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Review Article

Maritime Asia, 1500–1800: The Interactive Emergence
of European Domination

JOHN E. WILLS, JR.

THE QUINCENTENNIAL FLOOD OF WRITING and arguing about Columbus and everything he can possibly be taken to stand for has involved surprisingly little attention to the “Indies” he hoped to find—the Spice Islands and, more broadly, the whole network of Asian maritime trade that linked the spice-producing regions with China, India, the Muslim heartlands, and indirectly with Europe. The opening of direct European voyages to Asia does not represent a world-historical transformation as fundamental as the establishment of the transatlantic routes but rather a reshaping of connections that had been developing for many centuries. Still, in the centuries that followed the arrival of Vasco da Gama in Calicut in 1498, the continued expansion and interweaving of maritime connections within and between the hemispheres was a basic factor in the creation of what Immanuel Wallerstein and others have called the modern world-system. The contributions of maritime Asia to this evolution are not nearly as thoroughly studied or as well integrated into theories like Wallerstein’s as those of the American connections. The remarkable surge of good writing on aspects of the events represented by the list of books under review published since 1987 makes this field accessible as never before, both to scholars who may wish to touch on it in teaching and summary writing and to those who are open to the challenges of the many opportunities for research and interpretation in an area of study that still is far from being fully developed.

The historiographical transformation of these studies in recent decades can be suggested by a change of name. Around 1960, when I began studying them, they were part of the “history of European expansion.” Today, the phrase “history of maritime Asia” is more acceptable and more indicative of the nature of thinking and writing in this specialty. Where previously even Asian nationalist scholars saw a rapid shift to European dominance of the seas in the “Vasco da Gama epoch,”¹ and saw the Asians largely as passive victims, today’s historians see that participants in the maritime history of every part of Asia included Asian navigators, merchants, pirates, investors, and merchant-princes, and that these Asian participants remained effective competitors of the Europeans far longer than earlier scholars had thought. Thus the long drift to European hegemony in Asian waters

¹ K. M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance: A Survey of the Vasco da Gama Epoch of Asian History, 1498–1945* (London, 1954).

James D. Tracy, ed., **The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), xviii + 442 pp.

James D. Tracy, ed., **The Political Economy of Merchant Empires: State Power and World Trade, 1350–1750** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), vii + 504 pp.

Jonathan I. Israel, **Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585–1740** (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), xxi + 462 pp.

Geoffrey Parker, **The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), xvii + 234 pp.

C. A. Bayly, **Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830** (London: Longman, 1989), xv + 295 pp.

C. A. Bayly, **Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), xi + 230 pp.

Roderick Ptak and Dietmar Rothermund, eds., **Emporia, Commodities and Entrepreneurs in Asian Maritime Trade, c. 1400–1750** (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1991), xiii + 509 pp.

K. N. Chaudhuri, **Asia before Europe: Economy and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), xviii + 477 pp.

Denys Lombard and Jean Aubin, eds., **Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques dans l'Océan Indien et la Mer de Chine 13^e–20^e siècles** (Paris: Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1988), 375 pp.

M. N. Pearson, **Before Colonialism: Theories on Asian-European Relations 1500–1750** (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), 86 pp.

Ashin Das Gupta and M. N. Pearson, editors, **India and the Indian Ocean, 1500–1800** (Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1987), xi + 363 pp.

M. N. Pearson, **The Portuguese in India** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), xx + 178 pp.

seems less overdetermined, less a foregone conclusion, much more multi-causal and contingent, and a much more challenging and rewarding area of study.

In the works here discussed is an even more interesting paradigm shift, in which Asian patterns of production, trade, and governance are seen to have fundamentally shaped the long process of emergence of the Asian maritime facets of the modern world-system. Many important aspects of European-Asian interaction in maritime Asia cannot be understood if we maintain an analytic separation of European intrusion and Asian response; they emerged in highly contingent and specific ways from the interactions, the congruences and mutual

Sanjay Subrahmanyam, **The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500–1800** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), x + 401 pp.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam, ed., **Merchants, Markets, and the State in Early Modern India** (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990), viii + 276 pp.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam, **Improvising Empire: Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal 1500–1700** (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990), xix + 269 pp.

P. J. Marshall, **Bengal: The British Bridgehead: Eastern India 1740–1828** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), xv + 195 pp.

Hameeda Hossain, **The Company Weavers of Bengal: The East India Company and the Organization of Textile Production in Bengal, 1750–1813** (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), xvii + 211 pp.

Susan Bayly, **Saints, Goddesses, and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society, 1700–1900** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), xv + 504 pp.

Anthony Reid, **Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680**, Volume 1: *The Lands below the Winds* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1988), xvi + 275 pp.

Leonard Blussé, **Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women, and the Dutch in VOC Batavia** (Leiden: KITLV, 1988), xiii + 302 pp.

Vicente L. Rafael, **Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule** (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988), xiii + 230 pp.

N. Standaert, **Yang Tingyun, Confucian and Christian in Late Ming China: His Life and Thought** (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988), xi + 263 pp.

John Whitney Hall, ed., James L. McClain, assistant ed., **The Cambridge History of Japan**, Volume 4: *Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), xxviii + 831 pp.

Derek Massarella, **A World Elsewhere: Europe's Encounter with Japan in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries** (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1990), xiii + 442 pp.

adaptations, of specific facets of the European and various Asian civilizations. Here, a sketch of what this story of interactive emergence might look like seems in order, to alert the reader to some of the main lines of change and interaction.

IN THIS STORY OF INTERACTIVE EMERGENCE, a first set of preconditions for the growth of commercial and cultural connections around the Indian Ocean was provided by the rise of Islam, which made the eastern Mediterranean and Persia an area of common religion and frequently of unified political authority,

prosperous and safe for merchants. Muslim traders who settled in the ports of India and Indonesia brought with them a unified set of commercial and legal practices that facilitated the growth of trade. The pilgrimage to Mecca added to the volume of maritime trade from India and Southeast Asia.

A second great set of contributions to trade was Chinese. China's "economic revolutions" after about 900 C.E. made it a source of large quantities of porcelain, silks, and other consumer goods that found markets throughout Eurasia. The superior ships and advanced commercial techniques of Chinese merchants facilitated the spread of Chinese shipping and enterprise across maritime Southeast Asia and into the Indian Ocean and contributed to the growth of indigenous trade-oriented economies and polities in many areas.²

Finally, the fine cotton and silk fabrics of the Indian subcontinent found markets everywhere and established especially enduring and structurally important linkages in two directions, to Island Southeast Asia and to the world of Islam, from Persia to the Arab lands to the Swahili ports of East Africa.

The political and cultural dimensions of this picture of interactive emergence are intriguing. The role of Islam in maintaining connections and spreading common practices has already been mentioned. The Portuguese carried the Christian war on Islam into the Indian Ocean, and that conflict eventually spread all the way to the Spice Islands and Mindanao. Asian Christian communities emerged from the interactions of European and Asian religious, cultural, and social idioms.

From the beginning, Indians did not just tolerate the Europeans; they employed them, rewarded them with revenue rights, and sought their protection in trade, in the process teaching them how to exploit the immense talents of the Indian peoples for production, commerce, and warfare. Thus European participation in Indian politics and political economy, not just profits of trade, sustained the European presence in the Indian Ocean from the sixteenth century on. Until about 1750, the Europeans had demonstrated distinctive "statist" modes of cohesion in simply surviving in the Indian Ocean and in articulating unusually wide systems of commercial coordination. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the British in Bengal combined these advantages with their own adeptness in exploiting Indian forms of political economy to outpace their Indian rivals, who also sought to build more effective mobilizing states. As a result, India became the prime fiscal and military base for the spread of British power in Asia.

Island Southeast Asia, the original goal of European voyages in search of the sources of spices, did not turn out to have the open-ended potential for empire building that was found in India, but its fractious small polities offered opportunities for meddling and domination that the Europeans found irresistible, and efforts to make territorial dominion profitable led to a series of important experiments in exploitative plantation monoculture.

