

Title: *Nansenbushu Bankoku Shoka No Zu* [Outline Map of All Countries of the Universe]

Date: 1710

Author: Zuda Rokashi Hotan

Description: The first Japanese printed map to depict the world, including Europe and America, from a Buddhist cosmographical perspective. Printed by woodblock in 1710 (Hoei 7), this map was composed by the Buddhist monk Rokashi Hotan. The Japanese Tendai monk, Hōtan, was exceptionally well-educated. His detailed production of this map integrates elements from Indic, Chinese, and European cosmological and cartographic traditions including both textual and visual as well as narrative, historical, and schematic materials. Though modeled graphically on a complete world map in the Western tradition, Hōtan's map is limited to a small fraction of the inhabited world in the Buddhist tradition, depicting only the countries of the southern island continent of *Jambudvīpa*. Some of the following is an extract from the *Geographicus* website <https://www.geographicus.com/P/AntiqueMap/NansenBushu-hotan-1710> and from the cited references. A seminal map. This is the first Japanese printed map to depict the world, including Europe and America, from a Buddhist cosmographical perspective. Printed by woodblock in 1710 (Hoei 7 = *Year of the Tiger*), this map was composed by the Buddhist monk Rokashi Hotan. Zuda Rokashi Hotan (1654-1728) was a prominent Buddhist scholar-priest active in Japan during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Zuda Rokashi, or Hotan his religious name, is the founder of Kyoto's Kegonji Temple. Inspired by the 1653 publication of *Si-yu-ki*, a pilgrimage narrative of the Chinese monk Hsuang-Tsang's (602-604) travels to India in search of sacred Sanskrit writings, Rokashi Hotan's map attempts to update Buddhist mythological cartography, as exemplified in the 1634 manuscript map *Gotenjikuzu* [Map of the Five Regions of India], to correspond with the *Si-yu-ki*, as well as with contemporary and ancient religious texts, Chinese annals, travel narratives, and even some European maps (see *monograph* #231). Rokashi Hotan lists these texts, 102 in all, at the top of the map. The consequent product of Rokashi Hotan's work is this magnificent amalgam of disparate ideas and traditions. Bundaiken Uhei (fl. 1680 - 1720) was a Japanese bookseller/publisher active in Kyoto during the early part of the 18th century and is best known for his publication of this important Buddhist world map.



In essence this is a traditional Buddhist world-view in the *Gotenjikuzu* mold centered on the world-spanning continent of *Jambu-Dvīpa*. The *Jambu-Dvīpa* world (the terrestrial world that we occupy) is one of four small islands in the seven concentric seas that surround the sacred mountain *Meru* that, according to Buddhist cosmology, is the center of the universe. The word *Jambu-Dvīpa* derives its name from *dvīpa*, meaning island and *Jambu*, a large slow-growing tree with black berries and a variety of medicinal properties. The shape of the island is shield-like, wider in the north and narrower in the south, akin to the shape of the Indian subcontinent. The shape of the map reflects that of the *Jambu-Dvīpa*. *Jambu-dvīpa* is also the Indian name for the great continent south of the cosmic Mount *Meru*, marked on this map by a central spiral (see the excerpt on the left). *Meru* is the archetypal pilgrimage site. At its center is Lake *Anavatapta*, a whirlpool-like quadruple helix lake believed to be the center of the universe. This lake, which is commonly associated with Lake Manasarovar in

northern India, is believed in Buddhist mythology to be the legendary site where Queen Maya conceived the Buddha. From the quadruple beast headed helix (heads of a horse, a lion, an elephant, and an ox) of Manasarovar or *Lake Anavatapta* radiate the four sacred rivers of the region: the Indus, the Ganges, the Bramaputra, and the Sutlej (or Ganges, Oxus, Indus and Tarim).

South of *Jambu-Dvipa*, India is recognizable for in its peninsular form. Japan itself appears as a series of islands in the upper right and, like India, is one of the few recognizable elements - at least from a cartographic perspective. China and Korea appear to the west of Japan and are vaguely identifiable geographically, which itself represents a significant advancement over the *Gotenjikuzu* map.

