

# An Early Dutch Map Depicting the Arrival of a Diplomatic Mission in Siam

Barend Jan Terwiel

**ABSTRACT**—A painted map from a collection in the Baden State Library appears to depict the arrival of a Dutch diplomatic mission in Siam in 1628—an event which is described in a lengthy eyewitness account in the VOC records. The map displays seven separate scenes showing the sequence of the mission’s arrival in the Chaophraya River. The correspondence between the text and the map suggests that the map was inspired by the text. This article examines the likely provenance of the map and how it came to be lodged in a German State Library.

## The map

The sixth volume of the *Comprehensive Atlas of the Dutch United East India Company, East Asia, Burma to Japan*, published in October 2010, reproduces an anonymous map (Figure 1), titled “Chart of the lower course of the Chao Phraya from its mouth to Bangkok,” dated by the authors of the atlas to 1635–1640.<sup>1</sup> The original, which is part of the Gijssels collection in the Baden State Library (Badische Landesbibliothek) in Karlsruhe, measures 40 x 53.5 cm and can be seen in high resolution on the Internet.<sup>2</sup> During his lifetime (1593–1676), Aernout Gijssels collected many materials relating to the Dutch East India Company (“VOC”) for his private use. The authors of the atlas suggest that the map depicts a VOC delegation to Siam, but they do not identify the event or have any information on the creation of the map.

During the first half of the 17th century there were four VOC diplomatic missions sent to Siam, each of them carrying a letter and presents from the Dutch Stadholder, Prince Frederick Henry, to the King of Siam.

Figure 1 (overleaf). Chart of the lower course of the Chao Phraya from its mouth to Bangkok. Gijssels Collection, Baden State Library, Karlsruhe

<sup>1</sup> J. Gommans and R. van Diessen, *Comprehensive Atlas of the Dutch United East India Company, East Asia, Burma to Japan*, Volume VII (Asia Maior in collaboration with Royal Dutch Geographical Society, Netherlands National Archives, and Utrecht University, Faculty of Geosciences, 2010), p. 61. In the Karlsruhe catalogue the map is dated between 1630 and 1640.

<sup>2</sup> Catalogued as K 478 fol. 56. The city of Karlsruhe was the capital of the former Kingdom of Baden, which between 1881 and 1945, became the federal State of Baden and since then a territory in the Federal State of Baden-Württemberg. See [www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/nl/Vogelvlucht-Bangkok.6555](http://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/nl/Vogelvlucht-Bangkok.6555).





The first of these missions arrived at the bar of the Chaophraya River in late August 1628 with a letter from the Prince for King Songtham (r. 1610/11–1628). Two ships, the *Mauritius* and the *Zuid Holland*, had left Batavia (now Jakarta) on 26 July 1628 with William Cunningham as envoy,<sup>3</sup> but after Cunningham died, aged 38, on 14 August, the senior merchant Adriaen de Marees and the merchant Joost Schouten took over responsibility of delivering the Prince's letter and presents.<sup>4</sup>

The second mission started from Batavia in April 1633 with Jan Joosten de Roij as envoy, bringing a letter and presents from the Dutch Stadholder for the Siamese King.<sup>5</sup> De Roij took it upon himself to carry the letter straight to the Dutch lodge, causing consternation among those familiar with Siamese etiquette. He was obliged to return the letter secretly to the ship, so that it could be placed upon a proper ceremonial barge and transported again to Ayutthaya.<sup>6</sup> Schouten, who had recently been appointed as “opperhoofd” (director) of the Dutch lodge with the rank of chief merchant, once more took part in the formal presentation at the court. The Siamese let the Dutch know that royal letters, such as those sent from Siam to the Netherlands, were written on a sheet of gold and that the Dutch should follow this practice.<sup>7</sup>

On the third mission in 1636,<sup>8</sup> when a letter and presents from Frederick Henry were sent to King Prasatthong, with Schouten as the single envoy, the Stadholder's letter was indeed written on a sheet of gold.<sup>9</sup> As presents, the Stadholder sent “a gold imperial crown, garnished with emeralds and a damascened sword inlaid with gold.” This sounds most impressive, but privately Schouten noted that “if the crown had been of a pyramid