China was as attractive to the Europeans as India for fine consumer goods, but China's centralized bureaucratic efforts to limit interaction with foreigners

² Mark Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past* (Stanford, Calif., 1973); William H. McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society since A.D. 1000* (Chicago, 1982), chap. 2.

presented a very different mode of what I have called interactive emergence. Political order and mercantile sophistication made possible large-scale trade with almost no foreign presence outside a few closely controlled ports. At least as important for the long-run evolution of maritime Asia was the anomalous situation of the maritime Chinese. The Chinese state almost never intervened in support of its maritime traders and emigrants. Commercially dominant but politically very much on their own, the overseas Chinese frequently became adept commercial and political allies of local rulers, whether Asian or European. Such key nodes of commerce and power in maritime Southeast Asia as Manila and Batavia were fundamentally dependent on Chinese productive, commercial, and organizational skills.

Even stranger were the consequences of dramatic political and social changes in Japan, which eventually led to complete prohibition of Japanese sea voyages. An early modern maritime Asia in which Japan projected beyond its shores its economic and military power would have had patterns of trade and power strikingly different from those that did develop.

The articulation of this picture of interactive emergence requires the comparison of several aspects of the cultures, economies, and polities of maritime Europe, the world of Islam, India, Southeast Asia, China, and Japan. These comparisons can contribute to many forms of history and also help to explain how it was that, of all these sophisticated and dynamic civilizations, the Europeans emerged in a position of steadily increasing dominance in Asian waters after about 1750. This field has implications for a variety of modes of thinking about the modern world as well as for the theory of the modern world-system.

UNTIL WORLD WAR II, scholarship in the history of European expansion in Asia was dominated by the European imperial powers, and many of the scholars and their readers were officials or former officials of the European empires. The postwar collapse of these empires led to a waning interest in and volume of scholarship in the European countries. A small number of scholars, most notably J. H. Parry and the remarkable C. R. Boxer, continued to make major contributions to the study of early European expansion. Eventually, a new generation of scholars developed who defined themselves as historians of one part of Asia or another, not of European expansion, and who frequently were themselves natives of the part of Asia they studied. These scholars use Asian-language sources, are interested in the internal dynamics of the various Asian civilizations, and read European-language sources for information about the Asian scene, not just the Europeans in it. This indigenization makes it much harder to keep up with the historiography and maintain a rounded picture of the subject. Historians of India, of Indonesia, and of China do not ask the same questions, do not read the same journals. I think it fair to assume that many of the authors of the recent books listed at the head of this essay and mentioned in its notes would not be aware of all the other books mentioned.

Scholars wanting to enter this field will find that there is a substantial

multinational network of communication. The Centre for the History of European Expansion at Leiden has been especially active in promoting conferences and interchanges of information, and its lively, solid journal *Itinerario* is the best single medium for keeping up with developments. Another center of current scholarship has formed in Paris.³ By far the most energetic center of activity outside Europe is at the University of Delhi; some of the most interesting articles by scholars there and elsewhere in India appear in the *Indian Economic and Social History Review*.

The rich "European expansion" summaries of Parry, Boxer, and others are still indispensable reading for every student of this field.⁴ It is regrettable that there has been more good summary writing on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries than on the eighteenth, when some of the long-run consequences of the enduring European presence in Asian waters became dramatically apparent. This makes all the more welcome the excellent eighteenth-century material in Holden Furber's fine survey of the East India Companies and the rich and interesting works on this era by Parry and by Glyndwr Williams.⁵

Among the books listed at the head of this essay, the two distinguished conference volumes edited by James Tracy offer the most sophisticated and multidimensional access to what is going on in this area. *The Rise of Merchant Empires* includes several essays focused on Asian commercial history, some good examples of quantifying economic history relevant to European trade in the Indian Ocean, and a series of surveys of the overseas trade of European countries that vary considerably in their attention to trade with Asia. Tracy's introduction gives an intelligent summary of some key issues. With the more recent *Political Economy of Merchant Empires*, several key methodological issues come nicely into focus. What were the relative contributions, on the one hand, of new modes of organization of force and articulation of power and commerce and, on the other, of reductions of transport and other costs to the long drift to European dominance over world trade? Russell Menard's carefully argued essay on transport costs finds the evidence for major European reduction or advantage in this important and often-discussed factor uneven for most lines of maritime trade and weak for European-Asian trade. On the political economy side, M. N. Pearson's "Merchants and States" opens up key comparative dimensions; I will return to it

³ The journal of this group is *Moyen Orient et Océan Indien*, continuing the earlier *Mare Luso-Indicum*. A fine example of this school of scholarship is Geneviève Bouchon, "Notes on the Opium Trade in Asia during the Pre-Colonial Period," in Roderick Ptak and Dietmar Rothermund, *Emporia, Commodities and Entrepreneurs in Asian Maritime Trade, c. 1400–1750* (Stuttgart, 1991), 95–106.

⁴ C. R. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire, 1600–1800* (New York, 1965); Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415–1825* (New York, 1969); J. H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance* (London, 1963); Parry, *The Spanish Seaborne Empire* (New York, 1966); Parry, *The Discovery of the Sea* (Berkeley, Calif., 1981); Bailey W. Diffie and George D. Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415–1580* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1977); G. V. Scammell, *The World Encompassed: The First European Maritime Empires, c. 800–1650* (Berkeley, 1981); Scammell, *The First Imperial Age: European Overseas Expansion c. 1400–1715* (Boston, 1989). Boxer's immense productivity can be seen in S. George West, *A Complete Bibliography of the Works of C. R. Boxer, 1926–1983* (London, 1984), which will have to be supplemented someday for Boxer's publications in recent years.

⁵ Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600–1800* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1976); J. H. Parry, *Trade and Dominion: The European Overseas Empires in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1971); Glyndwr Williams, *The Expansion of Europe in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1967).

below in connection with his other work. Tracy's introduction again does an admirable job of laying out these issues and adds some especially telling detail on Southeast Asian examples of maritime profit and power mobilization.

Two other works may be noted as fine examples of the contributions to Asian maritime history that can be made by works focused primarily on Europe. Jonathan Israel's *Dutch Primacy in World Trade* gives full coverage to the rise of Dutch power in Asia, with an excellent grasp of fact and literature. Israel makes two useful contributions to understanding the Dutch in Asia. First, by arguing that Dutch trade hegemony in Europe was advanced at several crucial points by state naval power, he makes the precocious "statist" centralization of the Dutch East India Company seem less anomalous than did the older view of an almost stateless Dutch dominance in Europe and the Atlantic. Second, his emphasis on the economic functions and power of Amsterdam as an entrepôt for all kinds of goods, especially luxury goods, from all parts of the world reinforces the emphasis on entrepôts in Asian maritime history and gives more importance to Asian trade as a source of Dutch domination of European trade than did the earlier emphases on quantities of goods imported and money earned.

Geoffrey Parker's *Military Revolution*, parts of which are summarized in his essay in Tracy's *Political Economy*, begins with an expert summary of changes in military organization and technology in early modern Europe and then in its last two chapters turns to the roots of Europe's growing ability to project its power around the world.⁶ Parker draws on a remarkable range of relevant scholarship in Asian and African history to compare the military, technological, and organizational goals and capacities of the Asian and African peoples to those of the Europeans and to isolate the multiple and contingent origins of European naval and military superiority. This is an elegant example of the way in which comparative thinking can yield insight into the emergence of a world-historical trend.

The issues of the comparative history of political economy and of state building opened up by the Tracy volumes and by Parker are developed with some fascinating twists in Bayly's *Imperial Meridian*. This book begins with a sweeping account of parallel economic, political, and cultural changes in the great Muslim empires during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Then it turns back to changes in relations among England, Scotland, and Ireland and the projections of British power across the Atlantic and in Europe. But India and the world of Islam repeatedly come into focus. The increasing effectiveness of organization and will to control in India and other parts of the British empire is seen as analogous to the state-building efforts of regional hegemonies in the Islamic empires. Resistance to indigenous and colonial power and Islamic revival march alongside the ideas and stimulus of the French Revolution as sources of popular turmoil around the world. This book will be a profoundly de-centering experience for many historians, especially those of the French Revolution and of the "Early National" period in the United States.

⁶ This theme has attracted the attention of a number of other eminent historians. See McNeill, *Pursuit of Power*, chaps. 3–5; Carlo M. Cipolla, *Guns, Sails, and Empires: Technological Innovation and the Early Phases of European Expansion, 1400–1700* (New York, 1965), chap. 2; and Parry, *Age of Reconnaissance*, chap. 7.