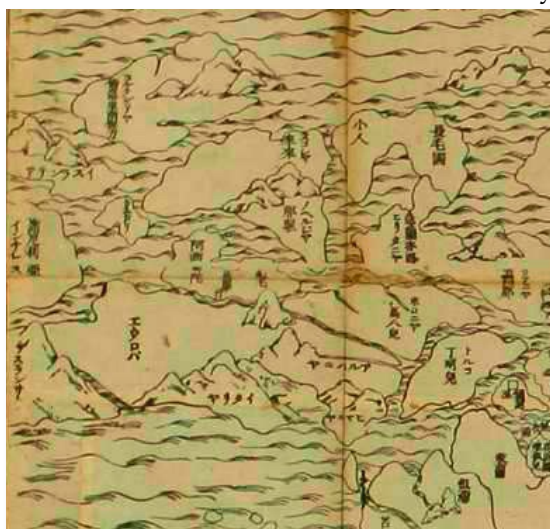


Southeast Asia also makes one of its first appearances in a Japanese Buddhist map as an island cluster to the east of India.

Africa (pictured on the left) is reduced to a large island located in the "Western Sea" identified as the "Land of Western Women" (shown on the far left (center), shown here on the left).

The language of the text on the map is Chinese, except for a few Japanese characters (Katakana) on the illustrations of European countries. Europe, located in the upper left of the map, is shown as a series of islands (*see below*). Europe had no place at all in earlier Buddhist world maps, making this one of the first Japanese maps to depict Europe, which is shown on the upper left of the map as a group of islands, which can be identified from Iceland to England, Scandinavia, Poland, Hungary and Turkey, but deliberately deleting the Iberian Peninsula. *Umukari* [Hungary], *Oranda*, *Baratan*, *Komo* [Holland or "the country of the red hair"], *Arubaniya* [Albania?], *Itarya* [Italy], *Suransa* [France] and *Inkeresu* [England] are all named.

On the lower right of the map South America is featured as an island south of Japan with a small peninsula as part of Central America, carrying among just a few place-names including four Chinese characters whose phonetical Japanese reading is "A-ME-RI-KA". This location is derived from the *General map of Ming Dynasty China and all the surrounding countries*, 1663. The island is divided into north and south divided by a big river. In the south part there are four Chinese characters longitudinally, which means America. This area is a Chinese legendary country where the giants live. Chile and Peru are labeled. In the middle right is Brazil. At the north end, in reverse order, is a port Cionega Sierra according to the famous map *Kunyu wanguo quantu* (1602) made by Matteo Ricci (#441).





North of Japan, a land bridge joins Asia with an unnamed landmass, presumably North America. The continent of Africa is not shown at all. On the other hand, this map is much more than a world map and the main concept by the author was to celebrate a historically very important event. The map echoes the pilgrimage route of the famous Chinese Buddhist priest Hsuan-Tsang (or Xuan Zhuang, Genjo in Japanese; 602-664 A.D.), who travelled to India to visit sacred places of Buddhism and also to collect holy sanskrit writings.

As mentioned above, this all was based on the Japanese version of Hsuan-Tsang's Chinese narrative, the *Si-yu-ki*, printed as late as 1653. Here numerous details are given, including the interesting feature of the so-called "iron-gate", shown as a strongly over-sized square, and the path taken by the monk whilst crossing the forbidden mountain systems after leaving Samarkand. Also, at the upper left corner 102 references from Buddhist holy writings and Chinese annals are mentioned to increase the credibility of the map.

Of special note is Rokashi Hotan's mapping of the Americas. Prior to this map America had rarely if ever been depicted on Japanese maps, so Rokashi Hotan turned to the 1645 Chinese map *Daimin Kyuhen Zu* [Map of China under the Ming Dynasty and its surrounding Countries] (#231), from which he copied both the small island-like form of South America, and the curious land bridge (the Aelutian Islands?) connecting Asia to what the Japanese historians Nobuo Muroga and Kazutaka Unno conclude "must undoubtedly be a reflection of North America". Whether this represents ancient knowledge from early Chinese navigations in this region, for which there is some literary if not historical evidence, or merely a printing error, we can only speculate.

While this map represents a significant step forward in the Japanese attempt to combine religious and contemporary geographic knowledge it remains in essence a Buddhist map. It is likely that Rokashi Hotan was aware of important European style maps circulating in China at the time. The 1602 *Kunyu Wanguo Quantu* [A Map of the Myriad Countries of the World] by the Jesuit Matteo Ricci (#441) is one such example and copies were known to have reached Japan in the 17th century. It is curious that Rokashi Hotan chose to ignore it and other Eurocentric data in exchange for a religious world-view, while at the same time attempting to reconcile Buddhist and modern geography. It should be noted that at the time of its production, Japan maintained an isolationist policy that began in 1603 with the Edo period under the military ruler Tokugawa Ieyasu, and lasting for nearly 270 years. Although knowing the world map by Matteo Ricci, Japanese maps mainly showed a purely Sino-centric view - or with acknowledgement of Buddhist traditional teaching - the Buddhist habitable world with an identifiable Indian sub-continent. Ultimately, this map makes a lot more sense when one understands that Rokashi Hotan scaled his world map not by distance but rather by religious importance. India, the birthplace of the Buddha, is the central locale in the *Jambu-Dvipa* conception and on this map. Other countries, including China, Japan itself, and even more so the distant continents of Africa, Europe and the Americas, Rokashi Hotan considered "but mote-like countries in the Jambu-Dvipa" and "as small as a millet-grain".

