

“RERUM MEMORABILIUM
 THESAUROS,” A TREASURY OF
 MEMORABLE THINGS – CARL PETER
 THUNBERG’S OBSERVATIONS DURING
 HIS YEAR IN JAPAN, 1775-1776

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重刻本草綱目序
 夫醫之為道君子用之以衛
 生而後世以濟世故稱仁術
 乃後世以醫視之縉紳先生
 多所弗講賈子不云乎古之
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“Each and every Traveller thinks that he ought to become an Author and relate something remarkable to his Countrymen, despite the fact that he himself has had such scant information that he has neither understood nor coherently been able to comprehend what he has heard and seen, much less been able to transmit to others some intelligible idea about it. And this sole reason has produced more incomprehensible books than one can easily imagine.”¹

Carl Peter Thunberg's caustic remark in the foreword to his *Travels in Europe, Africa, Asia, Undertaken in the Years 1770-1779*, offers an interesting insight into his character. He was a born scholar, whose curiosity and powers of observation never seem to have flagged for an instant, even under the most trying circumstances, and he endeavoured to report the facts, as he understood them, accurately and without exaggeration. The bulk of Thunberg's voluminous *oeuvre* consists of scholarly papers published in the *Acta* of various academies and learned societies in Sweden and throughout Europe during his long career. His first major work, the *Flora Japonica*, was published in Leipzig in 1784, and this was followed by the account of his travels, published in four volumes in Upsala between 1788 and 1793. His *Flora Capensis* was published in Upsala between 1807 and 1813.² The long list of papers published in the *Acta* of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Stockholm, seventy-two in all, spans nearly five decades, from 1773 to 1821, as do the two hundred and ninety-three dissertations, written by Thunberg and defended in a public disputation by one of his students, from 1780 to 1828, a truly remarkable achievement even for a man whose scholarly career can be said to have lasted from his first preliminary treatise in 1767 to his death in 1828.

Carl Peter Thunberg was born in Jönköping, in the Swedish province

of Småland, on November 11th 1743. His father, Johan Thunberg, was a bookkeeper at Hörle iron-works as well as a tradesman, and died early. His mother, Margaretha, né Starkman, the daughter of the alderman of the guild of pistol-makers in Jönköping, continued her late husband's trade in order to support her two small sons, and later married the merchant Gabriel Forsberg. Thunberg's parents intended him to go into trade, but at the age of twelve he was showing such scholarly promise that he was encouraged to continue his schooling, supplemented by private tuition under his teacher Håkan Sjögren, later dean of Växjö Cathedral. In 1761 he matriculated at Upsala University, where he sat for the then customary examinations in Theology, Law and Philosophy before specialising in Medicine, where he quickly became one of the star pupils of the famous botanist Carl von Linné (1707-1778), internationally better known as Linnaeus, his name before he was ennobled. Linnaeus, who had revolutionised botany with his sexual system of classification and was internationally renowned as one of the leading scholars of his day, arranged extensive foreign travels for a number of promising Swedish scholars through his friends and colleagues in Europe, e.g. the famous Dutch botanist Johannes Burmannus (Burmman, 1706-1779) and his son and successor Nicolaus Laurens (1734-1793), and Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820), who had taken part in Captain James Cook's first voyage, 1768-1771, accompanied by Linnaeus' pupil Daniel Solander (1735-1782).

Thunberg presented his doctoral thesis *De Ischiade* (On Sciatica) in 1770, and in the autumn of that year travelled through Denmark and Holland to Paris, where he spent eight months on a small travelling scholarship from Upsala University in order to perfect his knowledge of Natural History, Anatomy and Surgery. He arrived in Paris on December 1st 1770, found his lodgings, recommended by Linnaeus, in the house of a tobacconist, M. Berth, in the *Rue de la Harpe* near the Sorbonne, and applied himself with vigour to his studies. It is quite typical of his seemingly boundless energy that he managed to find the time to visit both the Charité and the Hôtel Dieu hospitals within the first twenty-four hours of his stay. His studies were a combination of theory and practice, and he attended the lectures and demonstrations of such luminaries as the professor of anatomy and surgery Raphael Sabatier (1732-1811) and the botanist Bernard de Jussieu (1699-1777). Some of Thunberg's remarks on life in pre-revolutionary France are quite illuminating. He noted with approval that free medical care for all, regardless of social standing, was provided at the Hôtel Dieu, and

when he paid a study visit to the workshop of the enameller Roux, who was famous for making false eyes, and who charged from 1 to 25 *louis-d'or* for them, he discovered that Roux used to distribute them free of charge to the poor once a month. Before leaving Paris he bought a set of the latest surgical instruments, which five years later, together with others acquired in Amsterdam, created a great deal of interest among the Shogunal physicians in Edo. Already when Thunberg passed through Amsterdam on his way to Paris, Burmannus the Younger had suggested that he ought to visit Japan, and upon his return to Holland in the autumn of 1771, it was arranged, through the *bona officia* of the Burmanni, that he was to travel to the Cape of Good Hope with the Dutch East India Company and spend some years there in order to examine the flora, sending specimens back to Holland, and also to perfect his command of the Dutch language in preparation for his journey to Japan.³

On December 30th 1771 Thunberg sailed as ship's doctor on board the *Schoonzigt*, and less than a week into the voyage an unfortunate incident occurred, which came very close to costing him his life. The ship's chaplain, who was in charge of the provisions and the menu, had by a strange oversight given the cook a quantity of lead white mixed with ordinary flour, and the resulting pancakes, eaten by the officers, the cook and his staff caused varying degrees of violent sickness. The first of Thunberg's published scholarly papers described this alarming event in minute and relentless detail, and it is further proof of his scholarly attitude that he managed to record his terrifying symptoms while being desperately ill for the best part of three weeks.⁴

