



China at the Center: Ricci and Verbiest World Maps

M. Antoni J. Ucerler, Theodore N. Foss, Mark Stephen Mir

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China at the Center focuses on two masterpieces of seventeenth-century map-making that illustrate the exchange of information (and misinformation) between Europe and Asia. The world maps created by Jesuit priests Matteo Ricci (1602) and Ferdinand Verbiest (1674) for the Chinese courts tell fascinating stories about the meeting of two worldviews.

They provided Europeans with greater knowledge of China and the Chinese with new ideas about geography, astronomy, and the natural sciences. The maps also show the ways that certain myths were perpetuated, especially as seen in the vivid and imaginative descriptions of the peoples and places of the world and in their depictions of exotic fauna.

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