<sup>3</sup> J.E. Heeres (ed.), *Dagh-Register gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlandts-India, Anno 1624-1629* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1896), p. 340.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 340. William Cunningham, of Scots ancestry, was born in 10 May 1590 in Veere. He joined the VOC in 1612, and when his contract expired on 3 July 1620, he was persuaded to add another three years as Senior Merchant with a salary of 75 guilders per month. After repatriation in 1623, he joined the West Indian Company, but probably in 1626 returned to the East Indian Company. Cunningham had a daughter, (born of a Siamese mother in 1617) named Fransyna (Cunningham's mother was Fransyncken Borselaers). See H.T. Colenbrander (ed.), *Jan Pietersz. Coen. Bescheiden omtrent zijn bedrijf in Indië*, Part 3 ('s-Gravenhage, Martinus Nijhoff, 1921), p. 677; and H. den Heijer, *Expeditie naar de Goudkust: Het journaal van Jan Dircksz Lam* (Zutphen: Walburg, 2006), pp. 47-49.

<sup>5</sup> I have omitted the mission of 1632 when Anthonij Caen took a letter and presents from the VOC Governor-General for King Prasatthong. Since this mission lacked a missive from the Dutch Stadholder, it was treated by the Siamese as if it were from an “inferior” ruler. See Dhiravata Pombeyra, *Siamese Court Life in the Seventeenth Century as depicted in European Sources* (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2001), p. 113.

<sup>6</sup> Bhawan Ruangsilp, *Dutch East India Company Merchants at the Court of Ayutthaya: Dutch Perceptions of the Thai Kingdom, c.1604–1765* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 62-63.

<sup>7</sup> An English translation of the Stadholder's letter can be seen in *Records of the relations between Siam and foreign countries in the 17<sup>th</sup> century*, Vol 2, Bangkok, 1917, pp. 1-3.

<sup>8</sup> As a result of this mission, a contract between the two countries was prepared, in which the export duties for a large number of Siamese products were specified. See J.K.J. de Jonge, “Overzicht der betrekkingen van de Nederlandsche Oost-Indische Compagnie met Siam”, in *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, Vol. 13, 1864, pp. 440-446.

<sup>9</sup> Bhawan, *Dutch East India Company Merchants*, pp. 64-65.

shape, and the sword more richly gilt, they would have been still more pleasing to his Majesty.”<sup>10</sup> On 2 October 1636, Schouten was granted an audience and was suitably rewarded for his role in the matter.

The fourth mission took place in 1641 with “opperhoofd” Jeremias van Vliet as envoy. The ceremony was interrupted several times and King Prasatthong did not send a return letter to the Prince of Orange, thereby ending the regular exchange.<sup>11</sup>

Shortly after the mission of 1628, Schouten wrote a detailed account of the event. This text helps to identify which mission is shown in the map, and suggests how the map may have been created.

### The text: Joost Schouten’s *Uytloopich Verhael*

Schouten’s account<sup>12</sup> is entitled “Uytloopich Verhael, in hoedaeniger wijze de missive ende geschencken van den doorluchtichsten Prince van Orangien aen den Coninck van Chiam in den jare 1628 behandicht, ende overgelevert zijn,” meaning “Detailed account of the way in which the letter and gifts from the illustrious Prince of Orange were handed over to the King of Siam in 1628”. It was first noted by George Vinal Smith in his seminal work on the VOC trading office in Ayutthaya.<sup>13</sup> Han ten Brummelhuis also quoted from the document and Bhawan Ruangsilp summarized the whole report.

Schouten provided details of the complex process of translating Prince Frederick Henry’s letter into Siamese and its presentation to King Songtham, which he witnessed. He also described the ceremonial transport of the letter to Ayutthaya. This part of the text may have been the inspiration for the creation of the map:

In the beginning of September both ships with the letter from the Prince arrived at the mouth of the Siamese river and its arrival and the death of the envoy were announced to the Phrakhlang (the king’s minister for all foreign affairs). The letter from the Governor General to introduce the envoy Cunningham to the Phrakhlang was also handed over, and it was immediately translated in Siamese...

...In accordance with the recommendation of the Honourable Governor-General the Phrakhlang took the matter in hand. After he had informed the King of all this he appointed the Merchant Adriaen de Marees and myself, Joost Schouten, Sub-Merchant.... to bring the letter of the Prince from the ship with all customary respect. At the same time, he sent a command to the Mandarins of the villages that were situated downriver from the capital that they should pay proper respect to it [the letter].