Having arrived in Cape Town on April 16th 1772 Thunberg remained in the country until the beginning of March 1775. During his three years in Africa Thunberg made three long field trips, each lasting between three and five months, throughout the length and breadth of the Cape colony, enduring all manner of adventures and calamities. On one occasion his party was attacked by a wild buffalo, which gored two horses, and on his thirtieth birthday he and his mount sank into a hollow made by a hippopotamus near the bank of a river they were crossing. Between these trips Thunberg was busy drying seeds, mounting pressed plants, packing dried insects and stuffed birds and planting live saplings and bulbs in boxes in order to send them to Leiden and Amsterdam as well as to Linnaeus in Upsala. He also made brief excursions with new-found friends and colleagues, e.g. the Scots botanist Francis Masson (1741-1805), who was collecting plants for Kew

Gardens in London, and the French naturalist and explorer Pierre Sonnerat (1745-1814), with whom he climbed Table Mountain, noting with some amusement that Sonnerat managed to wear out three pairs of “dainty and thin French shoes” on this particular occasion. Masson and Thunberg corresponded in later life, and there is a letter dated the Cape of Good Hope, May 29th 1793, in which Masson refers to mutual acquaintances: “Many of your old friends still exist and have often enquired for you, viz. De Witt of Rode Zant [...]” The latter appears to have been a particular friend, and Thunberg had often visited his estate, consisting of vineyards and orchards. Thunberg studied and made notes on everything new and interesting, and apart from discovering several hundred hitherto unknown plants as well as animals and insects, he even managed to compile a brief vocabulary of the native “Hottentot” language, complete with click-sounds, an exercise he was to repeat in Java as well as in Japan. Idleness was obviously anathema to him, and on one occasion, when he was waiting for new funds in Cape Town, he expressed his utter distaste for his condition, however temporary, as an “otiosus Spectator”, an idle onlooker.

On March 2nd 1775 Thunberg sailed for Batavia in the *Loo*, arriving on May 18th. Almost immediately he was appointed chief surgeon on the *Stavenisse*, which was bound for Japan, and engaged to remain in the country for a year as doctor at the Dutch Factory (*Oranda shōkan*), accompanying the *Opperhoofd* (‘overseer’, Jap.: *kapitan*) on the journey to Edo. Before the *Stavenisse* weighed anchor on June 21st Thunberg had ordered a number of new suits of clothing, “some silk, some cloth with froggings and other finery, in order to be able with dignity to show myself among the curious Japanese, who view the Europeans with more attention than ever the Naturalist can examine any rare Animal.”⁵ Remarkably he also managed to compile a small Malay vocabulary and phrase book, chiefly dealing with domestic matters, or indeed catastrophes, e.g. “Is it that late, why have you not yet cleaned the house?” and “Whose fault is it that I have not yet had any coffee?” The Dutch officers customarily brought a number of slaves to Japan as domestics, and Thunberg probably needed a smattering of Malay in order to communicate with his personal servant. The many fortifications on the canals in Batavia made him reflect on the situation of the Europeans in a strange land: “These defence measures, necessary for a people which is scant in number in a country encroached upon, make the City far from pretty, and leave a thinking Philosopher with less than agreeable notions about the manner in which the many delica-

オランダ商館
甲比丹

cies, expensive fabrics and furniture the European enjoys with so much pleasure are procured from these distant places.”⁶

出島

Things could not have been more different in Japan, where the Europeans were confined to the small island of Deshima in the harbour of Nagasaki. “A European, who has to remain here, is as though dead and buried in a corner of the globe. [...] One’s will is completely infirm and inert, since for the European there is no other will here but that of the Japanese, which must be strictly observed in every detail.”⁷

Thunberg’s account of his stay in Japan occupies a substantial part of his *Travels*, and his year in this remote country, which barely tolerated the presence of a few carefully guarded foreigners on its soil, was clearly the high point of his extensive travels. The *Stavenisse* dropped anchor in the harbour of Nagasaki on August 13th 1775, after a rough passage, and Thunberg noted the many time-consuming preparations which had to be undertaken before the officers and their personal luggage were allowed ashore and the unloading of the cargo could finally begin. The muster-roll of the entire crew, including the slaves, recorded names and ages only, as everyone was considered to be of Dutch nationality, although there were Swedes, Danes, Germans, Portuguese and Spaniards among the crew. Three years earlier an abandoned ship, the *Burg*, which contrary to Company orders had not been fired, had drifted ashore and been meticulously inspected by the Japanese authorities. Important quantities of contraband had been discovered, and as a consequence the rules concerning smuggling were enforced with increased stringency. Even the ship’s captain and the head of the Factory were now subjected to careful searches when moving between the ship and Deshima, and the passes which the Europeans were obliged to carry at all times, contained not only their names but a list of the belongings about their persons on each occasion, including such items as pocket watches. Thunberg recorded the prolonged and rigorous examination of the ship, its cargo and those who had sailed in her, the ceremonial visits by Japanese officials, who were treated to cakes and liqueurs, served in crystal glasses from cut-glass decanters, while seated under a specially erected awning on the deck, and the constant need to apply for permission to move about, even when he, the ship’s doctor, had to go aboard to tend to those who had fallen ill or met with accidents while unloading the cargo. Bedding was ripped open and the feathers stirred about, tubs of butter or jam were pierced with iron rods, a square hole was cut in the middle of each cheese, and random samples were taken from the eggs brought

in from Batavia. Despite certain mitigating circumstances, e.g. the fact that “Customs duties are quite unknown [...] A particularly fortunate advantage, which few other countries possess!”⁸, Thunberg regarded the inflexible Japanese bureaucracy as tedious and annoying. European coins could not be taken into the country, and the really dangerous contraband was religious works, especially those illustrated with engravings. There were few restrictions concerning reading matter for personal use, however, and Thunberg noted that his books in Latin, French, Swedish and German were only cursorily examined by the interpreters, who were unable to read them. The officers, including Thunberg, were also allowed to keep their rapiers, although other weapons were not permitted.