Bayly's *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* presents a more detailed picture of efforts in several regions of India to build up state structures that would extract larger resources of wealth and military manpower from their subject populations than the Mughal empire, for all its effective central control, had wanted or needed to. Bayly interprets these efforts not just as results of group and regional conflicts that intensified as Mughal control declined but also as responses to the growth and specialization of commerce and agriculture that made greater resources available. The English in India emerge as one of these regional state-building powers, competing with and learning from the others, given an edge by their external resources but still finding some of the other state builders formidable adversaries. This is brilliant and provocative comparative history of politics and political economies, and it makes crucial contributions to an indigenized interpretation of the drift to European maritime hegemony in the Indian Ocean.

Other works listed offer abundant evidence both of the richness of facts, topics, and sources in Asian maritime history and of the uneven state of development and the difficulty of keeping it all in focus. The volume edited by Ptak and Rothermund contains revised versions of papers presented at a 1989 conference, which was a rare chance for sustained interaction between historians of the Indian Ocean and those who study the trade around the South China Sea. Some of the papers are highly specialized, especially where Sinological and Indological techniques are applied to the study of specific commodities. Those studied include such surprises as opium, salt, tortoise shell, deerskins, and bird nests, as well as the better-known spices and textiles. Entrepreneurs studied include a Persian, a Chinese, and various Indians, as well as Europeans.

K. N. Chaudhuri has given us three works of broad coverage and synthesis. *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660–1760*⁷ is one of the finest works in this field. *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean*⁸ provides some excellent Asia-centered material on the rise of the Islamic and Chinese spheres of production and trade, on commodities, shipping, and entrepôts in Asian trade, and on the European intrusions. Chaudhuri's more recent *Asia before Europe* will be welcomed by every student of the field for its richness of reading and ambition in interpretation, especially in dealing with the Islamic world, but it is not particularly concerned with the world of maritime trade. Chaudhuri is far better read and more at home in Asian history than Fernand Braudel ever was, but to this reader his wide range of theoretical reading and reference sometimes induces even more bafflement than Braudel's *pointillisme*.⁹ Braudel's influence can be seen in an emphasis on the *longue durée* that obscures some substantial changes in economic and commercial patterns and in a related lack of interest in states and political economies.

The conference volume edited by Denys Lombard and Jean Aubin seeks to redress excessive emphasis on the Europeans in the Indian Ocean by focusing

⁷ Cambridge, 1978.

⁸ K. N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge, 1985).

⁹ Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism: 15th–18th Century*, 3 vols. (London, 1979, 1982, 1984).

almost entirely on Asian merchant communities. Specific topics range over eight centuries and from East Africa to Japan. Some of the studies are primarily summaries of earlier scholarship or addenda to works the authors have already published elsewhere. Others are rich in citations of primary sources in Asian languages. For the topic of the present essay, this collection is especially valuable as a guide to the facts and literature on the Muslim trading communities around the Indian Ocean.

M. N. Pearson has made a number of important contributions to the study of political economy and state building. His *Before Colonialism* is a rare effort at summary and methodological self-consciousness about one set of issues, those raised by Wallerstein. Concentrating on the inconsistencies and inadequacies of Wallerstein's comments about the Indian Ocean, however, Pearson overlooks a central theoretical difficulty. Wallerstein's world-system paradigm has no place for developments that have not yet led to the economic peripheralization of an area within the modern capitalist world economy. The background to economic peripheralization is sought primarily in structures of economic dominance and exploitation. But in maritime Asia, the European presence took a number of novel statist forms, first the ramshackle Estado da India, then the great monopolistic companies, which maintained a European presence for over 250 years until the climactic state-building competition in late eighteenth-century India led to full-scale peripheralization in the world-system.

Pearson's work *The Portuguese in India* can be read as moving toward the comparative history of state building, for which the amazing things the Portuguese wanted to do in dominating Asian trade are as important as their failures to reach their goals. But it is in his essay "Merchants and States" in Tracy's *Political Economy* that Pearson makes his most important contribution to the necessary comparative themes. A distinction between "despotic" and interventionist states leads eventually to the generalization that Asian states, more or less in the despotic mold, might have been hospitable to commerce but almost never actively promoted it. The Estado da India and the companies are seen as intrusions of the European interventionist, trade-promoting type of state building into maritime Asia. Much remains to be done in fleshing out the implications of these views and making the necessary qualifications of them. Fuller use still can be made of the intriguing work of Niels Steensgaard, who distinguished the "redistributive" nature of the Portuguese Estado da India from the efforts of the companies to internalize protection costs and drive their competitors out of the market.¹⁰ Bayly's picture of the shift to the building of resource-mobilizing territorial states also is of fundamental importance. Tracy's introduction and Thomas Brady's essay, "The Rise of Merchant Empires, 1400–1700: A European Counterpoint" in *Political Economy*, offer valuable supplements to this discourse on empires and modes of state building. None of these authors has made use of the considerable increase of interest in states and state building seen in several social sciences in recent years.¹¹

¹⁰ Niels Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: The East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago, 1974).

¹¹ For starting points, see Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds.,

BAYLY CALLS EARLY MODERN MARITIME HISTORY one of the best-researched fields in Indian history, a claim that could not conceivably be made for the maritime history of any other part of Asia. The predominance of books about India among the works discussed in this essay is striking but not surprising. For anyone working in any part of the history of maritime Asia, these works are indispensable reading, both because of the variety of topics and approaches they open up and because India's maritime connections affected every other Asian coastline. Some recent surveys will help us get our bearings. There are excellent chapters on maritime trade in Volumes 1 and 2 of the *Cambridge Economic History of India*.¹² Das Gupta and Pearson's *India and the Indian Ocean* is a useful guide to the questions and literature of the field, although it inevitably suffers from the overlaps and inconsistencies of an edited volume.

For the sixteenth century, there are some excellent studies of the Portuguese and their Indian allies and rivals, heavily dependent on Portuguese sources. The Portuguese never had the human or fiscal resources to drive their Muslim rivals from the seas. How, then, did they survive and in some cases prosper in the Indian Ocean? First, the Indian commercial economy was so large and energetic that many of its merchants and almost all Indian rulers found it cost-effective to buy a sea pass (*cartaz*) from the Portuguese or simply bribe their customs officials charged with excluding the Muslims from certain lines of trade. Second, the Portuguese presence in India soon came to derive most of its economic vitality not from trade between India and Europe but from participation in trade within Asia, much of it in close cooperation with Asian merchants. Thus efforts to understand the dynamics of the Portuguese presence lead to an "indigenizing" attention to their interaction with Asian economies. And while the Portuguese sources are unsystematic and hard to use, they tell us a great many things we can learn from no Asian-language source. In recent Portuguese scholarship on these topics, the contributions of V. M. Godinho loom very large; the four volumes of his *Descobrimientos e a Economia Mundial*¹³ are a wonderful collection, very much in the *Annales* style, of fresh data, compilations of figures from many sources, and suggestive interpretations of many issues. Organized projects on the Portuguese in Asia have languished in Portugal since the end of the empire after the 1974 revolution, even as the old restraints of imperial ideology evaporated. One remaining forum has been a series of international conferences and their published papers.¹⁴ In India, there has

Bringing the State Back In (Cambridge, 1985); Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990–1990* (Oxford, 1990); and Jack A. Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley, Calif., 1991).

¹² K. N. Chaudhuri, "European Trade with India," and A. Dasgupta, "Indian Merchants and the Trade in the Indian Ocean," in Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Volume 1 (Cambridge, 1982), 382–433; Chaudhuri, "Foreign Trade and the Balance of Payments (1757–1947)," in Dharma Kumar, ed., *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Volume 2 (Cambridge, 1983), 804–77.

¹³ 2d edn. (Lisbon, 1981–83); this is fuller and more up-to-date than the first Portuguese edition or the French version, *L'économie de l'empire portugais aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles* (Paris, 1969).