Rokashi Hotan's map became the model on which all future Japanese Buddhist world maps were drawn well into the 19th century. The confused cosmological view

upon which his map is based, referencing at once religious, secular, and non-Buddhist teachings, matched the growing religio-secular conflict that would emerge in Japan during the coming centuries. Ultimately this is one of the most important, beautiful, and influential printed maps ever to emerge in Japan.

Two identical versions of this woodblock map appeared in 1710. The more common was published by Chobei Nagata of Kyoto. A less common example was published by the bookseller Bundaiken Uhei and corresponds to this example. Bundaiken Uhei's mark and name appear in the lower left quadrant. In most examples coloration varies. A strong crisp image suggests that this is one of the first examples that Bundaiken Uhei printed, as wooden plates tend to wear quickly and many other examples show signs that the woodblock was more heavily worn.

This is the earliest map of this type representing Buddhist cosmology and became the prototype of Buddhist world maps. The *Nan-en-budai Shokoku Shuran no Zu* (a world map), the date of which is still uncertain, and the *Sekai Daiso Zu* (a world map), the *En-bu-dai-Zu* (a world map), *Tenjuku Yoch Ziu* (a map of India), a trilogy by Sonto, a Buddhist, are derived from Hotan's world map. The special features of these maps are the representation of an imaginary India, where Buddha was born, and the illustration of the religious world as expounded by Buddhists. In the Buddhist world maps or *Shumi World*, the space for the regions called *Nan-sen-bu* and *Nan-en-budai*, etc. - equivalent to the continents on the real Earth - is very small. It has been maintained that their artists could not have closed their eyes, as far as these parts are concerned, to the objective world maps made in Europe. But these maps treat India as the heart of their world, and consequently we can say that they never recognized the European world maps. In their maps the Buddhists connected the "Five Continents" with the "Spiritual World" where the Spirit of human beings must go after death. In these maps we find confusion of the visionary world and the real. Hotan's world map was so popular that it is not difficult to find it today.

Summary: Hōtan's map was revolutionary in being the first printed Oriental map to introduce detailed Western cartographic information into this traditional Buddhist cosmological view, and to attempt to merge the two together into a comprehensible form. It became the prototype for all subsequent Buddhist world maps printed in Japan until the late 19th century.

Europe is depicted as a series of islands in the upper left of the image, whilst South America is likewise another island in the lower right of the image. Africa is omitted completely. China and Japan are clearly defined in the upper right of the map. The popularity of the map is evidenced by the fact that although the map is dated 1710, it was reissued unchanged in numerous editions through to about 1815 and spawned innumerable copies and derivatives over the next 150 years.

The text is Chinese, except for a few Japanese characters on the illustrations of European countries. Europe is shown at upper left as a group of islands, which can be identified from Iceland to England, Scandinavia, Poland, Hungary and Turkey, but deliberately deleting the Iberian Peninsula. At lower right South America is featured as an island south of Japan with a small peninsula as part of Central America, only a few place-names appear but include four Chinese characters whose phonetical Japanese reading is "A-ME-RI-KA". North of Japan, a land bridge joins Asia with an unnamed landmass, presumably North America. Africa is not shown at all.

