‘Geleerdster der Landbeschryveren’? Adriaan Reland Mapping Persia and Japan, 1705–1715

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In 1764 the Amsterdam learned journal *Maandelyke uittreksels, of Boekzaal der geleerde waerelt* called Adriaan Reland ‘den geleerdsten der Landbeschryveren’, ‘the most learned of land-describers’.¹ Reland had won such praise with his short treatise on the location of the earthly paradise.² Yet contemporaries might have been tempted to extend this judgement to another strand of his geographical-historical studies too, to cartography proper. For cartography was indeed one of the many facets of Reland’s scholarly pursuits. He published standalone maps as well as geographically informed works which relied on maps as a central part of their argument. His last major work, the two-volume *Palaestina ex monumentis veteribus illustrata* of 1714,³ constantly mapped the features of ancient Palestine discussed in the text to thematic maps dispersed throughout the book. Of all of Reland’s works this would be the one best suited to the heading of ‘land-description’, as it clearly illustrates his method of combining maps with further research on the topic on the one hand and of relying on contemporary indigenous sources in drafting these maps on the other. In the case of the Holy Land these were Biblical sources as well as ancient authors writing on Palestine, above all Flavius Josephus. Reland had projected an edition of this work but was not able to carry it out before his death. The question I am going to ask in this chapter is whether this twofold approach to cartography can also be found in Reland’s standalone maps. If this were the case, these maps might be aligned with, and integrated in, his overarching research patterns more closely than has been argued so far.

To do this I will focus on two maps by Reland: his 1705 map of Persia⁴ and his 1715 map of Japan.⁵ In the beginning of the eighteenth century Reland was

1 Van Wolde, ‘Wederlegging van Jonas Kortens gevoelen’, p. 172: ‘Het andere heeft tot uitvinder den geleerdsten der Landbeschryveren, Adriaan Reland’.

2 Reland, ‘Dissertatio de situ paradisi terrestris’, in his *Dissertationum miscellanearum pars prima*, pp. 1–55.

3 Idem, *Palaestina ex monumentis veteribus illustrata*.

4 Idem, *Imperii Persici delineatio*.

5 Idem, *Imperium Japonicum*.

acclaimed as a Dutch authority on Asia, but this was mostly due to his reputation as a known specialist in the languages of the Near East.⁶ His cartographic endeavours were long seen to constitute no more than a sideline of his scholarly production.⁷ Now, while Reland's map of Japan has attained a certain prominence in the history of cartography and has been the subject of substantial research already, his map of Persia has hitherto been somewhat neglected by researchers. To my knowledge there has not been any publication dedicated to it. It is not even mentioned in de Bruijn's summary of Reland's contributions to Iranian studies in the Netherlands.⁸ Cyrus Alai in his current standard reference work on maps of Persia seems not to have known who Reland was, as we see from his description of a copy of this map:

There is a decorative dedication cartouche in the lower right corner of the map, inscribed with the Name of Nicolao Wizen, a Dutch consul, signed by A Relando, the author of the geographical text. A portrait and the coat-of-arms of the said consul are incorporated into the cartouche. The name of Petrus Schenk as the mapmaker appears in a smaller cartouche in the lower left corner of the map.⁹

This exemplifies a familiar phenomenon in the Reland reception so far: while some of his works have received some share of scholarly attention, the majority have not. His *Palaestina illustrata* is likewise overshadowed by his earlier work on Islam, *De religione Mohammedica* of 1705.¹⁰ Such lacunae have, if not caused, at least been reinforced by the dearth of primary sources, as the greater part of Reland's papers, manuscripts and letters have been lost since the middle of the eighteenth century.

Where the two maps under consideration here are concerned, there are at least some letters which touch upon them. Reland communicated his map of Persia to his close correspondent and friend Gijsbert Cuper (1644–1716), mayor of Deventer and professor at the Deventer Athenaeum, on 25 April 1705, shortly after it came off the press.¹¹ He also announced his progress on the map of Japan to Cuper on 13 August 1714, and sent him the finished print on

6 Bastiaensen, 'Adrien Reland a la recherche d'une méthode comparative', pp. 45–46.

7 Cf. Kiss, 'The Cartography of Japan during the Middle Tokugawa Era', p. 103.

8 Bruijn, 'Iranian Studies in the Netherlands', pp. 170–171.

9 Alai, *General Maps of Persia 1477–1925*, p. 89.

10 Reland, *De religione Mohammedica libri duo* (1705). A second edition was published in 1717.

11 The Hague, Royal Library, 72 H 11 CL 105 (1704–1709), Adriaan Reland to Gijsbert Cuper, Utrecht, 25 April 1705.

20 February 1715.¹² We know that he really did so, because, in contrast with most such cases, the maps have never been removed from these two letters and are still attached to them in the archival files. On 9 April 1705 Reland wrote a letter to the Italian scholar Antonio Magliabechi (1633–1714) announcing that he would send him a copy of the *Imperii Persici delineatio* when it came off the press in a few days' time.¹³ On 20 March 1715 Reland sent a copy of *Imperium Japonicum* to the director of the Prussian Royal Library in Berlin, the noted Orientalist Maturin Veyssière de la Croze (1661–1739), with whom he exchanged letters on Asian alphabets.¹⁴ Moreover, at least in the case of the map of Japan, Reland communicated it in wider circles too, for on 23 June 1714 he quite explicitly mentioned it in a letter to the editor of the *Journal des Savants*, Jean-Paul Bignon (1662–1743) in Paris, to whom he would later dedicate the finished product.