¹⁴ See, for example, Luís de Albuquerque and Inácio Guerreiro, eds., *Actas do II Seminário Internacional de História Indo-Portuguesa* (Lisbon, 1985).

been an important indigenized revival of scholarship at and concerning Goa.¹⁵

Pearson's study *The Portuguese in India*, a most useful survey with an excellent bibliography, maintains a focus on Portuguese institutions and actions, less strongly indigenizing in thrust than his earlier work on the Portuguese in Gujarat¹⁶ but still rich in openings for Portuguese-Indian and Portuguese-Muslim comparisons. Everywhere from Mozambique to Island Southeast Asia, the Portuguese encountered well-established and sophisticated Muslim merchant communities and followed Muslim trade routes.¹⁷ The gratuitous and indiscriminate violence of Portuguese assaults in their first phase frequently was successful, despite the overwhelming numerical superiority of the Muslims, because Muslim ships in the Indian Ocean, unlike those in the Mediterranean, rarely carried arms and used ships that were ill suited to the mounting and firing of cannon. The Ottoman empire and the Mamluk state in Egypt faced many challenges internally and on their other frontiers and had to mount their Indian Ocean expeditions from desert coasts; they were only occasionally able to send a major fleet to defend their fellow Muslims in India against Portuguese attacks and did not establish a permanent base or presence on the Indian coast. The Portuguese Estado da India was a ramshackle and conflict-ridden structure, but the Muslims in the Indian Ocean had *no* overarching political structure of their own. This lack seems to have facilitated Portuguese efforts to exploit local differences and find Muslim allies.¹⁸ An early, short-lived exception to the general weakness of Muslim mobilization was the effort of a powerful group on the Malabar (southwest) coast to mobilize naval power and mercantile wealth to resist the Portuguese.¹⁹ A later and more dramatic exception was the naval power of Oman, which rose to dominate the Persian Gulf after the Persians and the English expelled the Portuguese from Ormuz, then extended its power and commerce down the east coast of Africa, building warships in Indian ports, forcing the Portuguese from their very thinly held strong point at Mombasa.²⁰ At the mouth of the Red Sea, Portuguese attacks

¹⁵ Teotonio R. De Souza, *Medieval Goa: A Socio-Economic History* (New Delhi, 1979); De Souza, ed., *Indo-Portuguese History: Old Issues, New Questions* (New Delhi, 1985); De Souza, ed., *Essays in Goan History* (New Delhi, 1989).

¹⁶ M. N. Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat: The Response to the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century* (Berkeley, Calif., 1976).

¹⁷ R. B. Serjeant, "Yemeni Merchants and Trade in Yemen, 13th–16th Centuries"; J. Aubin, "Marchands de Mer Rouge et du Golfe Persique au tournant des 15^e et 16^e siècles"; J. Calmard, "Les marchands iraniens: Formation et montée d'un groupe de pression, 16^e–19^e siècles"; and Serjeant, "The Hadrami Network," all in Denys Lombard and Jean Aubin, eds., *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques dan l'Océan Indien et la Mer de Chine 13^e–20^e siècles* (Paris, 1988), 61–107, 147–54.

¹⁸ Diffie and Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire*, chap. 15; George W. F. Stripling, *The Ottoman Turks and the Arabs, 1511–1574* (Urbana, Ill., 1942).

¹⁹ Geneviève Bouchon, "Regent of the Sea": *Cannanore's Response to Portuguese Expansion, 1507–1528*, Louise Shackley, trans. (Delhi, 1988); see also the summary in Bouchon, "Sixteenth Century Malabar and the Indian Ocean," in Ashin Das Gupta and M. N. Pearson, eds., *India and the Indian Ocean, 1500–1800* (Calcutta, 1987), 162–84, esp. 169, 174–75, 181.

²⁰ R. D. Bathurst, "Maritime Trade and Imamate Government: Two Principal Themes in the History of Oman," in Derek Hopwood, ed., *The Arabian Peninsula: Society and Politics* (Totowa, N.J., 1972), 89–106; C. R. Boxer and Carlos de Azevedo, *Fort Jesus and the Portuguese in Mombasa, 1593–1729* (London, 1960); Edward A. Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves: Changing Pattern of International Trade in East Central Africa to the Later Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, Calif., 1975), 62.

were driven off, and the later Dutch and English coffee trade in Yemen was completely dependent on the toleration of the local authorities.²¹

Pearson, Parker, and others have pointed out the apparent cost-effectiveness of Indian acquiescence in Portuguese extortion. But historians accustomed to the coastal defenses and commercial rivalries of early modern Europe or to the vigilance against foreign intrusion of early modern China and Japan will find the Indian tolerance of the Portuguese presence and failure to mobilize a sustained counterattack amazing. A full explanation of these non-responses will have to pay some attention to the nature of Indian society, in which divisions into endogamous occupational groups (the “caste system”) and the intricacies and tensions of Hindu-Muslim relations made broad territorial solidarities, or even unified fronts in a single port city, very hard to achieve. Bayly shows us that mobilizing territorial states did emerge in India, but in the late eighteenth century, not the late sixteenth. It also is important to remember the particular historical situation in the sixteenth century. The Hindu empire of Vijayanagar collapsed. The Muslim sultanates steadily lost ground to the Mughal advance from the north. Afonso de Albuquerque (1453–1515) struck right along the seam of this political division in conquering and holding Goa; later, the rise of the Maratha-Mughal conflict in Goa’s back yard guaranteed its survival.

Another important account of the Portuguese presence, complementary to Pearson’s in many ways, is Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Luís Filipe F. R. Thomaz’s “Evolution of Empire: The Portuguese in the Indian Ocean during the Sixteenth Century” in Tracy’s *Political Economy*. In addition to many fresh views on shifts in the Portuguese goals and concepts of empire, this excellent essay reflects the authors’ work on Indian trade and Portuguese involvement in it on the Coromandel (southeast) coast and around the Bay of Bengal. In his own works, especially *The Political Economy of Commerce*, Subrahmanyam provides some of the most sharply argued positions of an indigenized historiography of the Indian Ocean. He criticizes the tendency of previous authors to portray the Indian economy as largely pre-market, changing only very slowly, except for a limited sphere of production of and trade in luxury goods. Subrahmanyam builds up a complex picture of dynamic economies in which basic foodstuffs were traded widely by land and by sea, many people depended for their livelihoods on agricultural and handicraft production for distant markets, and rich merchants and political power-holders sought to secure their positions and minimize their risks by becoming “portfolio capitalists” who invested in a wide variety of handicraft, commercial, and tax-farming operations and in political influence at one or more regional courts. Portuguese participation in this economy, Subrahmanyam shows, was constantly changing and complexly symbiotic, involving cooperation with some local producers, merchants, and “portfolio capitalists” and conflict with others. The general pattern is described as one of “contained conflict,” in which the effects of Portuguese maritime dominance and violence were blunted and countered by Indian wealth, military manpower, and commercial and political acumen.

²¹ C. J. Brouwer, *Cauwa ende Comptanten: De Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie in Jemen/Cowha and Cash: The Dutch East India Company in Yemen* (Amsterdam, 1988); Chaudhuri, *Trading World*, chap. 16.

Thus Subrahmanyam demonstrates that the Portuguese already were involved in the first stages of a pattern of interactive emergence of European power in Asia, learning from and sharing in distinctive Indian practices of trade and of revenue collection. He mentions several cases of Indian rulers granting revenue collection rights to local Portuguese and even to a local branch of the Society of Jesus.²² At Goa, as Pearson and others have shown, the Portuguese maintained almost intact the land-holding and revenue collection system of their Indian predecessors.²³ In Bengal, there is evidence for several grants by local sovereigns and Mughal emperors to the Portuguese of rights to collect local land taxes and customs dues.²⁴

India was and is an immense and self-conscious field of experiment in relations among various groups defined by status, occupation, religion, and ethnic heritage, and of confrontation, debate, and accommodation among religious and philosophical teachings. The Portuguese and their Roman Catholicism were new elements in this mix. At Goa and a few other centers, Catholicism brought forms of authority and institutional continuity that were new to India. These had considerable effect: episcopal hierarchy, religious orders (especially the Jesuits), Holy Inquisition, and municipal governments. Pearson has two good chapters on the Goa situation. Boxer has made many contributions to this kind of social-cultural history, including a book showing the common patterns of municipal organization throughout the Portuguese empire.²⁵ Teotonio de Souza and his colleagues have written about Goa with the special insight of erudite insiders. Subrahmanyam tells us a great deal about Cochin on the Malabar coast and the various Coromandel settlements. Despite all this good work, until recently it was hard to see the full range and challenge of studies of Christianity in India, which require the contributions both of the ethnohistorian of intergroup relations and of the student of the confrontations of text-based high cultures. Now the comprehensive history by Stephen Neill provides excellent guidance, sympathetic both to Indian culture and to Christianity.²⁶ The most intriguing effort to open a dialogue with the textually based high traditions of Hinduism, that of the Jesuit Robert de Nobili, has had several good narrative accounts, including a chapter in Neill, but only recently has a Jesuit scholar of Hinduism, Francis X. Clooney, begun to show how Nobili adapted specific themes of the South Indian Vaisnava Hinduism of his time.²⁷ The breakthrough in studies of Christian interactions

²² Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Improvising Empire: Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal 1500–1700* (Delhi, 1990), 67, 74, 121.