Apparently undaunted by the many restrictions imposed on the Europeans at Deshima Thunberg seems to have organised his scholarly work from the beginning of his stay. Two days after the arrival of the *Stavenisse* he began examining the fresh fodder which was brought three times a day for the cattle, pigs, sheep, goats and deer which the Dutch kept at Deshima, “and sought out the rare plants which were to be found, in order to dry them for the Herbaria of Europe and which I did not myself have the liberty to gather in the surrounding fields in a country, where our pigeons, more at liberty, were less suspected, captive and guarded than the Europeans, zealous for trade and profit, who had arrived here after many mortal dangers so far from their own domicile”.⁹ He investigated the tiny community of Deshima thoroughly, describing the half-timbered houses where the Dutch Factory staff lived, the Japanese guard houses, the interpreters’ large building, known as the Collegium, and the way in which the trade was organised, as well as the main goods for import and export. Among the more exclusive and sought after commodities was “Unicornu”, chiefly rhinoceros horn but also narwhal, and Thunberg had himself bought a quantity, for which he received such a good price that he was able to pay off the advance he had received from the East India Company and finance his “beloved science” during his stay in the country. “The Japanese have an exaggerated idea, about its medicinal usefulness and power to prolong life, strengthen vitality, improve the memory and cure all ailments”,¹⁰ he said about “Unicornu”, explaining that the Japanese interest in it had been recently discovered by chance, when a retired head of the Dutch Factory had sent a narwhal horn as a gift to one of his friends among the interpreters.

Thunberg was able to observe the Chinese who were trading in Nagasaki, and who were subject to the same restrictions as the Dutch, partly due to the fact, he stated, that they had attempted to bring into Japan religious works printed by the missionaries in China. The Chinese were however allowed to have a temple of their own in the city, which they could visit freely, and they were also permitted to own Japanese currency for their daily expenses. Although similar in colour and looks to the Japanese, Thunberg noted, the Chinese differed in their clothing as well as in their language. In his first published account of Japan, a paper on Japanese coinage presented by Thunberg when he was elected a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in 1779, one of his opening remarks concerned the dress of the Japanese, who like "Asiatic Peoples in general, do not allow themselves to be governed by fashion like the Europeans. [...] The Japanese [...] surpass their neighbours in this constancy. Already from time immemorial they have used and still use today, without any change, their own justifiably so called national costume, which consists of one or more full-length dressing-gowns, which are tied around the waist with a belt."¹¹ This interest in the attire of the Japanese mirrors the utilitarian aspect of Thunberg's observations. The examination and collection of plants may have been his main task, but any other detail from the daily life, customs, manners, religion and political organisation of the Japanese which might prove useful in Europe was duly filed for reference. It is worth noting in this context that the Swedish king, Gustaf III, who attempted to improve his country's economy by means of sumptuary laws, had promulgated the general use of a so-called "Swedish costume" in 1778.

During September and October, when the *Stavenisse* was being loaded and made ready for the return journey to Batavia, Thunberg had to remain on board to tend to the sick, who were suffering from an epidemic of stomach ailments, chiefly diarrhoeas, which ravaged Nagasaki. As far as the sailors were concerned Thunberg blamed this on the climate, with hot days and cold nights, and in the city itself he considered a glut of ripe persimmons, *kaki*, to be a contributing factor. The ship had been moved out to the small island known as Papenberg in Nagasaki harbour, and Thunberg was able to go ashore on this and other islands, some of them uninhabited, and walk about freely collecting plants. "If one then comes to a village, which usually is quite large, an incredible number of people and children come thronging and screaming in order to observe the in their opinion peculiar Europeans. They are especially amused by our big round eyes and there-

fore always shout *Hollanda O-Me.*"¹² Among the medicinal plants discovered during these excursions Thunberg mentioned smilax (*Smilax china*), the root of which was considered to purify the blood, the only cure for venereal diseases known to the Japanese doctors. He claimed that the interpreters were "heartily pleased" to discover that this plant, imported from China at great expense, grew locally. He also found wild figs (*Ficus pumila* and *erecta*), *Fagara piperita*, which Thunberg called "pepper bush" and which was used in food instead of pepper but also made into a poultice with rice flour as a cure for boils and rheumatic joints, and nettles (*Urtica japonica* and *nivea*) from which the Japanese made ropes, some of them thick enough to be used on ships. From September 1st 1775 and for the duration of his stay he took temperature readings four times a day, and made meteorological observations.

The *Stavenisse* sailed in November, leaving Thunberg and thirteen other Europeans, as well as a few slaves, in what seemed like house arrest on Deshima. He complained that "The way of life of the Europeans is in most things the same as elsewhere in the East Indies, luxurious and disorderly,"¹³ and described the unvarying evening routine of a constitutional along the island's two streets, followed by a visit to the "Chief", i.e. the *Opperhoofd* of the East India Company Factory or another officer. The officers enjoyed free board and lodging, and thus had few living expenses, unless they gave lavish dinner parties or spent their money on "the Sex". Thunberg commented with disapproval on the arrangements at Deshima, where prostitutes could be engaged for periods from a day to a whole year, and on the brothels in Nagasaki which the Chinese and Dutch could visit. "The Christians, whom it would be befitting to be enlightened by Religion and Moral, should never degrade themselves to licentious commerce with the more pitiable than unfortunate daughters of the Country; but the Japanese themselves, as Heathens, do not consider Lewdness a Vice, least of all in such places which are protected by Laws and the Powers that be."¹⁴