<sup>10</sup> C.R. Boxer (ed.), *A True Description of the Mighty Kingdoms of Japan and Siam by François Caron and Joost Schouten, reprinted from the English edition of 1663* (London: Argonaut, 1935), Appendix 1, p. 141.

<sup>11</sup> Details of the Van Vliet mission in Bhawan, *Dutch East India Company Merchants*, pp. 68-70.

<sup>12</sup> Catalogued as ARA VOC 1098 in the Dutch National Archives in The Hague.

<sup>13</sup> G.V. Smith, *The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand* (De Kalb, Northern Illinois: Centre for Southeast Asian Studies Special Report 16, 1977), p. 155.

After the Phrakhlang had given his orders we all together sailed away, and arrived at Bangkok. This is a little town some fourteen miles south of the capital. Its Governor made available two long rowing boats, one for the Princely letter, and one for himself. This Governor is one of the most important persons of the kingdom, son of the old King of Phatthalung and married to the sole heiress of the Kingdom of Pattani (but expelled from there because of partisanship and jealousy). Together with these long rowing boats we sailed further down to Ban Chaophraya at the mouth of the river. Then the letter ... was placed in a small case, under a cover of red cloth and handed over to the King's long rowing boat where it was placed in a round, red elevated small house with silken curtains on all sides. As soon as the letter was handed over, wind instruments and drums began playing and the journey upwards began, together with the long rowing boat of the Bangkok Governor, who sat under a silken tent, and also ourselves sitting under a red tent in a long black prow, manned by thirty rowers, flying the Prince's flag. Our interpreter sat in a similar, but slightly smaller prow, and the other Siamese commissioners followed behind the letter up until Bangkok. There accompanied by the sound of many wind instruments and drums the letter was transferred to the beautiful long prow of the King, with fifty rowers, where it was placed under a gilded small house.

Twelve of the grandest and most important persons from Bangkok, each one in a long paddle-prow, accompanied it up river, so that by that time we were sixteen prows and around 400 persons in all. During the journey upriver, all up- and down-coming vessels stopped until the letter and its retinue had passed.

This memorandum was Schouten's first lengthy report to his superiors. He was to write other lengthy reports on Japan and Siam,<sup>14</sup> during a brilliant career.

### The map and the text

The map, drawn from a bird's-eye perspective, is in two segments on a single sheet of paper. On the lower part, looking from left to right, it depicts two large ships and five sloops, all festooned with Dutch flags. I suggest this represents several scenes from the arrival of the diplomatic mission at the Lower Chaophraya River. Apparently the artist assumed that the mission went immediately to Ban Chaophraya, a customs station not far from the mouth of the river where those entering Siam from the Gulf were required to present themselves.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Five years later he submitted a study on Japan. See L. Blussé, "Justus Schouten en de Japanse gijzeling", *Nederlandse historische bronnen*, 5 (1985), pp 69-75.

<sup>15</sup> Gijsbert Heeck calls it "a small village at the mouth of the river where all in- and out-going shipping must halt on the king's order and pay toll". Gijsbert Heeck, *A Traveler in Siam in the Year 1655: Extracts from the Journal of Gijsbert Heeck*, trans. B.J. Terwiel, Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2008, p. 37. The two VOC ships, anchored outside the bar were still reckoned to be outside Siam. This was confirmed in August 1655 in the aftermath of a Dutch attempt to take three Portuguese vessels. *Ibid.* pp. 29-35. However, it ought to be noted that Van Nijenrode explicitly

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Uytloopich Verhael, In soedalingen  
 wese. de missie ende gesceenicheit  
 vanden doorengestichten Meinen van  
 Orangien aluden Comite van Ceiam  
 inden jaer 1620. Besandicst. ende  
 ophergevelet sijn,