You might perhaps ask whether this same geographical map of the Japanese Empire, divided into 66 regions (whose true individual names I have written in Japanese and Latin letters), will be the best I have issued. I have [used] many maps sent from Japan itself, from our Indian Society [= the VOC], many hand-drawn ones by seamen accustomed to do so, and from other sources. I try to remove from all these the most egregious errors and lies which so far occupy the maps, and because of which the geography of this part of the globe, though not unknown, merits only little trust.¹⁵

This letter was in itself a follow-up to a letter to Bignon sent ten days earlier. With this first letter Reland had notified Bignon about a rather large shipment

12 The Hague, Royal Library, 72 H 11 CL 105 (1710–1716), Adriaan Reland to Gijsbert Cuper, Utrecht, 13 August 1714; Adriaan Reland to Gijsbert Cuper, surroundings of Utrecht ('in hortis suburbanis'), 20 February 1715.

13 Targioni Tozzetti (ed.), *Clarorum Belgarum ad Ant. Magliabechium nonnullosque alios epistolae*, p. 384.

14 University of Tartu, Universitas Tartuensis DSpace, Adriaan Reland to Maturin Veyssière de la Croze, Utrecht, 20 March 1715.

15 The Hague, Royal Library, 72 D 37, 11 A, Adriaan Reland to Jean-Paul Bignon, Utrecht, 23 June 1714: 'Rogabis forsitan ipse met. Mappa geographica imperii Japonici, divisa in LXVI regiones (quarum singulis vera nomina adscripsi caractere Latino & Japonico) primum erit quod a manu mea proficiscetur. Plures actus sum mappas ex ipsa Japonia mittas, plures quas Societas nostra India, manu pictas nautis dare consuevit, et alia praesidia. His nixus errores crassissimos et mendas quae obsederunt mappas hactenus omnis tollam, & de e geographia particulae hujus orbis terrarum non ignobilis, haud male me meritum confido'.

of books he had sent to Bignon via the publishing house of Fritsch & Böhm in Rotterdam.¹⁶ In the later letter we read that the parcel included ten copies of Reland's *Palaestina illustrata* with clear instructions about the people to whom Bignon should pass on those nine not destined for himself, plus a stack of additional treatises and copperplate tables, and Reland now seemed to worry that something might go wrong with the shipping.¹⁷ I know of no similar letters connected with Reland's policy of distributing his maps, whether it concerns the map of Japan or that of Persia, but I am inclined to believe that he might have used similar means of disseminating his works in order to draw greater attention to them. But to be able to do so, he first had to procure something which he could advertise. So how did he draw up his maps?

1 *Imperii Persici delineatio*, 1705

For his map of Persia Reland claimed to have used indigenous source materials: 'drafted from the most capable Persian and Arabic geographers' as the subtitle states.¹⁸ Unfortunately he did not go into detail about these sources. Reland was a capable Arabist with an interest in Persian and has even been termed the 'only important contemporary Dutch scholar of the Persian language'.¹⁹ It seems perfectly possible that he did indeed access such materials; but which ones?

There are only few Early Modern maps of Arabic or Persian origin available, so it is hardly possible to determine similarities just by visual comparison. European cartographers contemporary with Reland usually based their maps on written descriptions when they included regional material from the Near and Middle East,²⁰ and it may be supposed that Reland based his map on similar sources. This is hardly surprising given that cartography in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was a craft based on division of labour between a cartographer, a draughtsman, and an engraver. There were

16 Preserved in an early twentieth-century copy in Leiden, University Library, BPL 885 (Rabault-Risseuw), Adriaan Reland to Jean-Paul Bignon, Utrecht, 13 June 1714.

17 The Hague, Royal Library, 72 D 37, 11 A: 'Quum ante paucos dies literas ad te dederim quibus significari me aliquot exempla Palaestinae meae Roterodamum ad Fritschium misisse ut ad te illa curaret, miraberis forsitan me tam lentum nuper nunc rursus ad te epistolam exarare'.

18 Reland, *Imperii Persici delineatio*: 'Ex scriptis potissimum geographicis arabum et persarum tentata ab Adriano Relando'.

19 Floor, 'Dutch-Persian Relations'.

20 Allen, 'The Sources for G. Delisle's "Carte des Pays Voisins de la Mer Caspiene" of 1723', p. 139.

mapmakers who could perform more than one, or even all, of these tasks but this was rarely the case. So what the cartographer would hand over to the draughtsman would in most cases be a textual matrix defining by coordinates which geographical features would have to be placed where on the map, perhaps with some added sketches. This constitutes what Alai described as being 'the author of the geographical text' in the quotation above. The draughtsman would convert this into a drawing which the engraver would then prepare for the press.

For his *Imperii Persici delineatio* Reland relied on the services of Pieter or Petrus Schenk (1660–1715), a German-born engraver and map-maker residing in Amsterdam. The use of geographical tables for the coordinates of cities, rivers, mountains and coastlines to prepare the description, which he would then forward to Schenk for the creation of the actual map, would have been obvious.