He was no friend of the "poisonous tobacco-pipe", and found these evening gatherings unutterably tedious and a waste of valuable time. There was not a great deal of demand on his professional services, however, and he was able to devote much of his time to the plants and insects he collected. He also cultivated the interpreters, many of whom practised medicine in Nagasaki and who were keen to learn all they could from the foreign doctor. In his obituary of Thunberg the theologian Carl Adolph Agardh characterised him as cheerful, lively

and kind, and another contemporary, the archaeologist Johan Henrik Schröder, mentioned his lack of affectation and his candid and amiable manner as well as his abstemious life-style.¹⁵ The openness and lack of guile in his demeanour seems to have impressed the interpreters, and the fact that his interest in science eclipsed all else must have been apparent to everyone who met him. Thunberg appears to have developed a genuine friendship with some of the interpreters, and the fact that they secretly procured a number of Japanese coins and maps of Japan as well as city maps of Edo, Miyako (present-day Kyoto) and Nagasaki for his collection is proof of the extent of their confidence in him, as it was an extremely perilous venture to break the laws of the Tokugawa *Bakufu*. The coin collection had to be smuggled on board hidden in his shoes, at great personal risk to Thunberg, and he took meticulous care to make extensive notes on the value, age and other characteristics of each coin, forming a representative selection of the current coinage of Japan, including some old pieces. Most of the senior interpreters spoke quite fluent Dutch, and although Thunberg was to say about the Japanese in general that "They ask for information about everything and often ask questions until the onset of boredom",¹⁶ he himself would appear to have employed similar methods. A routine was established, where Thunberg taught the interpreters botany and medicine, as well as other sciences, and they in their turn brought him rare and unusual plants, which they had collected themselves or received from friends in the interior.

He finally received permission from the Governor of Nagasaki to collect plants in the countryside, but this was immediately revoked when the authorities, ever inclined to interpret legal precedents literally, discovered that Thunberg was of more senior rank than the Dutch assistant doctor who many years previously had been allowed to search for medicinal plants during an epidemic. At last, on February 7th 1776, having received renewed permission, he was able to walk in the countryside, although his joy was somewhat tempered by the fact that he was accompanied by a large retinue of interpreters, *banjos* (i. e. guards, *banshû*) and servants. The Japanese officials were given a run for their money by the briskly striding Thunberg who complained that he was obliged to treat his exhausted attendants to refreshments at some wayside teahouse and that this proved quite costly. During the following month he availed himself of this opportunity once or twice a week, weather permitting, examining kitchen gardens as well as wild flowers and plants. There were many vegetables and herbs also commonly

grown in Europe, e.g. beetroot, carrots, asparagus, onions, lettuce, beans, peas, aniseed and parsley. Sweet potatoes (*Convolvulus edulis*) were grown on the mountain slopes near the villages, and Thunberg preferred them to ordinary potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum*) which did not seem to thrive in Japan. He noted the many uses of bamboo, that boxwood was used to make ornamental combs, and that the tobacco plant was one of the few tangible relics left by the Portuguese. The sample of finely cut Japanese tobacco which he brought home to Sweden still retains a faint aroma, incidentally.

By mid-February preparations for the journey to Edo, or *Hofreis*, were well under way, and some provisions, including several cases of wine, liqueur and beer bottles, as well as household utensils and empty packing cases for goods to be brought back, were sent ahead by boat to Shimonoseki. The Japanese New Year fell on February 19th 1776, and Thunberg described the festivities as well as the Japanese method for the computation of time, and also the *e-fumi* ceremony, which took four days in the city of Nagasaki, where the entire population were gathered by district and made to trample on copper plaques bearing pictures of the crucified Christ or the Virgin and Child, in order to prove that they were not Christians. On March 4th the embassy left Deshima, a vast procession of about two hundred Japanese officials, interpreters and servants, and three Europeans, the *Opperhoofd*, Arend Willem Feith, his secretary Herman Köhler, and Carl Peter Thunberg as "Doctor of Legation". The remaining Dutch at Deshima, as well as a large number of Japanese, accompanied them to a temple on the outskirts of Nagasaki, "where we rested for a while and treated our merry party to Sakki (i.e. *sake*)".¹⁷ Thunberg was very gratified to note that when the party continued on their way, all the Japanese officials and others in Nagasaki and at Deshima who had any dealings with the Dutch Factory "were standing in groups, according to their station and prestige, along the route we travelled, more than half a mile in length on both sides of the road, which was for us the most beautiful sight, as well as the greatest honour".¹⁸ The three Europeans travelled in "norimon", the palanquin used by high-ranking *bushi*. Thunberg described the comforts of this conveyance in glowing terms, its velvet cushions, silk curtains and bamboo blinds, and the small shelves where he could place writing materials, a few books, one bottle each of red wine and beer, and a lacquer box containing a "double sandwich". Packhorses carried the personal luggage as well as an apparatus for making tea, from which boiling water was available at all times, although Thunberg and