1600. Door de Groote ende Ouderinge Prinschap. tussch  
 de Gollantse. ende Ceiamse natie. Goddende de Sint  
 gaudens gaudinghe, ende frequentoren. in maecandus.  
 Landen. Sijne magest. van Ceiam. vermoedet was ge  
 worden. dat seene mit Amboes middelen. de wesenge  
 goetche. eninge jaer. door sijne magest. egeringe  
 den Comite sijn. door vaders met sijnen van  
 den mis. sive. aluden doorengestichten Meinen Maurit.  
 tins de Nassouwe. Orme van Orangien. Ouders  
 gade. ende door de Oufanghe. Duitwoorde op besede  
 de Prinschap tusschen de twee natien. Op secken  
 soulandus. Bogost. ende gegeent was. 100. geest sijn  
 Magest. in den jaer 1622. Comand. wt. Coorloogse  
 Coest. godadu. tegeu sijn. tegeu den Comite van  
 Cambodja. Beiegt. ende goet godaest. denon. Bie  
 op Comite. ende wt. Orme van Orangien. naar Gollant. te  
 mider. ende Lioort. Om de godde. geledent. die sijn.  
 de. gend. door d'adcompt. vanden. Comand.  
 Fredric. de. tegeu mit sijn. gegeu vanden  
 de. door. Comand. Generale. Jan. Pieter.  
 Colu. dot. geouwe van Coest. in Cambodja. wt. Batt.  
 in Ceiam. gesonden. ende. geouwe. tegeu.  
 Arriverden. 100. geest. sijn. magest. nochtans.  
 de. bewes. Prinschap. goege. geaest. ende. voor. dese  
 goet. willie. gegeu. besandicst. den. de. Geou.  
 Comand. Generale. Prinschap. bod. die.  
 sijn. mit. geouwe. gegeu. volgend. sijn. oors.  
 woornen. den. missie. mit. de. gegeu.  
 aluden. doorengestichten. Meinen. Maurits.  
 sijn. sijn. tegeu. van. Assistentie. dot. onder.  
 bekinge. vanden. Cambodja. in. de. bestand.  
 in. de. geouwe. ende. goet. tegeu. Comand.  
 in. de. met. desen. Comite. sijn. tegeu. de.  
 Comand. de. de. naar. Battavia. verhoeten.  
 ende. in. de. vanden. de. de. de. de. de.

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Figure 2. The first page of Schouten's Uytloopich Verhael

The upper part of the map is again intended to be viewed from left to right. On the left three sloops are being rowed downriver. This must have been when Schouten's party, after traveling upriver to Bangkok to send a message to the Phrakhlang, returned downriver to Ban Chaophraya to begin the ceremonial procession with the letter. Further to the right of the picture, four sloops are shown moored on the eastern bank of the river. The letter is then transferred to four Siamese state barges, festooned with the Dutch flag. These take the letter to Bangkok. Finally, to the far right we see the ceremonial boat procession moving towards the capital Ayutthaya.

The two sequences do not necessarily represent what actually occurred, but rather what artists in a Dutch atelier thought happened. Essentially it is an artistic creation by craftsmen who were unfamiliar with Southeast Asian etiquette. It is suggested here that Schouten's report must have provided the inspiration for the map's creation. In the following paragraphs the picture and sections of Schouten's text are juxtaposed.



Figure 3. The first scene: arrival at the river mouth



Figure 4. The second scene: "we all together sailed away"

At the left of the lower panel, two beautifully drawn VOC trading ships are riding at anchor outside the mouth of the Chaophraya River (Figure 3). The ships are festooned with red, white and blue Dutch flags, their gun ports are open, and their cannons are firing salutes in various directions. Both ships are drawn with a rampant lion as bowsprit. In the early 17th century a crouching red lion with a golden mane was the standard bowsprit on large VOC ships.

The two ships are not identical. While the upper ship has ten guns on each side, the lower ship has eleven. On the lower ship the distance between the mainmast and mizzenmast is greater. According to Schouten's *Uytloopich Verhael*, the mission of 1628 had two VOC ships, the *Mauritius* weighing 800 tons and the *Zuid Holland* only 600 tons. This difference accords with the depiction on the map.

The second scene shows four sloops approaching the mouth of the river, sailing in two-by-two formation, each with a foresail and a main (Figure

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states that in his time (he resided in Siam from 1617 to 1621) the first toll station was Bangkok. See C. van Nijenrode, "Vertoog van de Gelegenheid des Koninkrijks van Siam", *Kroniek van het Historisch Genootschap Gevestigd te Utrecht*, Vol 27, 1871, p. 230.