The geographical tables of the medieval Muslim cartographers Ulugh Beg (1393/4–1448/9) and Ja'far Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (1201–1274) were known amongst European scholars,²¹ as they had been translated into Latin and published already in 1648 by John Greaves (1602–1652).²² And from Reland's *Palaestina illustrata* we see that he used 'Alfaras; Kias; Ptolemaeus; Ibn Said; Albiruni' for the compilation of his maps of Palestine.²³ This suggests that in 1714 Reland used geographical or astronomical tables by Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Tarkhān Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī (d. 950) (= Alfaras), Sa'īd b. Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Sa'īd al-Qurṭubī (1029–1070) (= Ibn Said), and Abū al-Rayḥān Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī (973–1048) (= Albiruni). This does not mean that he already did so in 1705, although there is no reason why he should not already have known about this material. Al-Bīrūnī's calculations in particular became the basis of much of European cartography on Persia, complemented since the seventeenth century by the work of Ismā'il b. 'Alī Malik Mu'ayyad 'Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Fidā' (1273–1331),²⁴ on whose work the French Geographer Royal Guillaume Delisle (1675–1726) based his map of Persia of 1721.²⁵

But whichever of these sources Reland had used to lay the groundwork for his approximation of the shape of the Persian Empire, as he called it on his map, they all were—as geographical descriptions always are—shaped according to the perspectives and needs of their makers. To obtain as close as possible

21 Cf. Brancaforte, *Visions of Persia. Mapping the Travels of Adam Olearius*, pp. 180–182.

22 Greaves, *Binae tabulae geographicae*.

23 Reland, *Palaestina illustrata*, vol. 2, p. 511.

24 Alai, *General Maps of Persia*, p. 203.

25 According to Hismann (ed.), *Neue Welt- und Menschengeschichte*, vol. 1, p. 389.

an approximation of the physical geography posed a serious problem. Medieval and Early Modern Persian cartographers knew little about the Caspian Sea because it was seldom navigated at the time.²⁶ On the whole Persian cartographers had little interest in the body of water bordering their realm in the North,²⁷ since they still based much of their work predominantly on the results of Ulugh Beg.²⁸ This did not mean that they could not devise innovative solutions on this basis. The only two known Persian world maps from the seventeenth century are essentially based on Ptolemy but their unknown makers ingeniously adapted his approach to a curved globe in order to be able always to determine the correct *qibla*, the prayer direction towards Mecca.²⁹ Yet for the coordinates of the cities they inserted into their adapted Ptolemaic grid they relied on Ulugh Beg's tables.³⁰ So whatever Persian sources Reland perused, he had in any case access to those works which the Persian cartographers themselves viewed as the state of the art of their discipline. But he could not avoid the problem that these still embodied a particular perspective. This had already prompted other European geographers to resort to similar solutions regarding the shape of Persia and the Caspian Sea. The first of these seems to have been Nicolas de Fer (c. 1647–1720), who, in 1685, published a map with similar geographical features.³¹

Now, Reland might also have had access to another source for material on Persia through his personal contacts, in this case via Cornelis de Bruyn (1652–1727), to whom he referred as 'amicus noster' in 1714.³² De Bruyn had only visited Persia itself in 1704 during an extensive voyage through Russia, Persia, India and Indonesia between 1701 and 1708. He published a long account of it in 1711,³³ which was hugely successful in the book market. While this would of course have been too late for the map of Persia, which was finished in 1705, De Bruyn had been on a journey to the Levant, including Syria and Egypt, in 1698, which had also led to the publication of a travel book in the same year.³⁴ Cornelis de Bruyn was also a long-time protégé of Nicolaes Witsen (1641–1717),³⁵ for many years one of the directors of the VOC's Amsterdam chamber, and,

26 Planhol, 'Caspian Sea. I. Geography'.

27 Alai, *Special Maps of Persia 1477–1925*, p. 117.

28 Allen, 'Sources', p. 149.

29 King, 'Two Iranian World Maps', p. 66.

30 Idem, p. 69.

31 Cf. Alai, *General Maps of Persia*, p. 87.

32 Reland, *Palaestina illustrata*, vol. 2, p. 635.

33 Bruyn, *Cornelis de Bruins reizen over Moskovie*.

34 Idem, *Reizen door de vermaardste deelen van Klein Asia*.

35 Rietbergen, 'Witsen's World', p. 127.

since the publication of his map and two-volume book on 'North and East Tartary' in 1688 and 1692 respectively, esteemed as the greatest authority in matters of North Asian geography and cartography.³⁶ Fittingly it was to 'the most esteemed Nicolaes Witsen' that Reland dedicated his map of Persia in 1705.³⁷ There was an exchange of letters between Witsen and Reland of which at least two letters have survived, but these contain nothing about maps.³⁸ So how exactly Reland gained his knowledge about Persian geography and who the 'most capable Persian and Arabic geographers' were whom he claimed to work from must be left open. There is a hint in the auction catalogue of his son Johan Hubertus Reland (1716–1760), who had inherited his father's manuscripts and papers, which points to a Persian geographic table.³⁹

But regardless of how Reland got access to the sources of information which he utilized for his *Imperii Persici delineatio*, the most important thing about them was that he could claim that they were genuine. Once the map was printed, it proved a successful product. Apart from being printed in several atlases and map collections by the original publishers, the map proved a success. This also emerges from the fact that, although with some delay, it was pirated by other mapmakers, a fairly common phenomenon in the early eighteenth century.

The Nuremberg engraver and publisher Christoph I Weigel (1654–1725) copied Reland's map of Persia in 1719,⁴⁰ as did the Augsburg engraver and map publisher Matthias Seutter (1678–1757) in 1720.⁴¹ That Seutter would have done so is unlikely to have been a coincidence, since he had learned engraving and map-making as an apprentice to the Nuremberg engraver and map-maker Johann Baptist Homann (1664–1724) before he established his own publishing house in his native Augsburg in 1707. Homann would also use Reland's map of Persia in compiling one of his own around 1720, of which I will say more below,

36 Witsen, *Nieuwe lantkaarte van het noorder en ooster deel van Asia en Europa*; idem, *Noord en Oost Tartarye*.

37 Reland, *Imperii Persici delineatio*: 'Amplissimo Viro Nicolao Witsen. Virtutibus suis et praeclaris in rem literariam meritis non minus ac Consulatu Urbis Amstelodamensis, honorificentissimis Legationibus aliisque summis muneribus illustri'.