²³ M. N. Pearson, "Indigenous Dominance in a Colonial Economy: The Goa *Rendas*, 1600–1670," *Mare Luso-Indicum*, 2 (1972): 61–73; de Souza, *Medieval Goa*, chaps. 2, 3.

²⁴ J. J. A. Campos, *History of the Portuguese in Bengal* (1919; rpt. edn., New York, 1975), chaps. 4, 5.

²⁵ C. R. Boxer, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics: The Municipal Councils of Goa, Macao, Bahia, and Luanda, 1510–1800* (Madison, Wis., 1965); Boxer, *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire, 1415–1825* (Oxford, 1963); Boxer, *The Church Militant in Iberian Expansion, 1440–1770* (Baltimore, Md., 1978).

²⁶ Stephen Neill, *A History of Christianity in India: The Beginnings to AD 1707* (Cambridge, 1984); Neill, *A History of Christianity in India, 1707–1858* (Cambridge, 1985).

²⁷ Francis X. Clooney, S.J., "Christ as the Divine Guru in the Theology of Robert de Nobili," in Ruy Costa, ed., *One Faith, Many Cultures* (Maryknoll, N.Y., 1988), 25–40; Clooney, "Roberto de Nobili, Adaptation, and the Reasonable Interpretation of Religion," *Missiology*, 18 (1990): 25–36.

with Indian culture is seen in Susan Bayly's book *Saints, Goddesses, and Kings*. Drawing on wide reading in sources and secondary literature and on field work in southern India, Bayly shows how Muslims, the Syrian-rite "Thomas Christians," whose roots go back long before Vasco da Gama, and more recent Roman Catholic converts all adapted Indian idioms of community and caste organization (including vehement "honors disputes" among themselves), patron deities and founding holy men, and pilgrimage to sites associated with them. This is a stunning example of the kind of richly textured picture of cultural interactive emergence that can be drawn out of a combination of ethnographic and historical approaches to the history of Christianity in Asia.

FOR ANY INDIGENIZED OR EUROCENTRIC ACCOUNT of the history of the Indian Ocean, the arrival of the Dutch and the English at the end of the sixteenth century marks a turning point. The organizational cohesion of the Dutch and English East India Companies far surpassed that of the Portuguese. Their military and naval power generally was subordinated to commercial objectives, although these might tacitly include the private commercial interests of the servants of the companies. Thus they form a remarkable early chapter in the history of bourgeois statism, of power in the service of profit. The wonderful record-keeping of the companies (especially the Dutch Company) makes possible some of the best research we have on the politics and commerce of the Indian Ocean. Subrahmanyam's studies, and those of many other scholars, of the Portuguese after 1600 owe a great deal to Dutch sources. The most important single demonstration of what can be accomplished in studies of the companies in their Asian contexts is Chaudhuri's massive volume *Trading World of Asia*, full of sophisticated and closely reasoned analysis of aspects of the Indian commercial economy *per se* as well as of the English East India Company and its activities in India. Several others have made excellent use of the Dutch sources.²⁸ Das Gupta's study of Surat is especially noteworthy for his description of the immense web of private trade connections between Indian merchants and employees of the Dutch and English East India Companies. In all these books, the authors' deep knowledge of Indian social and economic history combines with the specifics noted in company records to make possible very detailed discussions of the social organization of production, especially in the great textile industries;²⁹ of the relations of producers and merchants with various levels of political power; of currency, credit, and prices; and much more. These books ought to provide food for thought to all students of early modern comparative economic history.

²⁸ Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat: C. 1700–1750* (Wiesbaden, 1979); Om Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal, 1630–1720* (Princeton, N.J., 1985); Tapan Rayachaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel, 1605–1690* (The Hague, 1962); S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650–1740* (Delhi, 1986).

²⁹ Chaudhuri, *Trading World*, chaps. 11, 12; Joseph J. Brenning, "Textile Producers and Production in Late Seventeenth Century Coromandel"; and S. Arasaratnam, "Weavers, Merchants, and Company: The Handloom Industry in Southeastern India 1750–1790," in Subrahmanyam, *Merchants, Markets, and the State*, 66–89, 190–214.

During the eighteenth century, the Dutch Company became increasingly committed to territorial control in Indonesia. In India, the great areas of trade growth, Bengal and Coromandel, were not controlled by any one European power and could be brought under such control only through a long process of deepening involvement in the internal politics of India. The English Company, less burdened by military commitments elsewhere, also was considerably more tolerant than the Dutch of private trade in its ports by Indian merchants, Europeans not in its service, and even its own employees. British private traders became adept exploiters of commercial connections and small margins of legal and semi-legal privilege.³⁰ The wealth and experience of these private traders and the trade they and their Indian partners brought to English ports—products of their own assimilation into the complexities and riches of the Indian economy—were sources of English strength (and sometimes of precious records for the economic historian). The growing scale and frequency of war in India as the Mughal power declined and formidable regional mobilizing states emerged presented amazing opportunities for French and British adventurers to gain fortunes in treasure and revenue rights by training and leading the armies of Indian princes. After 1757, the English Company became the supreme power in Bengal. This was a process of world-historical importance, the culmination of the interactive emergence of European power in maritime Asia. Indian treasure and Indian opium propelled the expansion of the British tea trade to China. British private traders from India sold large quantities of guns and opium throughout Southeast Asia. These developments have attracted many researchers, but until recently they had not received an up-to-date summary. Now there are two, nicely complementary, in Bayly's *Indian Society* and Marshall's *Bengal: The British Bridgehead*. Both are sophisticated and rich in analyses of Indian changes and contexts. Neither does very much with the remarkable personalities and strange events so often described—Clive, Hastings, Cornwallis, the Black Hole, and others. For these and for the free-wheeling, cynical, corrupt, and immensely dynamic flavor of the times, one will have to turn to earlier general histories.³¹ Hameeda Hossain's *Company Weavers* is an excellent example of the kind of detailed history of commerce and production that can be written from the English records, and it paints a melancholy picture of once-stable weaver communities driven to destitution by British pressures for production and revenue.

For the rest of early modern maritime Asia, the current state of scholarship is much less even, and the shift from Eurocentrism to indigenization and interactive emergence less decisive. Ceylon or Sri Lanka, geographically associated with the Indian subcontinent, stood somewhat apart both in its predominant Buddhist culture and in its commercial economy; as the early modern world's most important producer of cinnamon (for which the leading markets were in Spain and Spanish America³²), it was a tempting target for European monopoly

³⁰ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, chap. 6; Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundations for Empire: English Private Trade in India, 1659–1760* (New Delhi, 1980).

³¹ Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade*, chap. 3; Parry, *Trade and Dominion*, chap. 9; Williams, *Expansion of Europe*, chaps. 5, 6.