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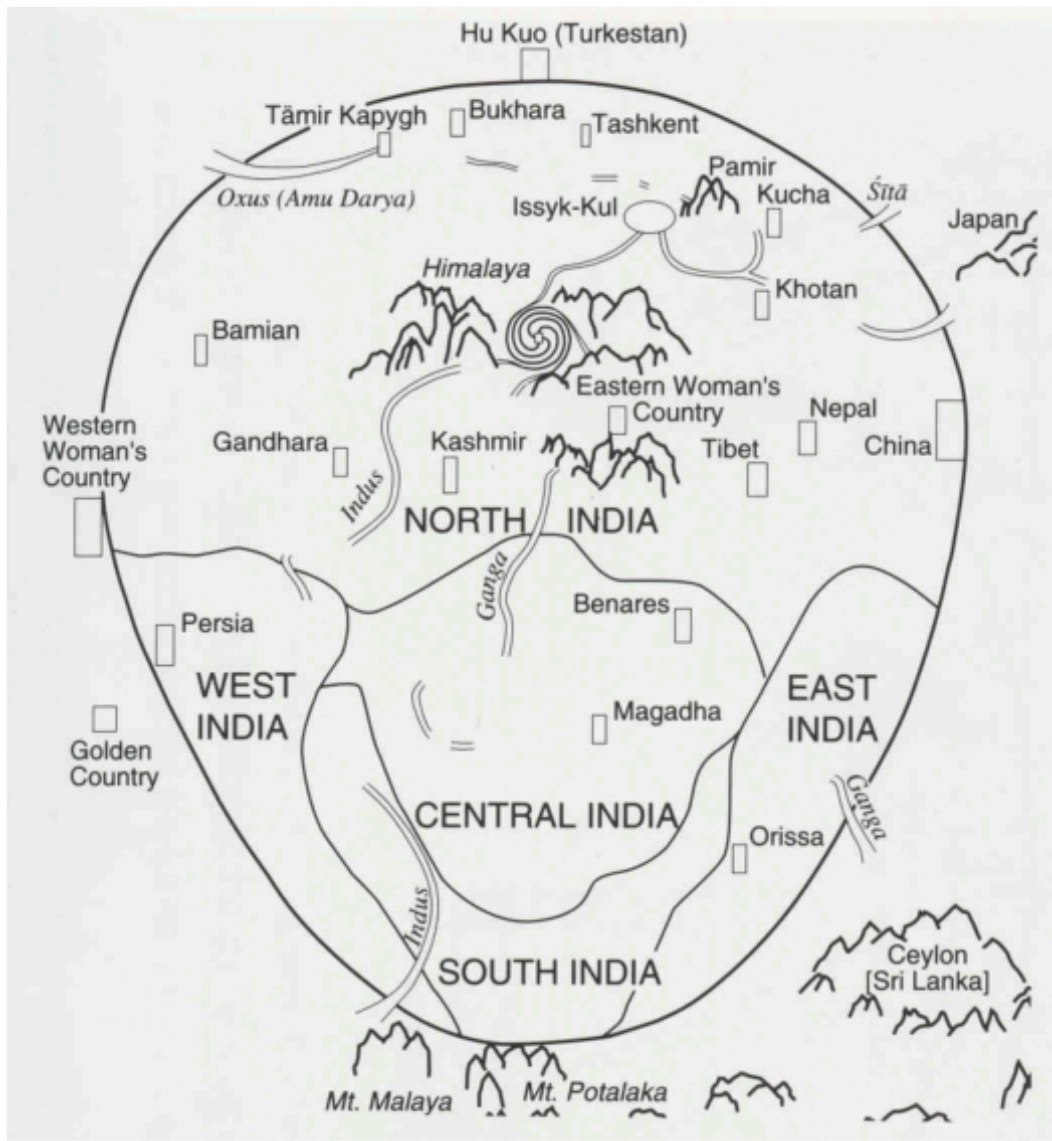
route of the famous Chinese Buddhist priest Hsuan-Tsang (or Xuan Zhuang, Genjo in Japanese, 602-664 A.D.), who travelled to India to visit sacred places of Buddhism and also to collect holy sanskrit writings. So the largest part of the map is depicted to *Jambu-Dvīpa* with the sacred *Lake of Anavatapta* (Lake Manasarovar in the Himalayas) at center, from which the four rivers Ganges, Oxus, Indus and Tarim flow. This all was based on the Japanese version of Hsuan-Tsang's Chinese narrative, the *Si-yu-ki*, printed as late as 1653. Here numerous details are given, including the interesting feature of the so-called "iron-gate", shown as a strongly over-sized square, and the path taken by the monk whilst crossing the forbidden mountain systems after leaving Samarkand. In the upper left corner 102 references from Buddhist holy writings and Chinese annals are mentioned to increase the credibility of the map.

Inspired by the 1653 publication of *Si-yu-ki*, a pilgrimage narrative of the Chinese monk Hsuan-Tsang's (602-604) travels to India in search of sacred Sanskrit writings, Rokashi Hotan's map attempts to update Buddhist mythological cartography, as exemplified in the 1634 manuscript map *Gotenjiku* [Map of the Five Regions of India #231.1], to correspond with the *Si-yu-ki*, as well as with contemporary and ancient religious texts, Chinese annals, travel narratives, and even some European maps. Rokashi Hotan lists these texts, 102 in all, at the top of the map. The consequent product of Rokashi Hotan's work is this magnificent amalgam of disparate ideas and traditions. In essence this is a traditional Buddhist worldview in the *Gotenjiku* mold centered on the world-spanning continent of *Jambu-Dvīpa*.