38 See the contribution by Anna Pytlowany in this volume for details.

39 'Descriptio totius universi continens longitudes, & latitudes urbium, enarrationem climatum, montium, fluviorum & rerum in orbe memorabilium, auctore Abulhazen Saad Ibn Ali', perhaps by Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Sa'īd (d. 1044); see *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum*, Manuscripts, p. 12, Oct. n° 24 (and Appendix 2, A oct 24 in this volume). I thank Bart Jaski for pointing me to this.

40 Cf. Brancaforte, 'German Baroque and Enlightenment Cartographers and their Representation of the Persian Gulf from 1650 to 1760', pp. 376–377.

41 Seutter, *Nova imperii Persici delineatio*; cf. Alai, *General Maps of Persia*, pp. 145–146.

and he copied the map of Japan. Nuremberg thus served as a kind of relay station for Reland's work in Germany, not only for his maps as copied by Weigel, Homann, and Seutter, but also for larger printed works. In 1716, the Nuremberg publisher Peter Conrad Monath (c. 1683–1747) would issue an edited version of Adriaan Reland's *Palaestina illustrata*,⁴² which was regarded as an only thinly veiled pirated copy inferior to the original. Nuremberg was still an important centre for the printing of geographic knowledge and this may explain why Reland's works were copied there in the first decades of the eighteenth century. It also raises the question of whether there was any more tangible connection, but since I have not yet come across any evidence I cannot say any more about this here.

2 *Imperium Japonicum*, 1715

Reland never left Europe—not even the Netherlands—so that he had to rely on his source materials. This had been the case in drawing up his map of Persia and was still more so in setting to work on the map of Japan ten years later, for genuine Japanese material was even harder to come by than Persian material. While information about Japan was accessible in many European travel accounts, missionary letters and printed treatises of all kinds, these sources were often contradictory, and only very imprecise where many subjects were concerned. So how could this be overcome?

The obvious answer was to ask those who had really been there, and this meant the VOC. Via the VOC trading post at Dejima in the harbour of Nagasaki a small but steady stream of people and material objects travelled back and forth between Japan and Europe, so if genuine Japanese sources were to be found in Europe, they would most probably have been connected to the VOC. Apart from his connections to Nicolaes Witsen, Adriaan Reland seems to have had access to the cartographical collection of Benjamin Dutry (1668–1751), another high-ranking VOC official, who owned Japanese maps.⁴³ It is most likely that Reland found the model for his *Imperium Japonicum* in this collection, although the exact nature of his contacts with Dutry is hard to determine. The legend to *Imperium Japonicum* explicitly stated that the sources were ...

by the most learned Mr. Paul Collignon, once one of our students, communicated to me from the library of the most renowned and refined

42 Monath (ed.), Reland, *Hadriani Relandi Palaestina ex monumentis veteribus illustrata*.

43 Barron, 'Europäische Karten und Kartographen', p. 17.

Mr. Benjamin Dutry, magistrate in Haeften and master of the East India Company.⁴⁴

Obviously Reland had not approached Dutry directly but rather indirectly via the above-mentioned Paul Collignon (d. 1728) who seems to have been attending Reland's lectures. Where and how this happened is difficult to say, as there is no entry for Collignon in the matriculation roll of Utrecht University. Collignon is a somewhat elusive figure, but the scattered evidence which I have been able to find states that he was a native of Hesse-Cassel who died as minister of the Dutch Church in London in 1728.⁴⁵ Collignon moved to this London post in 1718 after serving as minister in Haeften,⁴⁶ where Dutry was the local authority,⁴⁷ so that a connection between the two does not seem unlikely. For want of better evidence I thus assume that Reland did indeed approach Dutry via Collignon and thus got hold of the model for his map of Japan. It is clear from the list of his manuscripts auctioned off after the death of his son that Reland actually owned works written in Japanese and Chinese containing geographical information. These were city and cadastre plans, and one fully fledged map.⁴⁸ This may well have referred to the model for *Imperium Japonicum*.

As Walter has pointed out, this model was a contemporary woodblock map by the Japanese ukiyo-e artist and painter Ryūsen (琉宣, Ishikawa Toshiyuki 石川寿之, d. 1715) from 1691,⁴⁹ the *Dai-Nihonkoku-Ō-Ezu* (大日本國大繪圖,

44 Reland, *Imperium Japonicum*: 'per virum eruditissimum PAULUM COLLIGNON, nuper auditorum nostrum, communicata mecum ex bibliotheca spectatissimi atque humanissimi viri BENJAMINIS DUTRY, Toparchae in Hasten et magistri societatis Indicae orientalis' (capitals in the original).

45 's Gravezande, *Twee honderd jarige gedachtenis van het eerste synode der Nederlandsche kerken onder het kruis, en, zo in, als buiten Nederland, allesins verstrooid*, p. 172; *Naam-Register der predikanten, zo van de Nederduitsche als Walsche kerken*, p. 140.

46 'Kerknieuws, *Maendelyke uittreksels, of Boekzael der geleerde werelt*, vol. 6, no. 6, p. 749.

47 Cf. Gelders Archief, Toegang 0002, Leenkamer van Gelre en Zutphen, 220a, Stukken betreffende de heerlijkheid Haeften, 1712–1729.