³² Jonathan I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585–1740* (Oxford, 1990), 316.

enforcement strategies characteristic of all spice-producing areas. Modern studies of Sri Lanka have been fullest on its political relations with Europeans.³³ Much remains to be done on the Roman Catholic missions and their widespread cultural impact, but there is a recent solid contribution on the Dutch missionary and educational effort.³⁴

IN ACCOUNTS OF EUROPEAN EXPANSION in maritime Asia, Southeast Asia is seen as a mercantile monopolist's dream. Its ports were hospitable to foreign merchants, who lived under their own headmen and interacted with a highly commerce-minded local elite.³⁵ The centers of production of cloves and nutmeg could be brought under tight control and huge monopoly profits made on sales in Europe. Pepper was cheaper and more widely grown, much harder to monopolize, but most Southeast Asian port cities had rather limited hinterlands and thus were vulnerable to attack or blockade from the sea. Trade from the Spice Islands and almost all Indonesian ports to India, the Middle East, and Europe had to pass through one of two narrow, patrollable straits, Sunda and Malacca. The Europeans who grasped these potentialities were following the examples of centuries of indigenous power-holders, who had focused on controlling the two straits and establishing loose hegemony over scattered and vulnerable port cities. During the European intrusion, a number of Muslim polities oriented toward maritime trade, raiding, and power arose in Southeast Asia: Johore,³⁶ Achen,³⁷ Makassar,³⁸ Banda,³⁹ and Sulu.⁴⁰ Of these, Achen was by far the most effective in maintaining its own independence and its own trade network and in counterattacking the Europeans. But none of these states lasted as long or spread its net of trade and power as wide as the Dutch East India Company. Reid's admirable *annaliste* account of the enduring patterns of trade, settlement, and production in this island world is a model of what a student of indigenizing social science can learn from close reading of European sources. It does not advance very far toward patterns of empire and political economy; those will be the topics of a promised

³³ S. Arasaratnam, "Ceylon in the Indian Ocean Trade: 1500–1800," in Das Gupta and Pearson, *India and the Indian Ocean*, 224–39; Arasaratnam, *Dutch Power in Ceylon, 1658–1687* (Amsterdam, 1958); K. W. Goonewardena, *The Foundations of Dutch Power in Ceylon, 1638–1658* (Amsterdam, 1958); George D. Winius, *The Fatal History of Portuguese Ceylon* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).

³⁴ J. van Goor, *Jan Kompenie as Schoolmaster: Dutch Education in Ceylon, 1690–1795* (Groningen, 1978).

³⁵ Denys Lombard, "Le sultanat malais comme modèle socio-économique," in Lombard and Aubin, *Marchands et hommes d'affaires asiatiques*, 117–24; M. A. P. Meilink-Roelofs, *Asian Trade and European Influence in the Indonesian Archipelago between 1500 and about 1630* (The Hague, 1962).

³⁶ Leonard Andaya, *The Kingdom of Johor, 1641–1728* (Kuala Lumpur, 1975).

³⁷ Denys Lombard, *Le Sultanat d'Atjeh au temps d'Iskandar Muda (1607–1636)* (Paris, 1967).

³⁸ Leonard Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka: A History of South Sulawesi (Celebes) in the Seventeenth Century* (The Hague, 1981).

³⁹ John Villiers, "Trade and Society in the Banda Islands in the Sixteenth Century," *Modern Asian Studies*, 15 (1981): 743–49; James D. Tracy, "Introduction," in Tracy, ed., *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires* (Cambridge, 1991), 3, 15; Willard A. Hanna, *Indonesian Banda: Colonialism and Its Aftermath in the Nutmeg Islands* (Philadelphia, 1978).

⁴⁰ James F. Warren, *The Sulu Zone, 1768–1898* (Singapore, 1981).

second volume.⁴¹ The best recent political and cultural summary in English is that by M. C. Ricklefs.⁴²

Historians have understood for many years that the Europeans first established themselves as non-privileged participants in the multiethnic life of the Southeast Asian ports and even when they came to wield ultimate power made use of indigenous structures and practices to control Asian traders and settlers. Recently, we have begun to see some additions to an indigenized account of the rise of Dutch power in Indonesia. The Chinese, already active in the area, became key allies of the Dutch, engaging in local trade, carrying a share of the trade between Java and China and among islands in Indonesia, contracting with the Dutch to collect various local taxes, and later, when rural areas near Batavia were sufficiently free of Javanese resistance, building up a thriving sugar industry. Leonard Blussé, whose excellent collection of articles, *Strange Company*, represents the best work yet done on these connections, has called Batavia a “Chinese colonial town.”⁴³ Many Dutch Company officials married highly capable part-Indonesian women who managed their private trade.⁴⁴ Even the progress of the Dutch toward wider dominion had roots in Indonesian political culture. In the highly personalized small states of Indonesia, inter-generational rivalry and unstable sharing of power and sovereignty were the norm; in such a situation, it was as normal for one rival or the other to call for Dutch assistance as it had been to call for the assistance of earlier indigenous maritime overlords.⁴⁵ A dramatic example of this was a remarkably brief campaign in 1682 in which the Dutch Company, called in by the Young King of Banten to aid him in a protracted conflict with his father the Old King, made Banten a client state, no longer a rival to Batavia as the entrepôt of west Java.⁴⁶ (The pattern has survived into our own time; the sultan of Brunei carried on a long struggle in the 1970s and 1980s with his father, who had abdicated.⁴⁷)

In the larger arena of Javanese politics, the Dutch are shown being drawn farther and farther in by the unstable and highly personalized politics of the Javanese courts⁴⁸ and then obtaining the cooperation of Javanese rulers in some highly exploitative systems of forced-delivery monoculture. The first great successes were in the production of coffee, making possible the continued

⁴¹ See also Anthony Reid, “An ‘Age of Commerce’ in Southeast Asia,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 24 (1990): 1–30; and Reid, “The Seventeenth-Century Crisis in Southeast Asia,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 24 (1990): 639–59.

⁴² M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia, c. 1300 to the Present* (Bloomington, Ind., 1981), esp. chaps. 3–9. See also Kenneth R. Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development in Early Southeast Asia* (Honolulu, 1985), chaps. 8, 9.

⁴³ Another important recent contribution is Denys Lombard, *Le carrefour javanais: Essai d'histoire globale*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1990), vol. 2, chap. 4.

⁴⁴ Jean Gelman Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison, Wis., 1983).

⁴⁵ J. van Goor, “Seapower, Trade, and State-Formation: Pontianak and the Dutch,” in J. van Goor, ed., *Trading Companies in Asia, 1600–1830* (Utrecht, 1986), 83–106.

⁴⁶ The masses of printed and manuscript material on this campaign await full analysis; for a brief account, see John E. Wills, Jr., “China’s Farther Shores: Continuities and Changes in the Destination Ports of China’s Maritime Trade, 1680–1690,” in Ptak and Rothermund, *Emporia*, 53–77, at 57–60.

⁴⁷ Mary Anne Weaver, “In the Sultan’s Palace,” *New Yorker* (October 7, 1991): 56–93, at 69.

⁴⁸ For exceptionally fine non-Eurocentric use of Dutch and Javanese sources, see M. C. Ricklefs, *Jogjakarta under Sultan Mangkubumi, 1749–1792: A History of the Division of Java* (London, 1974).

expansion of its consumption in Europe, well beyond the limited capacity of the original production areas in Yemen.⁴⁹ These early examples of the great nineteenth and twentieth-century colonial monoculture and industrial-world consumption of Third World agricultural products deserve far more study than they have received.

For the maritime history of the rest of Southeast Asia, current knowledge is much less satisfactory. One excellent study has been done of the vigorous trade of the Portuguese, Japanese, and Chinese on the southern coast of Vietnam.⁵⁰ Siam, relatively open to foreigners, its monarchs involved in maritime trade, its Chinese settlers very influential and prime managers of its important "tributary" trade with China, deserves more study. The story of the rise and fall of French influence and of the power of the Greek adventurer Constantine Phaulkon in Siam during the 1680s is perhaps the most astonishing of the many improbable melodramas of European power and adventure in maritime Asia.⁵¹

The Philippines have a highly distinctive and important place in the history of maritime Asia, as a conduit for American silver into the Asian economies, the locus of an important European-Chinese-indigene interaction, and the one part of Asia that became Roman Catholic. This fascinating story has been largely ignored in "European expansion" surveys. The later history of the islands was so profoundly shaped by the projection across the Pacific of many of the policies and institutions of Spanish America, including the cumbersome structure of law and bureaucracy and the great importance of missionary enterprise, that the indigenization of this history has been unusually difficult.⁵² Manila was as much a "Chinese colonial town" as Batavia.⁵³ American silver came thence from Acapulco primarily to pay for Chinese goods, and its greatest effects were on the economy of China.⁵⁴ For the history of the indigenous people of the islands after the Spanish intrusion, much remains to be done.⁵⁵ Some of the potentialities of the study of the massive

⁴⁹ W. Rummelink, "Expansion without Design: The Snare of Javanese Politics," *Itinerario*, no. 1 (1988): 111–28; G. J. Knapp, "Coffee for Cash: The Dutch East India Company and the Expansion of Coffee Cultivation in Java, Ambon and Ceylon, 1700–1730," in van Goor, ed., *Trading Companies in Asia*, 33–49.

⁵⁰ Pierre-Yves Manguin, *Les Portugais sur les côtes du Viêt-nam et du Campá* (Paris, 1972).