下関

絵踏み

酒

武士

the other Europeans “seldom used this stomach-weakening beverage”.¹⁹

Sheltered from the elements and carried along at a comfortable pace Thunberg was able to observe the countryside, flora and fauna, buildings and people of Japan, and he made careful notes of the names of the places he passed through as well as the most important local crafts and other characteristics. At Ureshino he inspected the baths constructed around the hot springs, where the water was thought to cure such ailments as venereal diseases, lameness, scabies and rheumatism, and he later published a paper on hot baths in Africa and Asia.²⁰ The white, translucent porcelain produced in the province of Hizen he had already seen at Deshima, and he was now able to obtain further information about its manufacture. Despite the low esteem in which the Europeans were held by the Japanese, the party undertaking the *Hofreis* (Jap.: *Edo sanpu*) were treated like a *daimyō* procession, and given comfortable lodgings and provided with an escort by the local *daimyō* when passing through his domain. When spending the night in a town or city they were confined to their lodgings, and on the rare occasions when they were allowed to walk about, as in the port city of Shimonoseki, Thunberg noted that the gates of the street where the brothels were situated were kept carefully closed. At Shimonoseki Thunberg saw laver, “called Awa Nori”, being collected, and throughout the journey, when there was a better chance of tasting genuine Japanese food than at Deshima with its European fare, he noted interesting dishes and food-stuffs, from buckwheat noodles, *soba*, and *mikan*, mandarin oranges, to *umeboshi*, pickled plums. The party embarked on a sizeable passenger vessel at Shimonoseki, and sailed through the Inland Sea, *Seto Naikai*, to *Hyōgo*, near present-day *Kōbe*. It was a cold journey, held up by adverse winds for weeks, but the energetic Thunberg used the enforced idleness to give lectures on medicine to the interpreters, question them on their country, its government, administration and society, and add material to the Japanese vocabulary and phrase-book which he had already started to compile. One of the senior interpreters owned a copy of the *Dictionarium Latino Lusitanicum ac Iaponicum*, printed by the Jesuit mission press at Amakusa in 1595. The title page was missing from the copy seen by Thunberg, a quarto volume of 906 pages, one corner of which had been singed, and its owner refused to part with this rarity at any price.²¹ Thunberg published the vocabulary, comprising about 1,500 words, in a chapter of his *Travels*, and his brief grammar and phrase book under the title *Observationes in Linguam Japonicam* in 1792.²²

嬉野

肥前

江戸参府

蕎麦、蜜柑
梅干

瀬戸内海、兵庫

天草

The large and prosperous city of Osaka made a great impression on Thunberg, who dubbed it the Paris of Japan, “the most amusing place in the entire country [...] where thousands of pleasant pastimes are available”.²³ There was no time for exploration, however, and before dawn the next morning the party pressed on towards Miyako (today known as Kyoto), the imperial capital, where they were to spend four days. Thunberg regretted that the Imperial Palace could only be viewed from a distance, and described the position of the “spiritual” Emperor, living in seclusion surrounded by his consorts and courtiers, “... the former Ruler of the Country, nowadays a Pope who only possesses power in Matters of the Church, who is considered so holy that no Male may look upon him.”²⁴ The actual political ruler of the country was the tenth Tokugawa Shogun, Ieharu (1737-1786, regnavit 1761-1786) whom Thunberg referred to as the “secular” Emperor. If Osaka resembled Paris because of its gaieties, Miyako was of old the centre of traditional arts and crafts of the utmost refinement, and the travellers were shown lacquer work, silks, and objects of gold, silver and copper. We are not told whether they bought anything, but Thunberg mentioned ordering lacquer ware at Hakone, and in his collection, now in the Museum of Ethnology, Stockholm, there are several lacquer objects, e.g. boxes, plates and an *inrô*, the medicine case worn by *bushi* males suspended from their sashes.

家治

箱根

印籠

Everywhere along the *Tôkaidô* (Eastern Sea Route) farmers were working in the fields, and the fruit trees were in full bloom. Thunberg had hoped to be able to find many rare and unknown plants along the road to Edo, but he discovered, to his half-amused annoyance, that the diligence and care of the Japanese husbandman was such that hardly a single weed could be discovered in the meticulously tended fields, not even by his eagle eye. An opportunity presented itself, however, when the party crossed the Hakone Mountains, a steep and difficult passage. Thunberg got out of his “norimon” and walked, and although he was not allowed to stray far from the road, he put his training from the mountainous Cape country to good use and ran uphill so fast that he had ample time to gather quite a few rare plants in his handkerchief before the worried and breathless *banjos* had time to catch up with him. The party arrived in Edo on April 27th, and were installed in their rather cramped lodgings overlooking an alley, where hordes of street urchins screamed and shouted as soon as the Europeans showed themselves at the windows, climbing the walls of the houses opposite to catch a glimpse of them.

東海道

The Europeans were not allowed to leave the house before the Shogunal audience had taken place, but a steady stream of visitors arrived. The first to appear were a group of physicians and astronomers, who were received with suitable ceremony. Their attention was focused on Thunberg, the only scientist of the party, and after a preliminary exchange of courtesies the astronomers began asking for information concerning eclipses, which they were unable to compute accurately. Thunberg answered their queries through the interpreters to the best of his ability, but found his conversation with the physicians considerably easier, as the interpreters had some understanding of medicine, and a wide range of subjects was covered, from cancer and fractures to piles and toothache. Two of the younger doctors became daily visitors, and Thunberg received them privately, giving lectures in physics, economy, botany, surgery and medicine until late at night. They were Katsuragawa Hoshû (1751-1809), official physician to the *Bakufu*, “the Emperor’s Physician in Ordinary, very young, kind-hearted, brisk and active”, and Nakagawa Jun’an (1739-1786), “Physician in Ordinary to one of the noblest Princes of the Country”, leading exponents of *Rangaku*, “Western Learning”, in Japan.²⁵ The embassy’s arrival in Edo had been preceded by the rumour that this year’s Dutch doctor was no ordinary barber-surgeon, and the two *Rangakusha* made the most of his three-week stay, according to Thunberg. “Although I was often exhausted by their importunity, I cannot deny that I have spent many enjoyable and edifying hours in their company.”²⁶ Among the foreign books used by his “beloved Disciples” Thunberg mentioned John Johnston’s (1603-1675) *Historia Naturalis*, Rembertus Dodonæus’ (1517-1585) *Herbarius* (Cruijdt-Boeck, 1618/1644), Johann Jacob Woyt’s “Treasury”, i.e. his *Gazophylacium Medico-physicum* (1741), and Lorenz Heister’s (1683-1758) *Chirurgie* (1718), and he was also shown several Japanese botanical and zoological works, some of them very poorly illustrated, he complained. Katsuragawa and Nakagawa began applying their newly acquired knowledge straight away, and Thunberg, who had brought a quantity of sublimate of mercury from Holland, was able to introduce this new cure for venereal diseases, which were very common in Japan in his day. At their request Thunberg wrote out a diploma in Dutch, giving details of the lectures he had given and the progress they had made, before parting from them, and he kept up a correspondence with them for several years after his return to Sweden, exchanging seeds and specimens.