48 *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum* p. 13, among the 'Manuscripta Sinica & Japonica': 'Speculum Jedo iv. vol.'; 'Liber Japonicus Geographicus continens descriptionem Urbis Miaco & praecipuarum partium ejus, cum figuris'; 'Tres tabellae in quibus depicta est Jedo metropolis Imperii Japonici'; 'Tabula geographica totius imperii Japonici'; 'Duae tabellae in quibus depictae Urbes Japoniae Osacka & Miako'; 'Liber Sinicus varios conspectus praediorum & regionum eleganter delineatos cum descriptione' (see also Appendix 2, A MSJ, e, h-m). I thank Anna Pytlowany and Bart Jaski for pointing me to these.

49 Walter, 'Zur Typologie gedruckter Japankarten (1595–1800)', p. 45.

Large Map of Great Japan),⁵⁰ an enlarged version of Ryūsen's earlier map *Honchō Zukan Kōmoku* (本朝圖鑑綱目, Outline map of our country) with added details.⁵¹ The individual sheet which Reland worked from was an undated manuscript copy of this map, which George Kiss already identified in 1947.⁵² The result of this decision to rely on a Japanese model in drawing up his map was that, in Reland's map, Japan assumed a shape that had no precedent in European cartography.⁵³ Kiss speculated that the main reason for this departure from European cartographic production of the time was the unsolved problem of Hokkaidō, or whether the northern parts of the Japanese archipelago were part of the Asian mainland. As European cartographers had so far failed to produce a satisfactorily solution, Reland might have chosen to rely on Japanese authors instead, assuming that they would know better.⁵⁴

A further hint that he relied on additional genuine Japanese sources is that in the top right corner of the map, where the south-western tip of Hokkaidō was depicted, the fortress of Matsumae, a Japanese outpost only constructed in 1605, was marked, and the strait of Tsugaru separating Honshū and Hokkaidō was approximated relatively well.⁵⁵ Information on both these features of his map was hardly available to Europeans in Reland's day, as becomes clear from the presentation of Reland's map in the third volume of the travel compilation series *Recueil de voyages au Nord* published by Jean-Frédéric Bernard (c. 1683–1744) in 1718,⁵⁶ where it was contrasted with a letter by Guillaume Delisle who claimed, also by referring to Japanese evidence, that the strait of Tsugaru was indeed a gulf, and that both Hokkaidō and Honshū were thus directly connected to the Asian mainland.⁵⁷ Reland's map was supposed to

50 A digitized copy of 1717 is available via the University of British Columbia (see bibliography).

51 A digitized copy of 1689 is available via the University of British Columbia (see bibliography).

52 Kiss, 'The Cartography of Japan', p. 114.

53 Walter, *Japan mit den Augen des Westens gesehen*, p. 45.

54 Kiss, 'The Cartography of Japan', pp. 118–119.

55 Ibid., p. 109.

56 Bernard (ed.), *Recueil de voyages u Nord*, vol. 3, p. 73 (also 2nd edn., *Recueil de voyages au Nord*, vol. 4, p. 32).

57 'Article CLIV: Recueil de voyages au Nord, contenant divers memoires très utiles au commerce & à la navigation', pp. 2011–2012: 'Une Lettre de M. de Lisle sur la question, si le Japon est une isle? A la verité les cartes represent ordinairement comme une isle: mais cet habile Geographe a cru devoir le joindre au continent de Jesso, ou de Jeço, sur le temoinage d'une carte que les Japonois firent voir aux Hollandois, & qui assurent que la mer entre Zungar & Jesso est une golfe qui n'avance que quarante lieuës entre les terres. S'il n'y a de communication entre Japon & Jesso que par mer, c'est parce qu'elle est impraticable par terre, à cause des montagnes qu'il n'est pas possible de traverser. Cependant

supply evidence to the contrary, which amounted to ranking his judgement on the matter as high as that of the French Geographer Royal.

Relying on Ryūsen's map would seem a sound choice, as it was hugely popular in Japan itself and went through many editions; but considering the difficulties of the transfer of information between Europe and Japan, it was also a likely choice, as it was more probable for a copy of a widely distributed map to end up in a European collection than for a comparatively rare one to do so. Ryūsen, who himself—like Reland—was no professional cartographer, had relied in 1687 on the *Shinkai Nihon Ō-ezu*, the first woodblock map of Japan to include data from both European material and the Keichō base map.⁵⁸ It thus kept closely to the cartographical tradition of depicting Japan in the so-called Gyōki style, which dated back to eighth- and ninth-centuries' maps attributed to the monk Gyōki (行基, 668–749) and was familiar to the Japanese public, while enhancing the usability of the map by including new cartographical data. The popularity the *Shinkai Nihon Ō-ezu* gained is probably why Ryūsen decided to work up a new edition of it. As in Europe, map-making in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Japan was not only a scientific but also an economic activity, and Ryūsen's products sold well. The *Honchō Zukan Kōmoku* became the standard model for popular woodblock prints of the Japanese main islands throughout the eighteenth century.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, it was not as geographically accurate as it might have been. In making it Ryūsen deselected information that was already available and straightened out the southwest to northeast curvature of the main island of Honshū, which distorted the shape of the country considerably. That this was no problem to the Japanese public was not merely because of a lack of geographical knowledge against which the map could have been measured, but above all because of its function which did not rely on geographical accuracy.

First and foremost, the *Honchō Zukan Kōmoku* and its follow-up, the *Dai-Nihonkoku Ō-Ezu*, were road maps intended as travel guides. Their main feature was that they depicted the overland roads and shipping routes of Japan, the cities in their relation to these, and the travel distances of the individual routes. They even listed roadside inns where travellers might eat and sleep on their journey. The purpose of these maps was to make predictable travel possible throughout the realm of *Dai-Nihonkoku*, Great Japan.⁶⁰ To fulfil

dans une nouvelle carte dressée par M. Reland sur une carte d'un Japonais, & inseré dans ce volume, on voit encore que le Japon est une isle'.