⁵¹ Jurriën van Goor, "Merchant in Royal Service: Constant Phaulkon as Phraklang at Ayuthaya, 1683–1688," in Ptak and Rothermund, *Emporia*, 445–65; George Vinal Smith, *The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand* (Detroit, Mich., 1977); Claude de Bèze, S.J., E. W. Hutchinson, ed. and trans., *1688: Revolution in Siam* (Hong Kong, 1968); Sarasin Viraphol, *Tribute and Profit: Sino-Siamese Trade, 1652–1853* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977); Jennifer Cushman, "Fields from the Sea: Chinese Junk Trade with Siam during the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1975).

⁵² Charles H. Cunningham, *The Audiencia in the Spanish Colonies, as Illustrated by the Audiencia of Manila (1583–1800)* (Berkeley, Calif., 1919); John L. Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines* (Madison, Wis., 1967); H. de la Costa, S.J., *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581–1768* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961).

⁵³ Robert R. Reed, *Colonial Manila: The Context of Hispanic Urbanism and Process of Morphogenesis* (Berkeley, Calif., 1978); Alfonso Felix, Jr., *The Chinese in the Philippines*, 2 vols. (Manila, 1966). For a comparison of changes in a number of overseas Chinese centers in one period of change, see Wills, "China's Farther Shores."

⁵⁴ W. L. Schurz, *The Manila Galleon* (New York, 1939); Pierre Chaunu, *Les Philippines et le Pacifique des Ibériques (XVI^e, XVII^e, XVIII^e siècles)* (Paris, 1960); William S. Atwell, "International Bullion Flows and the Chinese Economy circa 1530–1650," *Past and Present*, 95 (May 1982): 68–90.

⁵⁵ See, for example, William H. Scott, *The Discovery of the Igorots: Spanish Contacts with the Pagans of Northern Luzon* (Quezon City, 1974).

cultural changes brought about by the missionaries were opened up in John Leddy Phelan's fine book *The Hispanization of the Philippines*, which shows how Filipino responses to Christian evangelism were shaped by their pre-conquest heritages in ways as various as the importance of cults of holy water and the social importance of godparenthood. Vicente Rafael's *Contracting Colonialism* reveals how the missionaries' efforts to find clear and univocal translations of Christian terms and to establish orderly administration of confession and the sacraments was an attempt at a hierarchical, authoritarian restructuring of Tagalog concepts of relations among people, between people and spirits, and between life and death. The converts in turn found ways to subvert these processes, exasperating their confessors with their indirection and evasion. Some readers will become suspicious when Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault are quoted and European rationalism is found uniquely bent on systematic power over others, but in this fascinating book the evidence of the links between rationalism and will to dominance in Spanish attitudes is plentiful and convincing. Along with Susan Bayly's ethnohistory and N. Standaert's indigenized study of elite cultural relations, Rafael's work lets us see as never before the contributions of mission history to non-parochial cultural history.

The paradoxes and contradictions of efforts to break from the "European expansion" paradigm do not abate in studies of the maritime histories of China, Japan, and Korea. I have already noted the fundamental contributions of Chinese emigrants to maritime enterprise and political development in Siam and at Batavia and Manila. These Chinese seafarers were also deeply involved in the spectacular rise and fall of a Dutch colony on Taiwan from 1624 to 1662, on which abundant Dutch materials now are being published. The pattern of triangular relations—among local people with little capacity to organize resistance, Chinese settlers, merchants, and tax-farmers, and a small and passive European community focused on an entrepôt trade with the Chinese—was strikingly similar to that at Manila. The Dutch even had one of their few substantial missionary efforts on Taiwan.⁵⁶

THE "MARITIME CHINA" of coastal and overseas trade was marginal to the politics of the empire and sometimes organized in ways quite different from the land-centered bureaucratic system.⁵⁷ At several key junctures from the early 1400s on, the rulers of the empire sensed in that maritime world sources of

⁵⁶ The best summary in English is John R. Shepherd, *Statecraft and Political Economy on the Taiwan Frontier, 1600–1800* (Stanford, Calif., 1993). Dutch sources may be sampled in translation in William Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch* (London, 1903). The major source publication now in progress is J. L. Blussé, et al., eds., *De Dagregisters van het Kasteel Zeelandia, Taiwan, 1629–1662, Deel I: 1629–1641* (The Hague, 1986). See also Thomas O. Höllman, "Formosa and the Trade in Venison and Deer Skins" in Ptak and Rothermund, *Emporia*, 263–90.

⁵⁷ John E. Wills, Jr., "Maritime China from Wang Chih to Shih Lang," in Jonathan D. Spence and John E. Wills, Jr., eds., *From Ming to Ch'ing: Conquest, Region, and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century China* (New Haven, Conn., 1979), 204–38; Ng Chin-Keong, *Trade and Society: The Amoy Network on the China Coast, 1683–1735* (Singapore, 1983); Pin-tsun Chang, "The First Chinese Diaspora in Southeast Asia in the Fifteenth Century"; and Ng Chin-Keong, "The Case of Ch'en I-lao: Maritime Trade and Overseas Chinese in Ch'ing Policies," in Ptak and Rothermund, *Emporia*, 13–29, 373–400.

challenge and disorder that could be most effectively dealt with by quarantine. Restriction of European and other foreign presences on the Chinese coast is best seen as part of a defensiveness that was deeply rooted in this wariness toward indigenous seafarers and, indeed, toward all Chinese who might ally with foreign intruders; not trusting their own people to limit and neutralize foreign contact, as Indians so often did, Chinese rulers sought to restrict foreign presence to border areas and to keep it under strict control even there. Only a few episodes in Chinese handling of European contacts were affected by the hierarchical institutions and preconceptions of the "tribute system"; the Chinese did have their own concepts of world order, but Western scholars' emphasis on them has been not so much an indigenization as a projection of Western concepts of an order of equal sovereign states and concern with any violation of that order.⁵⁸

Chinese statesmen understood the potential fiscal and economic importance of foreign trade and permitted it when it could be managed in ways compatible with their wariness of the maritime Chinese and of uncontrolled Chinese connections with foreigners. Thus the Portuguese were allowed to settle on the tiny, easily controlled peninsula of Macao and to carry on from about 1570 to 1638 a rich trade with Japan, which the Ming authorities found far preferable to encouraging maritime Chinese involvement with the dangerous Japanese.⁵⁹ The huge eighteenth-century export of tea from Canton, one of the backbones of European trade in maritime Asia, was carefully controlled by the Ch'ing authorities to minimize the disturbances that might arise from bad debts or poor quality control. Chinese merchants, products of a sophisticated and rapidly expanding commercial economy, provided large quantities of goods of reliable quality; in contrast to India, the Europeans neither were allowed nor expressed any great desire for close control over the processes of production.⁶⁰

Defensiveness toward the threat of cultural contamination and political subversion by foreign missionaries was a constant feature of Chinese policy. We have several recent studies that provide valuable accounts of the broad contexts, cultural, social, and political, of missionary efforts and Chinese reactions to

⁵⁸ John E. Wills, Jr., *Pepper, Guns, and Parleys: The Dutch East India Company and China, 1662–1681* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), chap. 6; Wills, *Embassies and Illusions: Dutch and Portuguese Envoys to K'ang-hsi, 1666–1687* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984); Wills, "Tribute, Defensiveness, and Dependency: Uses and Limits of Some Basic Ideas about Mid-Ch'ing Foreign Relations," *Annals of the Southeast Conference of the Association for Asian Studies*, 8 (1986): 84–90, rpt. in *American Neptune*, 48 (Fall 1988): 225–29.

⁵⁹ C. R. Boxer, *Fidalgos in the Far East, 1550–1770* (1948; rpt. edn., London, 1968); Boxer, *The Great Ship from Amacon: Annals of Macao and the Old Japan Trade, 1555–1640* (Lisbon, 1959); George B. Souza, *The Survival of Empire: Portuguese Trade and Society in China and the South China Sea, 1630–1754* (Cambridge, 1986). For summaries of Portuguese and other maritime European relations with Ming China, see John E. Wills, Jr., "Relations with Maritime Europeans, 1514–1662," in *Cambridge History of China*, vol. 8, in press, also to appear in Wills, ed., *China and Maritime Europe, 1500–1800: Trade, Settlement, Diplomacy, and Missions* (Cambridge, in press).