Size: Printed area measures 56.5 x 45 inches (143.51 x 114.3 cm)

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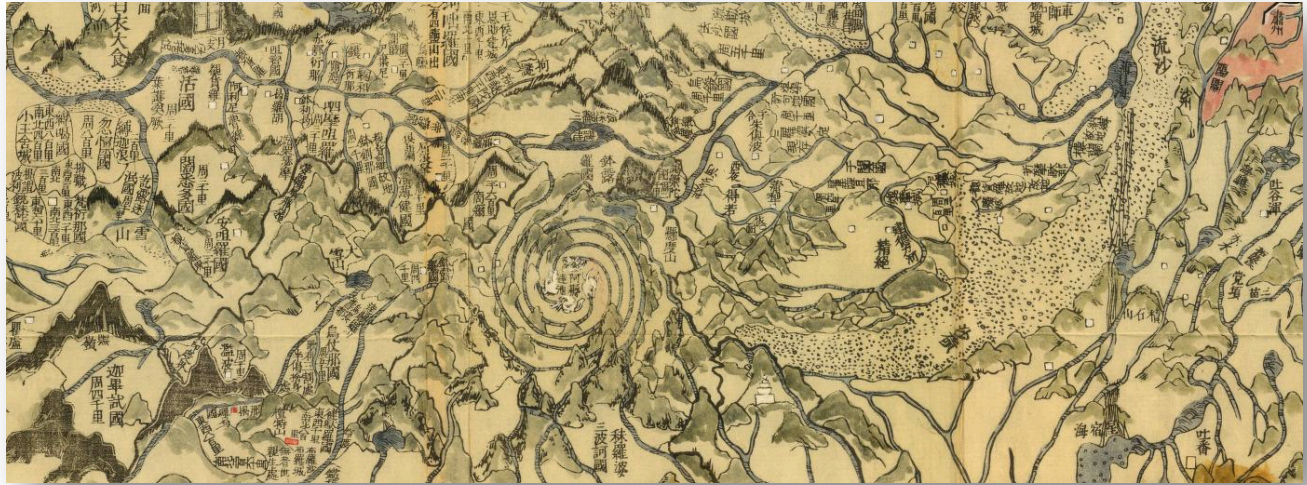


Outline of the Gotenjikuzu [Map of the Five Regions of India] (see #231.1)





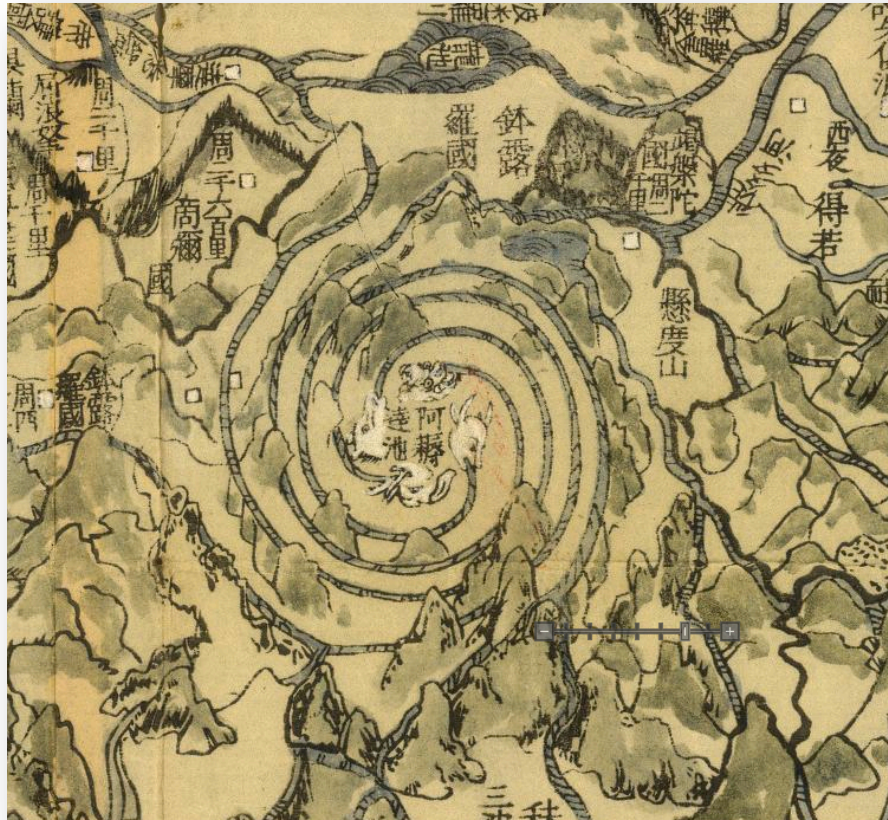
Detail: Africa depicted as a large island