The Shogunal audience took place on the 18th, and Feith, Thunberg and Köhler, dressed up in silks and gold lace, with a wide black silk

桂川甫周

中川淳庵
蘭学

蘭学者

cloak over the shoulders and girded with their swords, were taken to Edo Castle in their “norimon”. The audience involved a great deal of waiting in different buildings in the compound, and various daimyô came to greet them, asking for specimens of their writing on fans or pieces of paper. Only the *Opperhoofd* was brought into the presence chamber, where he prostrated himself to the standing Shogun in the traditional Japanese greeting of a superior. He then joined the others in the antechamber, where a number of courtiers came to see them. From the sudden silences among these when certain men entered, Thunberg concluded that the latter must be very high-ranking personages, and he later learned from the interpreters that the Shogun himself had come in to take a closer look at the foreigners. After a brief tour of the palace, including the now empty audience chamber, the party were taken by “norimon” to visit the residences of all the members of the *Rôjû*, Senior Council, “although the day was far advanced and our early breakfast had had time to subside to a considerable depth”, and returned to their lodgings in the evening, faint and exhausted.²⁷

老中

The return journey was less formal, and there was time for some diversions. In Miyako there was the customary sightseeing tour, which included the Hôkôji temple with its *Daibutsu*, a gigantic seated figure of Amida Buddha, and the Rengeôin or Sanjûsangendô, where a large seated figure of Kannon is flanked by one thousand standing Kannon sculptures.²⁸ Thunberg had gathered some information concerning the religions of Japan, and was aware of the basic features of Shinto as well as the Indian origins of Buddhism, and the sight of the *Daibutsu* made a great impression. “Daibuds Idol, which was almost in the centre of the Temple, could strike both terror and veneration; terror, as regards its size, which is hardly likely to have its equal, and veneration, as regards the reflections one is caused by it to make.”²⁹ In Osaka, where the party spent two whole days, they were allowed more freedom than ever before, were shown around the city, and attended “Comedies” and “Dances”, i.e. *Kabuki* performances. Thunberg found these “peculiar” and indeed “preposterous” and although the actors were quite skilful, “in a way”, the theatre was rather small and confined. He was considerably more impressed by a botanical garden, “although without an Orangery”, where he was able to buy several rare bushes and trees, such as Japanese maple and sago palm (*Cycas revoluta*, Jap.: *sago yashi*). These were planted in a large wooden box, protected by hoops interwoven with twine, and shipped via Nagasaki and Batavia to the *Hortus Medicus* in Amsterdam.³⁰ It took Thunberg a great deal of per-

法広寺、大仏
蓮華王院、三十三間堂
観音

神道

歌舞伎

沙穀椰子・西穀椰子

338 suasion to be allowed to view the process by which copper bars were cast in cold water, a method which was the secret behind the particularly strong and shiny colour of Japanese copper. Through the *bona officia* of his friends among the interpreters Thunberg received as a gift a box containing samples which illustrated every step of this process, and he was overjoyed to bring this back to his former professor Torbern Bergman (1735-1784), the originator of analytical chemistry.³¹ After his return to Deshima on June 29th, Thunberg spent the summer surveying and arranging his collections, and was able to make several excursions in the countryside, but he could not be persuaded to remain in Japan for another year and left Deshima on November 23rd 1776 for the *Stavenisse*, which was anchored at Papenberg.

He arrived in Batavia on January 4th 1777, and spent six months in Java before sailing to Ceylon on July 5th on board the *Mars*. Thunberg stayed mainly in Colombo, where he met several countrymen of rather diverse backgrounds and fortunes, and made botanical excursions in the company of a Sinhalese physician. He was particularly interested in the cultivation, harvest and export of cinnamon, a spice, which of old plays an important part in Swedish cookery.³² Another plant which attracted his utilitarian interest was breadfruit (*Artocarpus incisa*), which he tried to introduce in Europe, describing with enthusiasm no less than fifteen dishes using it as an ingredient, and commenting that it tasted not unlike cabbage. On February 6th 1778 he finally left Asia, sailing in the *Loo* for Cape Town, where the ship remained for a few weeks before continuing to Europe. The long-tailed monkey he had bought in Ceylon died from exposure, and his breadfruit saplings and other rare plants were ruined in a severe gale in the English Channel. On October 1st the *Loo* arrived at Texel, and the next two and a half months were spent in Holland, before Thunberg travelled to England in mid-December. In London he met Daniel Solander and was allowed to go through Sir Joseph Banks's extensive herbarium. It was not until the end of January 1779 that he at last set out for home, and it is quite typical of his energy and thirst for knowledge that when he had to wait in Stralsund in the then Swedish Pomerania for the packet-boat to Ystad in Sweden, he used the extra time to travel to Greifswald in order to visit the University and especially the library.