58 Unno, 'Cartography in Japan', p. 412.

59 Unno, *Cartography in the Traditional East and Southeast Asian Societies*, p. 412.

60 Cf. the reproduction in Yamashita, *Japanese Maps of the Edo Period*, pp. 48–49.

this function, a physically correct approximation of the lands depicted was less important than presenting a recognisable image of the country which would allow users to identify at one glance what the map was about and to find the position of the cities of their interest in a short time. Both were facilitated by employing the traditional Gyōki style layout which also had one additional advantage: it was much easier to fit into a rectangular print format than a physically more correct approximation. This made it attractive to both users—who would not have to handle a more unwieldy format while being given a very detailed map—and printers—who thus could cut down on expenses for paper and get a better marketable product—alike. Much like a modern day tube map or railway timetable, the aim of the product was not to provide a correct depiction of the shape of Japan but rather to present a most practical one.

I doubt whether Reland was aware of this. His treatment of the details of Ryūsen's map in drawing up his *Imperium Japonicum* suggests that he was not: he carried over some of the cities, but seems to have done so at random; and he discarded all the city names and, more important still, all the roads. The reason for this is unlikely to have been that he did not understand what this type of map was for, because he had just produced one himself a little earlier. One of the maps included in the first volume of his *Palaestina illustrata* depicted all major roads and routes in ancient Palestine.⁶¹ Most probably he did not want to bother European users with details which were of no use to them—he only kept the names of provinces, both in Chinese characters and in Dutch transliteration—but in doing so he took away the only basis guaranteeing the functionality of the map. Consequently, he was left with a physical shape of Japan which was never intended to be true to the real forms of the country, but which he treated as if it were.

The map which Reland now drew up was published in two versions as a standalone map, by his Utrecht printer Broedelet⁶² and by the specialized map publishers Otten.⁶³ This time he relied on the drawing and etching skills of the well-known Amsterdam engraver Jan Goeree (1670–1731) and his sometime affiliate Balthasar Ruyter.⁶⁴ The *Imperium Japonicum* was promptly reviewed favourably by some learned journals.⁶⁵ Adaptations and reprints followed. It was translated into French under the title of *Le Japon divisé en soissante et six provinces* as an add-on map for the *Recueil de voyages au Nord*, and

61 Reland, *Palaestina illustrata*, vol. 2, p. 422[b].

62 Cf. idem, *Imperium Japonicum*.

63 Cf. idem, *Imperium Japonicum*.

64 I thank Bart Jaski for identifying Ruyter.

65 'Nova Literaria', p. 94; 'Nova Literaria', pp. 239–240; 'Akademienieuws', p. 260; 'Nouvelles Littéraires', p. 182; 'Utrecht', *Neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, pp. 149–150.

also included in Henri Abraham Chatelain's (1684–1743) seven-volume *Atlas historique* in 1719.⁶⁶ Bernard's version shifted the promise of authentic indigenous sources to the subtitle: 'Cette carte est tirée des cartes des Japonois par Monsieur Reland'.⁶⁷ The large maps accompanying the *Recueil de voyages au Nord* were originally sold separately too; the books contained directions about where to glue them in. That Bernard kept the reference to the source material is thus indicative of its advertising value beyond academia proper. Chatelain did the same thing, while doing away with Reland's name; the legend only said that the map was directly copied from Japanese originals.⁶⁸ From a contemporary German remark about the Otten's copy it seems that this was indeed what constituted the major appeal of the map:

Who only has one look at this map cannot refrain from buying it. For first come the names of the provinces, of which there are a great many, all expressed in Japanese characters. Following this at the bottom the coats of arms are presented of not only the emperor but also of the most distinguished persons of rank.⁶⁹

Being part of the cartographical portfolio of the Otten brothers, the map of Japan made its way into some of their collectible atlases. But more important for its distribution and the attention later historians of cartography paid to it was that it was referred to by other map-makers. Johann Caspar Scheuchzer (1702–1729) referred to Reland's map in his edition of Engelbert Kaempfer's maps for the publication of Kaempfer's *History of Japan*⁷⁰ because he based his maps on the same sources, Ryūsen's maps.⁷¹ Although there is no tangible evidence, I regard it as highly likely that Scheuchzer was only inspired to do so

66 Chatelain and Gueudeville, *Atlas historique ou Nouvelle introduction a l'histoire*.

67 A digitized copy of the map is available via Gallica: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b5963179z> (accessed 16 April 2019).

68 Chatelain and Gueudeville, *Atlas historique*, vol. 5, p. 161: 'Cette carte a été copïee exactement sur une pareille faite par les Japons c'est pourquoy on n'y a rien changé. Elle contient la Division de cet Empire en soixante six Royaumes, avec leurs veritables nomes ecrits en nôtre langue & dans la langue du païs'.

69 Hübner, *Museum geographicum*, p. 31: 'Wer diese Charte nur ansiehet, der kan sich nicht enthalten, dieselbe zu kauffen. Denn erstlich sind die Nahmen der Landschafften, derer feine viel sind, alle mit Japonischen Littern exprimiret. Darnach sind unten die Wappen nicht nur des Käysers, sondern auch der vornehmsten Standes-Personen vorgestellt'.