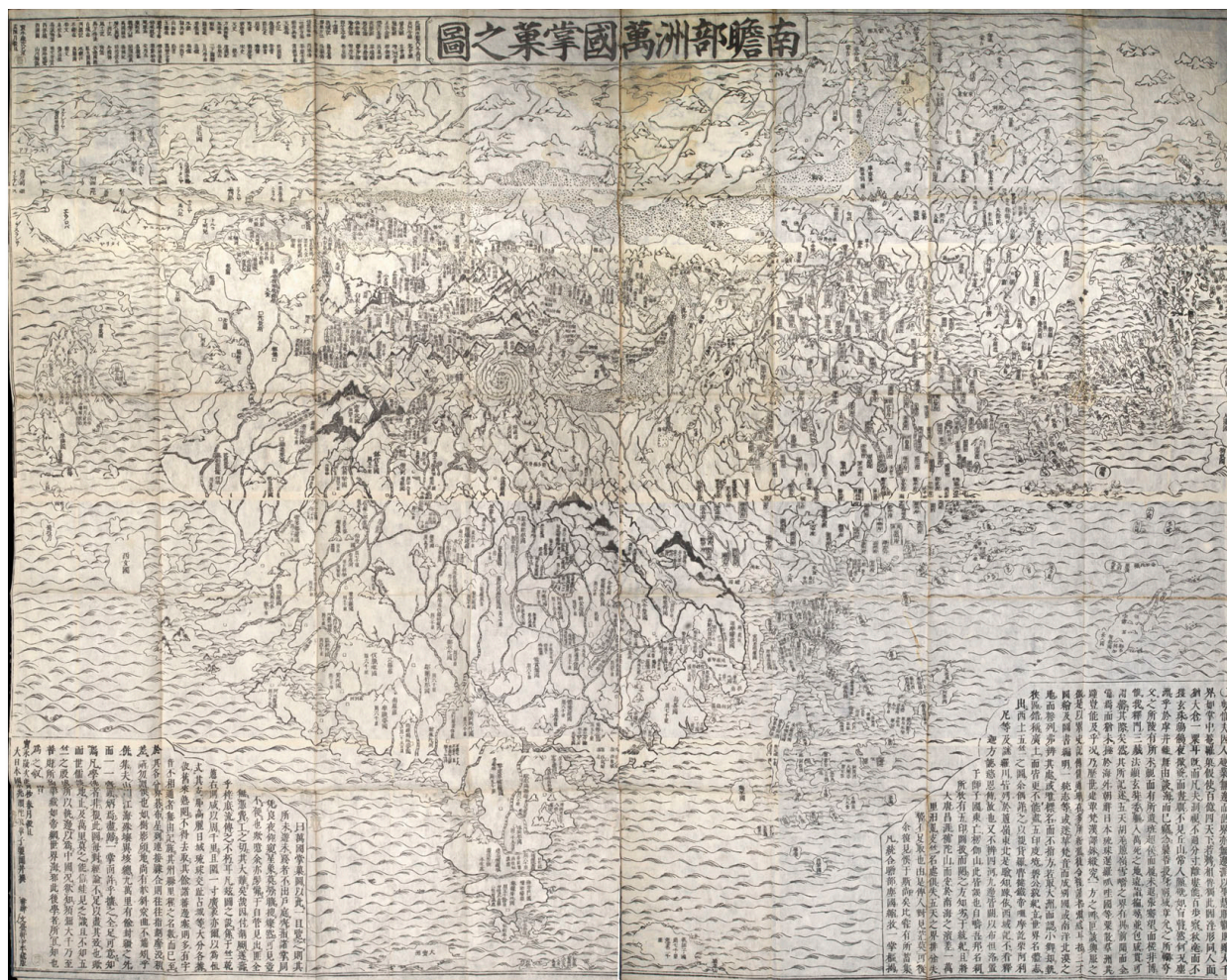
Detail, Mount Meru

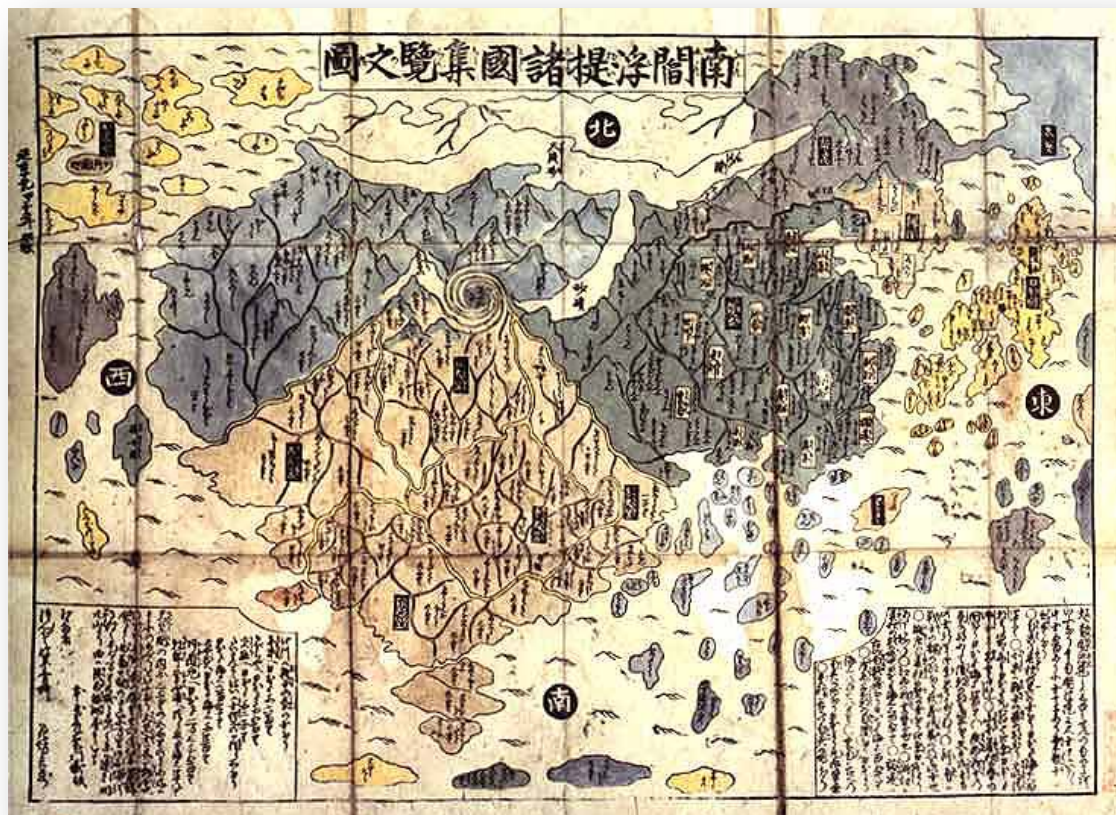
At its center is *Lake Anavatapta*, a whirlpool-like quadruple helix lake believed to be the center of the universe. This lake, which is commonly associated with Lake Manasarovar in northern India, is believed in Buddhist mythology to be the legendary site where Queen Maya conceived the Buddha. From the quadruple beast headed helix (heads of a horse, a lion, an elephant, and an ox) of Manasarovar or *Lake Anavatapta* radiate the four sacred rivers of the region: the Indus, the Ganges, the Bramaputra, and the Sutlej. South of *Jambu-Dvīpa*, India is recognizable for its peninsular form. Japan itself appears as a series of Islands in the upper right and, like India, is one of the few recognizable elements - at least from a cartographic perspective. China and Korea appear to the west of Japan and are vaguely identifiable geographically, which itself represents a significant advancement over the *Gotenjikuzu* map. Southeast Asia also makes one of its first appearances in a Japanese Buddhist map as an island cluster to the east of India. On the opposite side of the map a series of islands is intended to represent Europe, which had no place at all in earlier Buddhist world maps, making this one of the first Japanese maps to depict Europe. *Umukari* [Hungary], *Oranda*, *Baratan*, *Komo* [Holland or the country of the red hair], *Arubaniya* [Albania], *Itarya* [Italy], *Suransa* [France] and *Inkeresu* [England] are all named. Africa appears as a small island in the western sea identified as the *Land of Western Women*. Of special note is Rokashi Hotan's mapping of the Americas. Prior to this map America had rarely if ever been depicted on Japanese maps, so Rokashi Hotan turned to the Chinese map *Daimin Kyuhen Zu* [Map of China under the Ming Dynasty and its surrounding Countries, #231.1], from which he copied both the small island-like form of South America (just south of Japan), and the curious land bridge (the Aelutian Islands?) connecting Asia to what the Japanese historians Nobuo Muroga and Kazutaka Unno conclude must undoubtedly be a reflection of North America. Whether this represents ancient knowledge from early Chinese navigations in this region, for which there is some literary if not historical evidence, or merely a printing error, we can only speculate. While this map represents a significant step forward in the Japanese