On March 14th 1779 he set foot on Swedish soil, and never again left the country, despite tempting offers of prestigious positions abroad. He settled in Upsala, where he had been appointed demonstrator in

botany, and in 1784 married Brita Charlotta (1752-1813) né Ruda. Carl von Linné the Younger (1741-1783) was not of the same calibre as his famous father, and when Thunberg succeeded to the professorship in 1784, the Botanical Gardens and collections of Upsala University had suffered some damage, the most irreparable being the loss of Linnaeus' herbaria, which his widow had sold to England. With the same energy that had characterised his assiduous work during his travels Thunberg devoted the next forty years to the consolidation, improvement and augmentation of the scientific heritage of Linnaeus. Already during his stay in Paris in 1771 Thunberg had been presented to King Gustaf III, who was visiting the city as Crown Prince, and immediately upon his return he was received in private audience by the King and gave a report on Japan. In 1785 Thunberg was created a Knight of the order of the Vasa (he was elevated to Commander in 1815, the first scholar to be so honoured) and donated his collections, comprising 18 cabinets of herbaria, 13 of insects, 11 of shells and mussels, as well as fish, amphibians, birds and mammals, to Upsala University. Gustaf III was as great a patron of the sciences as of the arts, and upon a petition from Thunberg he donated a plot for the new Botanical Gardens, just below Upsala Castle, as well as a sum from his privy purse for the construction of an orangery and other buildings. The inauguration took place on the centenary of the birth of Linnaeus, May 25th 1807, and Thunberg summed up his views on nature in his speech: “Although it is so seldom felt, and seldom fulfilled, it is nevertheless one of our foremost duties, – to know Nature, – to realise the value of Nature's great and wonderful Chain, – to regard its splendour devoutly and with admiration, – to use its products wisely and with consideration.”³³

Thunberg spent the winters in Upsala, and the summers at his estate Tunaberg, not far from the city, travelling between his homes in an old-fashioned narrow barouche, jocularly referred to by his students as “the rattle-snake”,³⁴ and only reluctantly and very occasionally did he venture as far as Stockholm, a distance of seventy kilometres. His nine years of travels had provided him with enough impressions and material to last him to the end of his long scholarly career, and he was the undisputed European authority, not only on the flora of Japan, but also on the country's social conditions. In an introductory salutation in Thunberg's first major work, the *Flora Japonica*, 1784, his friend and senior colleague Jonas Theodor Fagraeus (1729-1797) congratulated him on having succeeded in following where Engelbert Kaemp-

fer (1651-1716) had lead the way: "Aperuit Kaempferus, officio noster, viam. Tibi soli contigit hunc adire Corinthum", ("Our Kaempfer opened the way for the task. You alone succeeded in reaching this Corinth"), he stated, and continued, rather prophetically, to refer to Thunberg's work as "rerum memorabilium thesauros" ("a treasury of memorable things"), unaware of the fact that this was only the beginning³⁵

NOTES

- 1 Carl Peter Thunberg, *Resa uti Europa, Africa, Asia, färrättad åren 1770-1779*, Del I (Upsala, 1788), foreword. English translations of Thunberg's texts are by the present author.
- 2 Its full title was *Flora Capensis, Sistens Plantas Promontorii Bonae Spei Africes*. A second volume was published in Copenhagen in 1818, and a complete edition was first published in Stuttgart 1823.
- 3 In his autobiographical notes Thunberg gives a list of his patrons: a Mayor Temminck and three other gentlemen, van Der Deutz, van der Poll and ten Hoven, who with Professor Burmannus paid his expenses and provided him with letters of recommendation to the Governor General of the Cape, Tulbagh, and his successor designate Rheede van Oudshorn. Vide *Carl Peter Thunberg (1743-1828), Självbiografiska anteckningar med bibliografi, sammanställda av Lars Wallin, Scripta Minora, Bibliothecae Regiae Universitatis Upsaliensis*, vol. 6 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1993), 10.
- 4 Carl Peter Thunberg, "Händelse at Blyhvitt (Cerussa) af förseende blifvit brukadt i mat, Insänd från Goda Hoppets Udde af Carl Peter Thunberg, Med. Doctor" ("Occurrence that Lead White (Cerussa) by Mistake was used in Food, Submitted from the Cape of Good Hope by C.P.T., Doctor of Medicine"), *Kongl. Vetenskaps Academiens Handlingar För År 1773 (Transactions of the Royal Academy of Sciences of the Year 1773)*.
- 5 Carl Peter Thunberg, *Resa ...*, Part II, 352.
- 6 *Op. cit.*, 294.
- 7 Carl Peter Thunberg, *Resa ...*, Part III, 71.
- 8 *Op. cit.*, 29-30.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 25.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 54.
- 11 Carl Peter Thunberg, "Inträdes-Tal om de Mynt-Sorter som i äldre och sednare tider blifvit slagne och varit gångbare uti Kejsaredömet Japan" ("Inaugural Speech on the Types of Coins which in earlier and later times have been struck and used as legal tender in the Empire of Japan"), *Hället för Kongl. Vetenskaps-Academien*, Den 25 Aug. 1779 (Held in the Royal Academy of Sciences, August 25th, 1779) (Stockholm: Johan Georg Lange, 1779), 4.
- 12 Carl Peter Thunberg, *Resa ...*, Part III, 67. The Japanese phrase means "Dutch big-eyes".
- 13 *Op. cit.*, p. 71.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- 15 *Biographie öfver Carl Petter (sic!) Thunberg, Kongl. Vetenskaps Academiens Handlingar för År 1828 (Biography of C.P.T., Transactions of the Royal Academy of Sciences for the Year 1828)* (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt och Söner, 1829); *Vita Caroli Petri Thunberg, Adumbrata a Johanne Henrico Schröder (The Life of C.P.T., Sketched by J.H.S.)* (Upsalæ: Palmblad & C., 1833).
- 16 Carl Peter Thunberg, "Tal om Japanska Nationen" ("Speech on the Japanese Nation"), *Hället för Kongl. Vetensk. Akademien vid Praesidii Nedläggande*, Den 3 Novemb. 1784 (Held at the Royal Academy of Sciences on the occasion of relinquishing the Presidency, November 3rd 1784) (Stockholm: Johan Georg Lange, 1784), 8.
- 17 Carl Peter Thunberg, *Resa ...*, Part III, 106-107. We may note that the retinue accompanying the embassy had increased manifold since the mid-17th century, when Thunberg's countryman Olof Eriksson Willman accompanied Adriaen van der Burgh on the *Hofreis* in 1652, stating that the four Europeans travelled with about sixty Japanese. Vide Catharina Blomberg, "Idolaters and Devil Worshipers -Religion in Olof Eriksson Willman's Travel Diary From Japan 1651-1652," in *Le Vase de bérly, Etudes sur le Japon et la Chine en hommage à Bernard Frank*, ed. Jacqueline Pigeot and H.O. Rotermund (Arles: Éditions Philippe Picquier, 1997), 363-372; and "Jammaboos and Mecanical Apples - Religion and Daily Life in Olof Eriks-

