *De Bry captured the essence of the text in this illustration. The image did more than provide visual evidence to support the travel account. By representing at least some of the Atlantic's denizens in this way, his vision contradicted the many images of the Atlantic which emphasized the dangers to be found in its waters, including the sea monsters awaiting the unwary who crossed their paths (de Bry,* Americae Tertia Pars, *Frankfurt, 1592).*

Figure 11. Tupinamba Dance

Europeans who traveled to the Western Hemisphere often wrote about native tobacco uses. For much of the sixteenth century, the plant seemed to be a panacea to Europeans, who read accounts of the ways that it could be used to cure an astonishing variety of human ailments. Yet at the same time that travelers offered reports testifying to the plant's medicinal potential, images such as this scene from de Bry's illustration of Léry's account also suggested the close links between the plant and what Europeans believed were savage customs or worship of the devil. In this picture a small group of European men, evident in the top right corner, survey the scene but do not participate in it, despite the temptations of tobacco. In describing the use of tobacco in an indigenous ritual, Léry wrote that those in the middle of the circle blow "the smoke in all directions on the other savages" and "say to them, 'So that you may overcome your enemies, receive all of you the spirit of strength'" (Léry, History of a Voyage, 142). *By the early seventeenth century, when Europeans began to enjoy the sensations of smoking and used tobacco for enjoyment instead of only as a cure, some critics made the link between the weed and its use by Native Americans (de Bry,* Americae Tertia Pars, *Frankfurt, 1592).*

Figure 12. Tupinambas Crying

According to Jean de Léry, Tupinamba Indians cried on two occasions: when greeting a traveler and in mourning. In the first instance, the missionary noted that "as soon as the visitor has arrived in the house" of the host, "he is seated on a cotton bed suspended in the air, and remains there for a short while without saying a word. Then the women come and surround the bed, crouching with their buttocks against the ground and with both hands over their eyes; in this manner, weeping their welcome to the visitor, they will say a thousand things in his praise."

But crying also took place in more familiar circumstances to the Europeans. When a member of a Tupinamba community died, especially if the person was a household head, the singing of a village "is suddenly turned to tears," as Léry reported, "and they lament so loudly that if we were in a village where someone had recently died, either we didn't try to find a bed there, or we didn't expect to sleep that night." He watched the preparations of the corpse for burial, noting that their graves were round instead of rectangular and the deceased's limbs bound together and then the dead placed almost in a sitting position in the hole. "If it is some worthy elder who has died," he added, "he will be entombed in his house, enveloped in his cotton bed; buried with him will be some necklaces, feathers and other objects that he used to wear when he was alive" [(image) De Bry, America Tertia Pars, *Frankfurt, 1592; (text) Léry,* History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, *164, 173–175].*

Document 24

The New Found Worlde, or Antarctike (1568)

By André Thevet, *The New Found Worlde, or Antarctike* (London, 1568)

André Thevet (1516?–1592) was no neophyte when he crossed the Atlantic Ocean on a voyage that took him to Brazil in 1555. He had by that point been traveling since the 1540s and had already produced an important travel account, titled Cosmographie de Levant, *which had been published in Lyons in 1554 after he returned from a four-year journey to the East. That book described his travels in Venice, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Athens, and Constantinople*

His Brazilian journey was briefer than he had intended. Only ten weeks after he arrived, Thevet became ill and decided to return to France, which he reached in January 1556. He later claimed that he had seen parts of North America, including Florida and possibly even Canada, but there is no proof that he ever made such a journey. As a result, his accounts have always been suspect, especially in the minds of a rival such as Jean de Léry, who was skeptical about all of Thevet's claims. Still, despite the hostility that he received—which was based at least in part on the fact that Thevet was a Catholic and his critics tended to be Protestants—Thevet managed to find printers eager to publish his account. Les Singularitez de la France antarctique, *published in Paris in 1557, contained his first substantial writings about the Western Hemisphere. An Italian version was published in Venice in 1561. Nine years after the first printing in Paris, an English-language edition appeared and found at least one well-known reader: Sir Walter Ralegh, who later referred to Thevet's writings in his own work.*[11]

The parts of Thevet's account here focus on particular aspects of the society of the Tupinambas, particularly the ways that they understood their dreams, the importance of visions in their society, and their belief in the immortality of the soul. Given his brief time in Brazil, it is certainly possible that Thevet

11. For details on Thevet's life and writings, see Roger Schlesinger and Arthur P. Stabler, eds., *André Thevet's North America: A Sixteenth-Century View* (Kingston, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986), xvii–xli; and Frank Lestrigant, *Mapping the Renaissance World: The Geographical Imagination in the Age of Discovery*, trans. David Fausett (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994; orig. pub. Paris, 1991).