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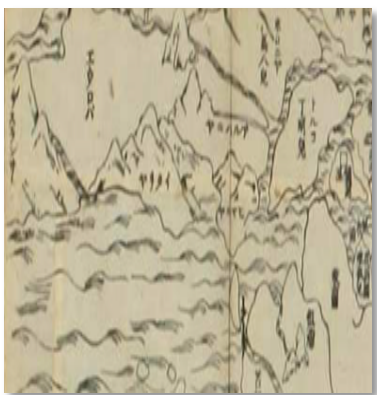




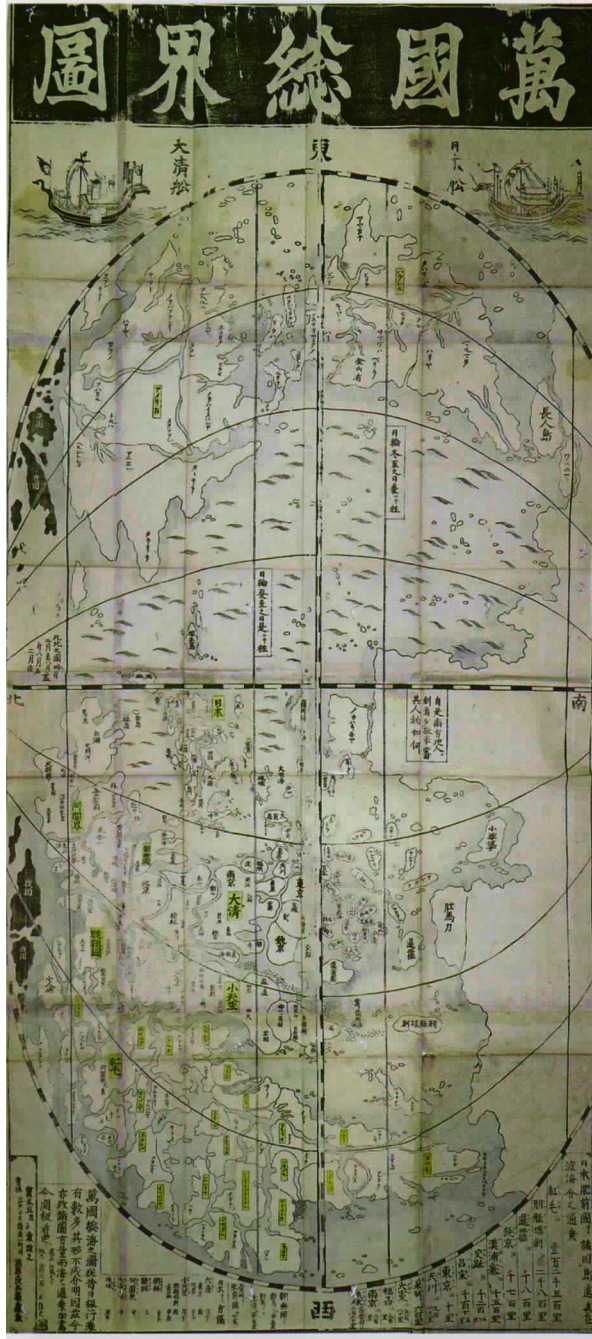


Bankoku shoka no zu.

No publisher or issue date is evident, but may be of the late Edo period. Woodcut, printed in color, 46.4 x 65.5 cm. According to Unno, the first edition was issued in 1744, and this example is a later edition. The removal of the word 'Nansenchushu' from the title shows that the publisher intended this version for the general public who want a simple India-China-Japan world map, rather than for Buddhists.



Comparison of the depiction of South America from the Nansenchushu Bankoku (left) and the Dàmíng jiǔ biān wànguó rén jì lùchéng quán tú of 1663 (right), depicted south of Japan.



Bankoku sokaizu [Map of All Counrries on Earth] by Ryusen Ishikawa. Second edition published by Mohei Suharaya in 1708. Woodcut, India ink, hand-colored, 125.5 x 54.7 cm. Title label lacking. The first edition was published in 1688 by Tahei Sagamiya who was associated with Mr Ishikawa, generally called Tomonobu or Ryusen. The east is located to the top, this vertically oblong style is common with previous or almost contemporary maps of Japan and city of Kyoto, and were intended to be displayed as banging scrolls. The earliest of world maps in this style seems to be Bankoku sozu in 1645, but this Bankoku sokaizu looks different from them. It is in the Ukiyo-e manner, a style of which Ryusen was a master.