Figure 5. Entering the mouth of the river



Figure 6. "... we sailed further down to Ban Chaophraya at the mouth of the river"



Figure 7. The four sloops moored south of Bangkok



Figure 8. The four barges with Dutch flags

4). Perhaps this scene was inspired by Schouten's words, "we all together sailed away." All four sloops are also firing cannon to front and rear. The upper two sloops have a canopy in the stern, perhaps sheltering the missive and presents. Apart from the ubiquitous Dutch flags, the upper front sloop also flies pennants, indicating perhaps that it is the principal vessel carrying the prince's letter.

To the right of this scene, a single sloop is shown entering the mouth of the Chaophraya River, again displaying Dutch flags and firing cannon from both front and back (Figure 5). Perhaps this indicates the approach to the toll station where the letter and presents were to be deposited during the time the two merchants contacted the Phrakhleng. Therefore, we may assume that the small number of houses drawn on the eastern bank of the river represents Ban Chaophraya. The word "Siam" is prominently displayed.

The upper panel of the map shows a stretch of the Chaophraya River. Once more the sequence begins at the left side, where three Dutch sloops are shown rowing downriver (Figure 6). This can be linked with the sentence "we sailed further down to Ban Chaophraya at the mouth of the river."

Moving to the right on this upper panel, we find two scenes. The first of these shows four sloops moored on the eastern bank of the river (Figure 7). The second shows one Dutch sloop (at lower left, with masts), still with a canopy at the stern, and three Siamese barges, each adorned with the Dutch flag and with a canopied shelter amidships (Figure 8). This shows the transfer of the missive and presents to the boats



Figure 9. The boat procession to Ayutthaya

that the Bangkok governor had made available. Finally, we see a flotilla of Siamese rowed barges (Figure 9). The rearmost of these has a golden-coloured roofed shelter; this coincides with what Schouten wrote:

There accompanied by the sound of many wind instruments and drums the letter was transferred to the beautiful long prow of the King, with fifty rowers, where it was placed under a gilded small house.

I have thus shown that the artist has presented the progression of the Dutch letter in seven separate stages of its voyage.

Schouten knew that a royal letter had to arrive in proper ceremonial fashion. Hence his party left the precious objects at the first toll station while he proceeded upriver to Bangkok from where a message was sent to inform the Phrakhlang. Then the matter was taken out of their hands. In reality, they returned to Ban Chaophraya together with two barges, provided by the Governor of Bangkok. This small flotilla transported the Prince's letter and presents upriver to Bangkok, where a new transfer took place, this time to a proper procession of sixteen ceremonial Siamese barges. The artist of the map seems to have misunderstood the intermediary role of Bangkok's Governor and has depicted the first transfer taking place between Ban Chaophraya and Bangkok.

Since Schouten's account mentions the way the letter arrived with two ships of different size, the intermediary role of the Phrakhlang, the governor of Bangkok providing vessels, and the transfer to a proper boat procession, it seems more than likely that his *Uytloopich Verhael* inspired the unknown artists to create this painting, though they may have misunderstood the ceremonial procedure.

### Aernout Gijssels and the VOC

How did this Dutch map come to be part of the Gijssels collection in a German State Museum?

Aernout Gijssels was born in 1593 in the Dutch municipality of IJsselstein. He came from a well-connected family and received a good education. At the age of eighteen,

he signed up with the VOC<sup>16</sup> as assistant-factor. His first posting was in Hitu, a town on the Moluccan Island of Ambon, where the Dutch at that time had established their main commercial centre.<sup>17</sup> In 1615 he was promoted to merchant and two years later, at the age of 25, to senior merchant, still residing in Hitu.<sup>18</sup> In 1618 he became second-in-command to Herman van Speult, the new Governor of Amboina. He returned for the first time to the Netherlands in 1620 as commander of three homebound VOC ships.<sup>19</sup>

From the money that he had regularly transferred he bought an estate, now calling himself Gijssels van Lier. In 1627 he was appointed, together with Jan Hochepped, to prepare a statement of accounts of the VOC for all their Dutch shareholders. This must have provided him with a unique insight into the complex organization of the VOC. Upon completion of this task, he was appointed in 1628 as Councillor of the Indies, and upon his own request was made Governor in Amboina.

In 1630 Gijssels returned to the Indies with a large retinue. After three years as Governor, he was accused of “private trading,” a charge that could have ended his career. However, he was able to clear his name and rose to the position of Inspector-General. This conflict seems to have rankled him throughout the rest of his life. As Councillor of the Indies, now living mainly in Batavia, he had free access to the archives and had copies made of numerous official documents. In September 1638 he finally left for The Netherlands, where he was received with great honours.<sup>20</sup> In 1641 he was appointed admiral of a Dutch Fleet, and sent to assist the Portuguese against the Spanish. The chaotic battle of Cape St. Vincent that took place on 5 November 1641 ended indecisively, but was proclaimed a success on both sides.