70 Scheuchzer (ed.), Kaempfer, *The History of Japan*.

71 Walter, 'Engelbert Kaempfer und die europäische Kartographie Japans', p. 63.

by Reland's example. Although no direct copy, his map is a true follow-up of Reland's *Imperium Japonicum* in spirit.⁷²

Kaempfer's work became a huge success on the European book market. It was almost instantly translated into Dutch and French,⁷³ and remained a very influential source for European knowledge about Japan for at least one century. Its popularity drew equal attention to Scheuchzer's map,⁷⁴ and thus to a cartographic representation of the archipelago in the style of Reland. Matthias Seutter of Augsburg directly copied Reland's map in 1730—as he had done with Reland's map of Persia ten years earlier—and Isaac Tirion did the same thing in 1740.⁷⁵ Seutter continued to reprint his copy of the *Imperium Japonicum* until 1745.⁷⁶

3 How to Do Things with Maps

While the mapping of Persia and the mapping of Japan seem to be quite different topics from a modern-day perspective, an early eighteenth-century observer might not necessarily have thought so. For both realms were somewhat impenetrable for European scientists, and thus both posed a number of special problems to geographers and cartographers alike, quite apart from the general problem of the shapes of these countries. The two most prominent of these problems might be the shape of the Caspian Sea—in mapping Persia—and the situation of the island of Hokkaidō, then called Ezo (or Yezo)—in mapping Japan. Was the Caspian an oval, as suggested by the strand of European cartography going back to the rediscovery of Ptolemy, and did it stretch from East to West or from North to South? How large was Ezo, and was it connected to the Asian mainland, so that Japan might—at least in part—be a peninsula rather than clearly separated from the continent?

That both phenomena may be seen as not only coincidentally connected becomes clear from the map-making activities of those Europeans who were active in Persia and Japan. Engelbert Kaempfer had already drawn up a manuscript map of the Caspian giving it as oriented from north to south rather than

72 Cf. Scheuchzer, *Het koninkryk Japan verdeelt in acht en zestig provincien*.

73 Scheuchzer (ed.), Kaempfer, *De beschryving van Japan*; Scheuchzer (ed.), Kaempfer, *Histoire naturelle, civile, et ecclesiastique de l'empire du Japon*.

74 Michel, 'Johann Caspar Scheuchzer (1702–1729) und die Herausgabe der *History of Japan*', p. 128.

75 Kiss, 'The Cartography of Japan', p. 119.

76 Seutter, *Imperium Japonicum*, reprinted in Cortazzi, *Isles of Gold*, p. 151.

from east to west, but this map never got into print.⁷⁷ Kaempfer had most probably been perusing the notes he made during his journey to Persia, to which he had taken the overland route via the Oka, the Volga, and the Caspian Sea.⁷⁸ Johann Caspar Scheuchzer, who edited Kaempfer's *History of Japan* and made use of Reland's map of Japan in compiling his own, had already proposed to edit and print Kaempfer's travels through the Eurasian continent as well in 1728.⁷⁹ The map he produced for the *History of Japan*, based on Japanese sources after Reland's mode, featured an inlet in the left upper corner which detailed the situation of Hokkaidō as Scheuchzer saw it, namely as being synonymous with the Kamchatkan peninsula: 'KAMCHATKA. By the Japanese called, OKU JESO, following the newest map of the Russian Empire'.⁸⁰

An even more telling example of the conceptual connection between both topics is provided by a remarkable map penned by Johann Baptist Homann and printed in Nuremberg in 1716, in translation called the *New Geography from the East, most thankfully contained in two most specialist tables, one of which shows the Caspian Sea, the other Kamchatka or the curious land of Ezo*.⁸¹ I would like to argue that the fact that Homann published this map so shortly after Reland's second Map, the *Imperium Japonicum*, came off the press in 1715, is not coincidental. While the *New Geography from the East* did not show much more of Japan than the northern part of Hokkaidō, his follow-up publication *Newest depiction of Asia* a few years later transferred both elements of his 1716 map onto a larger projection of Asia as a whole.⁸² The shape of Japan in this map clearly points to the influence of Reland's *Imperium Japonicum*, although in the legend Homann now only referred to Russian discoveries as his sources. A comparison with an earlier edition of the *Newest depiction of Asia* highlights both the changes which had taken place regarding the Caspian, which in this map was still shown as almost round, and Hokkaidō, which was dramatically oversized and in unclear relation to the unknown boundaries of the Asian mainland.⁸³ For his improved map of the Caspian Homann had obviously really drawn on Russian sources. Through channels yet unclear he seems to have gained early access to the results of the Russian mission to survey the Caspian ordered by tsar Peter II in 1715. Until 1718 this

77 Lazar, 'The Manuscript Maps of Engelbert Kaempfer', pp. 68–69.

78 Cf. Brakensiek, 'Politische Urteilsbildung zwischen Empirie und Tradition. Der Persien-Bericht des Engelbert Kaempfer 1684/85', p. 99.

79 Michel, 'Herausgabe der *History of Japan*', p. 129.

80 Cf. Scheuchzer, *Het koninkryk Japan verdeelt in acht en zestig provintien*.

81 Homann, *Geographica nova ex oriente gratiosissima duabus tabulis specialissimis contenta*.

82 Idem, *Recentissima Asiae delineatio*.

83 Idem, *Asiae Recentissima delineatio*.

mission was led by Aleksandr Bekovič-Čerkasskij (d. 1717), a converted Muslim, and Aleksandr Ivanovič Kožin, and from 1718 until its end in 1720 by Fyodor Ivanovich Soimonov (1692–1780) and Carl van Verden (d. 1731); it resulted in a final map of the Caspian Sea and its surroundings printed in Moscow in 1721.⁸⁴

Homann's physically remarkably accurate depiction of the Caspian differed from everything printed earlier so markedly that we have to assume that he acquired some of the preliminary results of the Russian survey for this part of his map. The second authority in matters of maps of Asia, the French Cartographer Royal Guillaume Delisle in Paris, only altered his method of approximating the Caspian Sea in 1721, when the *Académie des Sciences* was presented with a copy of the final Russian survey map by Tsar Peter in return for his admittance to the *Académie* in 1717.⁸⁵ Delisle's maps before this time showed a Caspian Sea still very closely modelled on that of Adam Olearius (1603–1671),⁸⁶ the most famous example being his *Carte de la Turquie, de l'Arabie et de la Perse* of 1701.⁸⁷ Delisle reworked his maps of Persia between 1720 and 1725, to make them conform to the latest surveys he could access,⁸⁸ and to this end he included the Russian survey results as soon as they were available to him. As these Russian sources for depicting the surroundings of the Caspian did not apply to Hokkaidō, the question remains open of where Homann got his information on Japan, but it seems clear that Reland's map was among the sources on which he drew.