⁶⁰ H. B. Morse, *Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China*, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1926–29); Louis Dermigny, *La Chine et l'Occident: Le commerce à Canton au XVIII^e siècle*, 3 vols. and album (Paris, 1964); C. J. A. Jörg, *Porcelain and the Dutch China Trade* (The Hague, 1982); Hoh-cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui, *The Management of Monopoly: A Study of the East India Company's Conduct of Its Tea Trade, 1784–1833* (Vancouver, 1984); J. L. Cranmer-Byng and John E. Wills, Jr., "Ch'ing Trade and Diplomacy with Maritime Europe, 1644–c. 1800," *Cambridge History of China*, vol. 9, in press, also to appear in Wills, ed., *China and Maritime Europe*; Kuo-tung Anthony Chen, "The Insolvency of the Chinese Hong Merchants, 1760–1843" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1990).

them.⁶¹ Standaert's book is unique among them in the care with which it describes certain intellectual elite circles at a time of new trends and a general sense of moral and political crisis, and shows how one intellectual, dissatisfied with his previous Buddhist quests and deeply impressed by the personal commitment and moral rigor of the missionaries, made the amazing leap of conversion to Christianity. There were several other distinguished intellectual converts in this generation but few in later generations. Looking at this decline in the light of recent advances in the understanding of their Chinese contexts, it is not hard to see how the emergence of a coherent naturalistic monism in philosophy and the revival of traditional moralistic fervor in the struggles against eunuch tyranny and Ch'ing conquest reduced the sense of moral and intellectual crisis that had moved Yang Tingyun and others to the desperate act of conversion.⁶²

The China-India contrast in ways of dealing with foreigners is only one of a number of exceptional challenges to comparative analysis of the relations of China, Europe, and maritime Asia. Another is the contrast in defensive responses between China and Japan. Japan in the late sixteenth century exhibited impressive positive responses to Christianity, openness to European trade, and energetic development of maritime trade in Japanese ships. But by 1640, it had turned to "closed country" policies, ruthlessly forbidding and extirpating Christianity, expelling the Portuguese because of their connection with the missionaries, and confining Dutch trade to the one port of Nagasaki. The challenges of fitting an understanding of these changes into our rapidly changing interpretations of early modern Japan are formidable. Japan after 1550 was evolving a new type of political order that can be fruitfully compared to the interventionist, revenue-increasing military states discussed by Pearson, C. A. Bayly, and others. Other changes included dramatic economic growth and urbanization, the emergence of an urban popular culture, and growing concern with the relations among Buddhism, Confucianism, and Japanese tradition and identity. Historians now have a superb guide to this complex set of changes in the volume on early modern Japan of the *Cambridge History of Japan*. The volume contains two excellent chapters on foreign relations by Jurgis Elisonas, the author of an earlier path-breaking study of Japanese reactions to Christianity.⁶³ Steeped in the primary sources, with fresh information and insight on every page, these chapters

⁶¹ John D. Young, *Confucianism and Christianity: The First Encounter* (Hong Kong, 1983); Jonathan D. Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (New York, 1984); Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact* (Cambridge, 1985); and Charles E. Ronan, S.J., and Bonnie B. C. Oh, eds., *East Meets West: The Jesuits in China, 1582–1773* (Chicago, 1988). A primary text of first importance now is available in English: Matteo Ricci, S.J., *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (T'ien-chu shih-i)*, Edward J. Malatesta S.J., ed., Douglas Lancashire and Peter Hu Kuo-chen, S.J., trans. (St. Louis, Mo., 1985). An excellent summary of post-1644 missions in China is John W. Witek, S.J., "Catholic Missions and the Chinese Reactions to Christianity," to appear in *Cambridge History of China*, vol. 9, and also in Wills, ed., *China and Maritime Europe*.

⁶² I have developed this argument in "Brief Intersection: Changing Contexts and Prospects of the Christian-Chinese Encounter from Ricci to Verbiest," to be published in a volume of studies of Ferdinand Verbiest, S.J., by the Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, Leuven.

⁶³ Jurgis Elisonas, "The Inseparable Trinity: Japan's Relations with China and Korea"; and "Christianity and the Daimyo," in John W. Hall and James L. McClain, eds., *Cambridge History of Japan*, Volume 4 (Cambridge, 1991), 235–372; George Elison, *Deus Destroyed: The Image of Christianity in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973). See also C. R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650* (Berkeley, Calif., 1951).

and this volume make Japan one of the most accessible cases of the interpretative shift from European expansion to interactive emergence. The positive commercial and religious responses of the late sixteenth century can be seen as facets of an age of political division in which a number of regional leaders sought to increase their wealth by attracting the Portuguese ships to their harbors, and conversions to Christianity were one of a number of manifestations of subversive popular religious organization and challenge to authority; the turn to control of trade and suppression of Christianity then can be viewed as facets of the general creation of strongly centralized polities and crushing of religious subversion. It is unfortunate, however, that this volume gives no connected coverage to the changes in the size and composition of Japan's foreign trade, and the energetic political efforts to control them, from the 1640s on,⁶⁴ or to the energetic efforts of some eighteenth-century intellectuals to use the small window on the world offered by Dutch trade to learn about European medicine, science, and even art.⁶⁵

In light of the achievements of the *Cambridge History* volume and the other important topics that have been opened up for Western readers, Massarella's book seems an odd throwback to a Eurocentric approach. Concentrating on the English efforts to open trade with Japan, it includes a great deal of detailed and unfocused summary of English documents. Only a few sections, notably a chapter on English-Japanese social relations in the port of Hirado, offer sustained analysis and attention to Asian contexts.

Another important indigenizing contribution has been Ronald Toby's path-breaking study of Japan's diplomatic stance toward its Asian neighbors. Toby argues that Japan remained diplomatically active, involved in foreign trade, in touch with and aware of the outside world, after 1640.⁶⁶ I would add that the highly focused energy and political control with which the Japanese leaders first promoted Japanese foreign trade and then forbade it, continually adjusted control measures at Nagasaki, and sought to extirpate Christianity are expressions of a focused political will and a sensitivity to Japan's changing position in the world that had no counterpart in China. China's overseas trade never was shut down as effectively as Japan's was after 1640, nor were the proscriptions of Christianity in China enforced with such dreadful thoroughness.

THE PICTURE SKETCHED in this essay of the interactive emergence of European-dominated interrelations in maritime Asia is based on the indigenized historiographies of various parts of Asia, all of which emphasize the internal dynamisms and processes of change of the various societies. I have noted many episodes of

⁶⁴ The most thorough study now available in English is Robert L. Innes, "The Door Ajar: Japan's Foreign Trade in the Seventeenth Century" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1980). For an interesting quantifying interpretation based on erratic knowledge of the literature on Japan, see Dennis O. Flynn, "Comparing the Tokagawa [*sic*] Shogunate and Hapsburg Spain: Two Silver-Based Empires in a Global Setting," in Tracy, *Political Economy*, 332–59.

⁶⁵ For a fine introduction, see Donald Keene, *Japan's Discovery of Europe, 1720–1830* (Stanford, Calif., 1969).

⁶⁶ Ronald P. Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Princeton, N.J., 1984).

impressive organization of maritime power and commerce, from Oman to Japan. The failures of most of them to sustain themselves and challenge the long drift to European domination of Asian waters were results of the contingencies of their own political and economic histories. The Europeans had a technological edge at certain times and in certain ways, but it was not insuperable. Far more important were the organizational cohesion and staying power of their state and corporate organizations, their effective interactions with Asians, their exploitation of Asians' talents and practices. Mobilizing state structures did emerge in India but long after the Europeans had intruded on the lands around the Indian Ocean. The sophistication and staying power of the Chinese imperial state made regional state-building tendencies neither feasible nor essential for defense. State building in Japan led to withdrawal into the "closed country."

This non-Eurocentric historiography offers much of interest and importance for historians of Europe, who can see in it, as in C. A. Bayly's *Imperial Meridian*, their familiar subject made strange by new contexts and comparisons. Asianists, in turn, find here a set of topics and issues about which they can learn from Europeanists and, perhaps even more surprisingly, from each other, as students of Japan, India, the Philippines, and the rest sort out the comparisons and interactions sketched here. I have suggested the phrase "interactive emergence" to describe the historical phenomena here discussed; more and more, it seems appropriate for their historiography as well.