In the following years Gijssels attempted to organize an independent East India Company, and sought the support of the Prince of Orange, but the Prince declined and the scheme failed to interest sufficient subscribers. In 1647 when the Prussian Elector, Frederic William, was in The Hague to prepare for his marriage to the daughter of the Prince of Orange, Gijssels canvassed his support. Frederic William encouraged him to write a memorandum on the practicalities of setting up a Prussian East India Company. Gijssels sent a series of detailed plans and as a result, in 1648 he was appointed as “Geheimrat” (privy councilor) in Brandenburg. During the next twenty years, Gijssels developed various plans to establish a Brandenburg East India Company, but they all came to nothing. In 1651 the Prussian Elector allowed Aernout Gijssels to obtain the lease of the “Amt” (governor) of Lenzen, a border town on the River Elbe. There he resided in a castle and ruled in the name of the Elector until his death in 1676.

<sup>16</sup> Most sources say that he enrolled at the age of sixteen, but here I rely upon M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofs, “The Private Papers of Artus Gijssels as Source for the History of East Asia,” *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. 10, No. 3, Dec. 1969, p. 545.

<sup>17</sup> Amboina, on Ambon Island in the Moluccas was the VOC East Indies headquarters from 1610 until 1619, when Governor General Jan Coen founded Batavia to take its place.

<sup>18</sup> Meilink-Roelofs, “The Private Papers,” pp. 547-548.

<sup>19</sup> Also on board were four Ambonese boys, who accompanied Gijssels and planned to study theology. They returned to Ambon with Gijssels in 1630.

<sup>20</sup> In 1639 Gijssels received from the VOC 3000 guilders to compensate for expenses and he was awarded an extra 1000 guilders for “his good services”. See F.W. Stapel (ed.), *Pieter van Dam, Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, Vol 1, Part 2 (’s-Gravenhage, 1929), p. 316

Gijssels, no doubt disappointed with the Great Elector who eventually had withdrawn from the plans for a Brandenburg East India Company, left his papers to his friend, the Margrave Herman of Baden. As a result, his maps ended up in Karlsruhe, state capital of Baden until 1952.

### Aernout Gijssels and his maps

The Baden State Library in Karlsruhe has eighty maps from Gijssels' bequest. Most relate to expeditions and voyages in the Moluccan Islands between 1631 and 1635 when Gijssels was Governor of Amboina. All are monochrome sketches of landscapes, some made by Isaac Gilsemans, who later accompanied Abel Tasman on his journey in 1642–1643.<sup>21</sup> A few others are maps showing large regions of the world, or sea routes that were not visited by Gijssels. These were probably acquired after 1638 when Gijssels finally returned from the Indies. Five relate to the Spilbergen expedition of 1615 and were identified by the Baden State Library as coming from the VOC mapmaker Hessel Gerritz in Amsterdam. Gijssels also obtained some large-scale maps drawn by the famous Joan Blaeu.

One of the maps in the Gijssels' collection is directly related to the famous atelier of Johannes Vingboons where hundreds of watercolour scenes were painted. In the Vingboons atlas that ended up in the Dutch National Archives there is a map called "t Casteel en t Conincklijck Palijs van Visiapour" (the castle and royal palace of Visiapour/Vijayapura). In the Gijssels' collection is the original drawing that probably was made in 1637 during a diplomatic mission by chief merchant Johan van Twist.<sup>22</sup>

The map showing the arrival of the Prince's letter in Siam is also exceptional in the Gijssels' collection. First, it has no bearing on Gijssels' chief aim of amassing documents related to his wish to form a new East India company. Second, it is a painting, rather than a map. Third, it is painted in colours. Fourth, unlike all the others, its style and execution suggest that it was created in the atelier of Johannes Vingboons and his assistants in the 1640s. The lettering of the words "SIAM" and "BANKOCK" is typical of Vingboons (Figure 10). Also the depiction of a Bangkok *chedi* and of houses along the waterfront almost exactly replicate parallel depictions on Vingboons map of Ayutthaya (Figure 11).