During the end of the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries such common European interest in the special geographic features of certain regions of both Persia and Japan was prompted by the economic relations held with both countries by the European trading companies, and above all by the VOC. The company neither directly ordered the production of such maps as Kaempfer drew up as an actual traveller and employee of the VOC, or Reland produced as an armchair geographer and peruser of VOC-assembled resources, nor did it authorize the proliferation of such maps. But by its activities the VOC provided both the stimuli and material necessary to launch these maps on the market. At least in a Dutch context the controversies over the actual shape of these regions continued for much longer than even the reprints of the maps. The discussion about the shape of Hokkaidō, its situation, and a possible connection between Asia and America in the Bering strait region still continued in

84 Alai, *Special Maps of Persia*, p. 117.

85 Ibid.

86 Ortelius, *Persici sive Sophorum regni typus*.

87 Delisle, *Carte de la Turquie, de l'Arabie et de la Perse*.

88 Alai, *General Maps of Persia*, p. 110.

the *Boekzaal der geleerde waerelt* until at least 1782, when a review of the Dutch edition of the *Universal History* explicitly stated that this had been Reland's reason for drawing up his map of Japan.⁸⁹

4 Cultural Misappropriations

I do not want to suggest that Adriaan Reland had drawn up his maps of Persia and Japan because of these entangled open questions about their geographical features. If this had been the case, he would be unlikely to have let ten years elapse between the map of Persia in 1705 and the map of Japan in 1715. Nevertheless, I think that both share a common methodological framework which underlies many, if not all, of Reland's works, and that they are thus conceptually related. What Reland had done in drawing up his two maps of Persia and Japan may be seen as part of a single unified approach: trying to tackle unsolved problems, in this case of a geographical nature, by resorting to source materials from the regions concerned rather than to European tradition. This shows a readiness to accept non-European learning if not on a par with European scholarship at least as comparable and supplemental to it, which was the exception rather than the rule in European academia. Such materials, once acquired, were then to be processed according to the philological standards developed by working with classical Latin, Greek, and Hebrew sources, and the results were to be inserted in the framework of European scholarship. In the case of Persia Reland was able to accomplish this task much better than in that of Japan, because he had a far better command of the sources both in terms of available material and of his competence to deal with it. This at least is the perspective of a modern-day observer on the basis of progress made in cartographical exactitude concerning the physical approximation of the parts of the earth's surface depicted.

To an eighteenth-century European this might not have been so easy. Confronted with several conflicting solutions to both the problem of the shape of the Caspian Sea and that of the situation of Hokkaidō, all of which claimed authority but in different ways, and without the possibility of supplying first-hand observations as a basis for choosing between these solutions, the respective merits of Reland's two maps were difficult to assess. In this situation his

89 Review of 'Algemene historie van het begin der waereld tot den tegenwoordigen tyd toe', p. 656: 'Wat de gemeenschap tusschen *Asie* en *Amerika* belangt, deze is zeer waarschynlyk, als men overweegt niet alleen het geene *Reland* wegens dit stuk behandeld heeft, maar ook uit de ontdekkingen, welke van de *Russen* gedaan zyn [...]' [*italics as in the original*].

claim to have based his results on original documents from the regions concerned was decisive for the success of his maps, because both Japan and Persia were seen as regions of the globe similar enough to Europe to produce knowledge on a sufficiently scholarly basis to be regarded as helpful to European scholarship. To put it simply, the general European cartographic public was obviously convinced that the Persians and Japanese not only knew best what Persia and Japan looked like, but could also be trusted to write this down in a sensible way, so that a capable scholar could introduce these results into European cartographic knowledge.

The problem and, as it were, the tragic element of this remarkably unprejudiced approach taken by Reland was that he was unable to avoid its pitfalls. He implicitly put European, Persian, and Japanese cartography on the same level not only in terms of their results but also of their underlying goals, thus implying that all three were striving equally for a most complete and accurate rendition in terms of the physical approximation of the regions within their reach. That there might be blind spots escaping the attention of the indigenous observers such as the Caspian Sea in the case of Persia, or that his source material might have been created following completely different goals in the case of Japan, was something that either did not occur to him or that—as in the case of Japan—his philological knowledge was insufficient to determine correctly. He can, of course, hardly be reproached with this since hardly anybody else in Europe would have been equipped to do better. Fittingly enough, neither issue was ever raised in the contemporary discussion of his cartographical works.

So while it may well be debated whether the epithet ‘geleerdster der landbeschryveren’ really suits Reland, his inclusive approach towards non-European scholarship and his extensive curiosity which led to the production of his two maps of Persia and Japan compare favourably with the attitudes of many other contemporary scholars. And that is a sufficient feat to call for closer studies of his cartographical works outside the narrow question of how accurate they were in approximating the actual shape of the earth’s physical surface.

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