- son Willman's Travel Diary 1651-1652”, *Itinerario, European Journal of Overseas History*, vol. XXII, no. 2 (Leiden, 1998), 85-102.
- 18 Op. cit., 107. The old Swedish mile was 36.000 feet, i.e. 10.688,5 metres.
- 19 Ibid., 111.
- 20 Carl Peter Thunberg, “Några Varma Bad uti Africa och Asien” (“Some Hot Baths in Africa and Asia”), *Kungliga Vetenskaps Academiens Nya Handlingar (New Transactions of the Royal Academy of Sciences)*, vol. II (Stockholm: Johan Georg Lange, 1781). *Resa ...*, Part. III, 115.
- 21 This dictionary, the first ever printed in Japan, was based on a work by the Augustine friar Ambrogio Calepino (c. 1440-1510). Thunberg's countryman Willman mentioned being shown a copy of the same work, complete with title page, when visiting the *Ômetsuke*, ‘Chief of Intelligence’ Inoue Chikugo no Kami Masashige in Edo in 1652.
- 22 Carl Peter Thunberg, *Resa ...*, Part III, “Japanska Språket” (Chapter headed “The Japanese Language”), 294-353. *Observations in Linguam Japonicam, a. Car. Petr. Thunberg, Nova Acta Regiae Societatis Scientiarum Upsaliensis (Observations on the Japanese Language, by C.P.T., New Transactions of the Royal Academy of Sciences)*, vol. V, (Upsaliae: Apud Joh. Edman, Direct. et Reg. Acad. Typogr., An. MDC-CXCII), 258-273.
- 23 Carl Peter Thunberg, *Resa ...* Part III, 150.
- 24 Op. cit., p. 153.
- 25 Ibid., 199. Katsuragawa was the scion of a family of physicians, and Nakagawa was a *bushi* from Obama, not far from Nagasaki. For a discussion of the importance of these two leading *Rangakusha*, vide Grant K. Goodman, *Japan: The Dutch Experience* (London: The Athlon Press, 1986).
- 26 Ibid., 200.
- 27 Ibid., 218.
- 28 The Hôkôji was originally constructed in 1586 by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and housed a wooden *Daibutsu* which was 19 metres tall. This was destroyed in an earthquake in 1596, and in 1612 Toyotomi Hideyori had a bronze image cast and constructed a new hall, which was seen by Olof Eriksson Willman and which burned down in 1662. Willman mentioned that the hall was 8 pillars in width and 12 pillars lengthwise, and Thunberg said that the temple he saw was constructed on 96 pillars, so an exact replica must have been made. The *Daibutsu* seen by Thunberg was made of wood, however, and since the destruction by fire of the last image in 1843 nothing remains of the *Daibutsuden* or Great Buddha Hall. Amida (Sansk. Amitabha) is the Buddha of the Western Paradise. Kannon (Sansk. Avalokitesvara) is the Bodhisattva of Mercy. Vide supra, note 17, my two papers dealing with Willman.
- 29 Carl Peter Thunberg, *Resa ...*, Part III, 246. For a discussion of Thunberg's views on Japanese religion see also Catharina Blomberg, “From the Horizon of the Enlightenment – Carl Peter Thunberg's Views on Religion in Japan,” in *Florilegium Japonicum: Studies Presented to Olof G. Lidin on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, ed. Bjarke Frellesvig and Christian Morimoto Hermansen (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1996), 29-40.
- 30 Op. cit., 248-251.
- 31 Ibid., 251-253.
- 32 His quite exhaustive paper, “Anmärkningar vid Canelen gjorde på Ceylon af Carl Peter Thunberg” (“Remarks on Cinnamon made in Ceylon by C.P.T.”) was published in *Kongl. Vetenskaps Academiens Nya Handlingar*, Tom I. År 1780.
- 33 Carl Peter Thunberg, “Tal vid Invignings-Acten af den Nya Akademiska Trägården (sic!), Dess Orangerie och Samlings-Salar, med Kongl. Maj:ts Allernådigste Tillstånd Hållit i Upsala Uti Den Nya Botaniska Lårosalen D. 25 Maji 1807, Då Tillika Firades Framledne Archiaterns och Riddarens Carl von Linnés Hundra-Åriga Födelse-Dag, af Carl Peter Thunberg, Med. och Botan. Professor, Riddare af Kongl. Maj:ts Vasa-Orden” (“Speech at the Inauguration of the New Academic Garden, Its Orangerie and Meeting-Rooms, with the Most Gracious Royal Permission Held in Upsala in the New Botanical Lecture Room, May 25th 1807, When the Late Physician in Ordinary and Knight Carl von Linnés One Hundredth Birthday was also Celebrated, by C.P.T., Professor of Medicine and Botany, Knight of the Royal Order of the Vasa”) (Upsala: Joh. Fr. Edman, Kongl. Akad. Boktr., 1807).
- 34 J.H. Schröder, *Vita Caroli Petri Thunberg* (Upsala, 1835), 9.
- 35 Carl Peter Thunberg, *Flora Japonica* (Leipzig, 1784), salutation by Jonas Theodor Fagraeus, pp. IX and X. This is an erudite paraphrase of Horace, *Epistulae* I, 17, 36: “Non cuivis homini contigit adire Corinthum” (Not every man has the fortune of visiting Corinth), quoted here as a florid way of describing the completion of something hard to accomplish.