Most remarkable is the extraordinary quality of the drawings of the two ships, showing many details of the complex rigging. Such quality was only attained in a few places in the Netherlands.

Vingboons' watercolour paintings were based upon cartographic material kept in the the "Oost-Indisch Huis", as the VOC headquarters in Amsterdam were generally

<sup>21</sup> See G. Anderson, *The Merchant of the Zeehaen, Isaac Gilsemans and the Voyages of Abel Tasman* (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> M. Gosselink, *Land in zicht: Vingboons tekent de wereld van de 17de eeuw* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2007), pp. 37, 52-53 and 120. The original can be seen at [www.Atlasofmutualheritage.nl/nl/Gezicht-paleis-Visiapour-India.6529](http://www.Atlasofmutualheritage.nl/nl/Gezicht-paleis-Visiapour-India.6529). The Gijssels collection in Karlsruhe has not only the original drawing but also Van Twist's written account of his mission to the king of Visiapour, which was first published in 1638 in Batavia as *Generale Beschrijvinghe van Indien, ende in 't besondere van 't Coninckrijck and Guseratten....*



Figure 10. Text on this map (above) and on Vingboons maps (below)



Figure 11. Depiction of a *chedi* and riverside house on this map (left) and on Vingboons map of Ayutthaya (right).

known. Since 1638 the chief of the map room was the above-mentioned Joan Blaeu, who took charge of the vast collection of sketches drawn by VOC mates, merchants, *opperhoofden*, envoys and draftsmen. Blaeu's main task was to take an inventory and to transform these sketches into practical maps. While all of Blaeu's maps were drawn for practical purposes, Vingboons aquarelles were highly valued ornaments, which adorned the walls of high officials, and his atlases were collectors' items. Blaeu has been described as Vingboons' associate and patron.<sup>23</sup>

The depiction of Bangkok in our map may thus well have been inspired by some of the sketches in the Amsterdam map room. Certainly, Bangkok was similarly depicted on one of the VOC maps of the lower Chaophraya River that was completed in the late 17th century.<sup>24</sup> The envoy Schouten may have sketched Bangkok's situation. If so, his drawing would have been sent to the map room of the VOC headquarters in Amsterdam.

Schouten's *Uytloopich Verhael* can be found only in the Dutch Archives. It does

<sup>23</sup> Gosselink, *Land in zicht*, p. 40.

<sup>24</sup> ANA Leupe Vel 4, No. 266. A copy is shown on [www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/nl/Chart-river-Siam.2516](http://www.atlasofmutualheritage.nl/nl/Chart-river-Siam.2516).

not appear in the Gijssels collection of the Baden State Library or in the vast Sejarah Nusantara collection, *Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia*. Most likely the map was made in the Netherlands, and perhaps was intended to illustrate a printed version of *Uytloopich Verhael*. Schouten's work on Siam, written in 1636, was published two years later in the Netherlands as a booklet of twenty-four pages called *Notitie vande situatie, regeeringe, macht, religie, costuymen, traffijcquen ende andere remercquable saeken des Coninghrijcks Siam*.<sup>25</sup>

In the early 1640s Schouten's fame was firmly established. In Batavia, he was a member of the "Raad van Indië" (the governing body), supervising the "buitencomptoiren" (external offices). In 1641 he was chosen to lead high-level diplomatic missions to Malacca and to the Queen of Aceh. On 25 November 1642 Abel Tasman named one of the islands discovered near the southwest coast of Tasmania as Schoute Eylandt (Schouten Island).<sup>26</sup> Shortly after, however, he was accused of engaging in homosexual relations, and consequently was executed in July 1644. Perhaps a plan to publish Schouten's *Uytloopich Verhael* promptly collapsed, and a map in preparation for this publication came onto the market at a bargain price which Aernout Gijssels could not resist. But this is only speculation.



<sup>25</sup> Published by Aert Meuris in 's-Gravenhage. The first English edition was printed in 1663, titled *A Description of the Government, Might, Religion, Customes, Traffick, and other remarable Affairs in the Kingdom of Siam: written in the Year 1636 by Joost Schouten, Directour of the East-India-Company in that Countrey*.

<sup>26</sup> V. Roeper and D. Wildeman, *Het journal van Abel Tasman, 1642-1643* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2006), pp. 74, 84.