

François Valentijn's Map of "The Great Siamese River Me-Nam"

Barend Jan Terwiel¹

Between 1724 and 1726, François Valentijn (1666-1727) published *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, a monumental work on the Dutch East India Company ("VOC"). In Volume 3, Part 2, Book 6, Chapter 1 (the section dealing with Siam), between pages 60 and 61, Valentijn placed a large map (74 cm long, and 29.4 cm high) depicting a large part of Siam.² Prominently in the middle of this map he drew a large scroll with the words: "De Groote Siamse Rievier Me-Nam ofte Moeder der Wateren in haren loop met de in vallende Spruyten Verbeeld," which may be translated as: "The Great Siamese River Me-Nam, or Mother of Waters, its course and its tributaries displayed." Hereafter this map will be referred to as "VAL". Valentijn mentions that the map contains unique information, and it will be shown below that this is indeed the case.

The five volumes of *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* describe more than twenty locations where the VOC had established trade offices, but since Valentijn was almost continuously stationed in the Moluccan Archipelago, he never had an opportunity to see them with his own eyes. Therefore, the information contained in the VAL map was derived from external sources.

Valentijn served two periods as a clergyman in the Dutch East Indies, from 1685 to 1694 and from 1706 to 1713 respectively.³ On 9 March 1705, not long before he set out for his second period with the VOC, he signed a contract with the publisher Johannes van Braam, in which he committed to write a multi-volume work on the VOC. He completed this task twenty-one years later.⁴ Therefore, during his second period of

¹ I thank Thawatchai Tangsiriwanit for giving me in 2004 a full-size reproduction of Valentijn's map on which I could read the register of 101 names. Two earlier versions of this paper were published: "Eine ungewöhnliche Landkarte Thailands," *Jahrbuch der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008, 441-6; and in "Reflections on the Age of Indigenous Siamese Mapping," in Leelananda Prematilleke (ed.), *Abhinandanamala, Nandana Chutiwongs Felicitation Volume Supplementum*, Bangkok: Abhinandanamala Committee, 2010, 111-24). In preparing this version I have greatly benefited from a lively correspondence with Patrick Dumon, who has been intrigued by Valentijn's map for a long time and has managed to identify many locations. Wherever I have relied upon his work, this is indicated with his initials, PD. Chris Baker and Volker Grabowsky contributed to the identification and interpretation.

² François Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* (...) (5 volumes) (Dordrecht en Amsterdam 1724–1726).

³ R.R.F. Habiboe, *Tot verheffing van mijne natie: Het leven en werk van François Valentijn (1666–1727)*, Franeker: 2004.

⁴ Annemarie Fennema, "François Valentijns *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indiën*," *Mededelingen van de Stichting Jacob Campo Weyerman*, 21, 1998, 12.

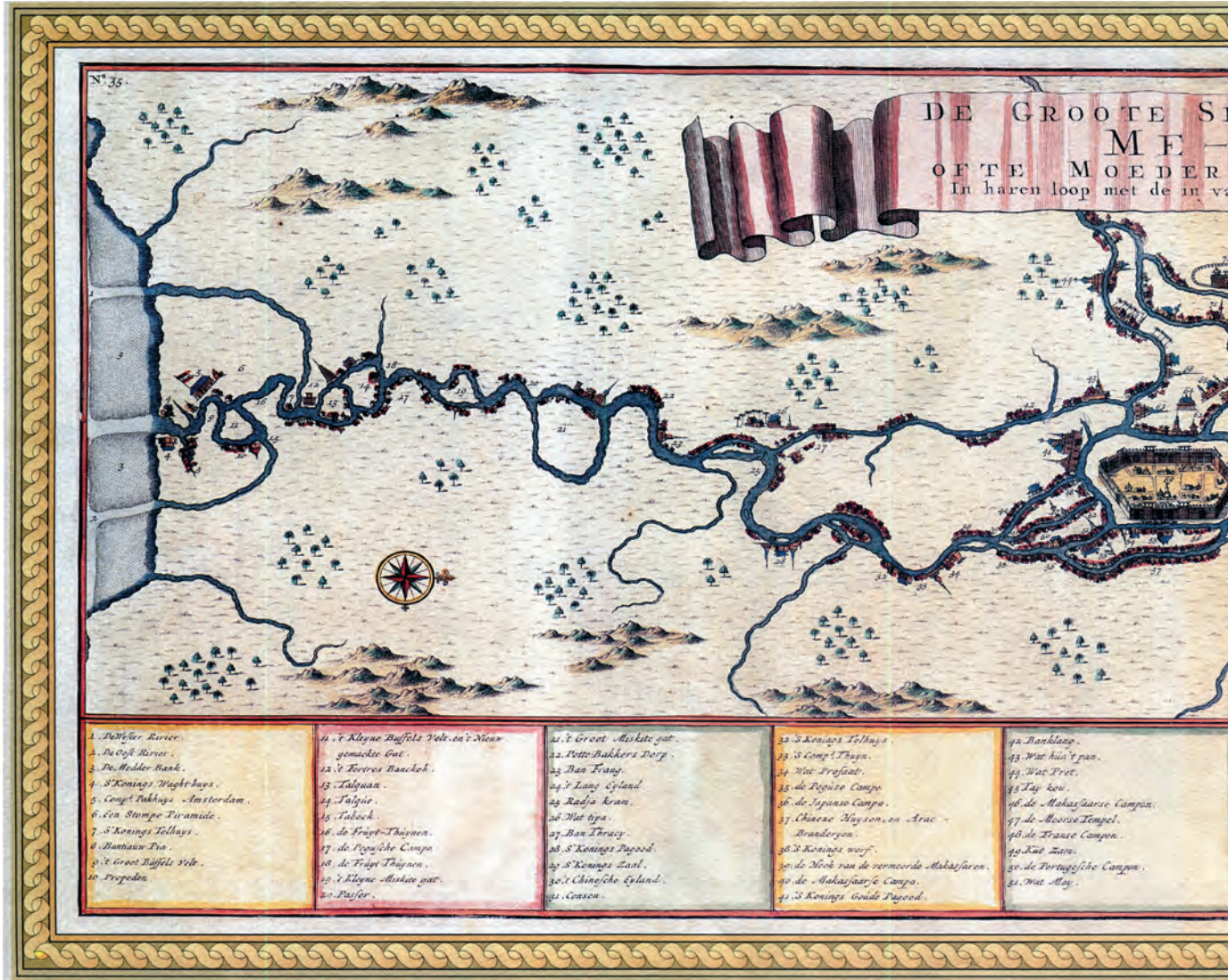


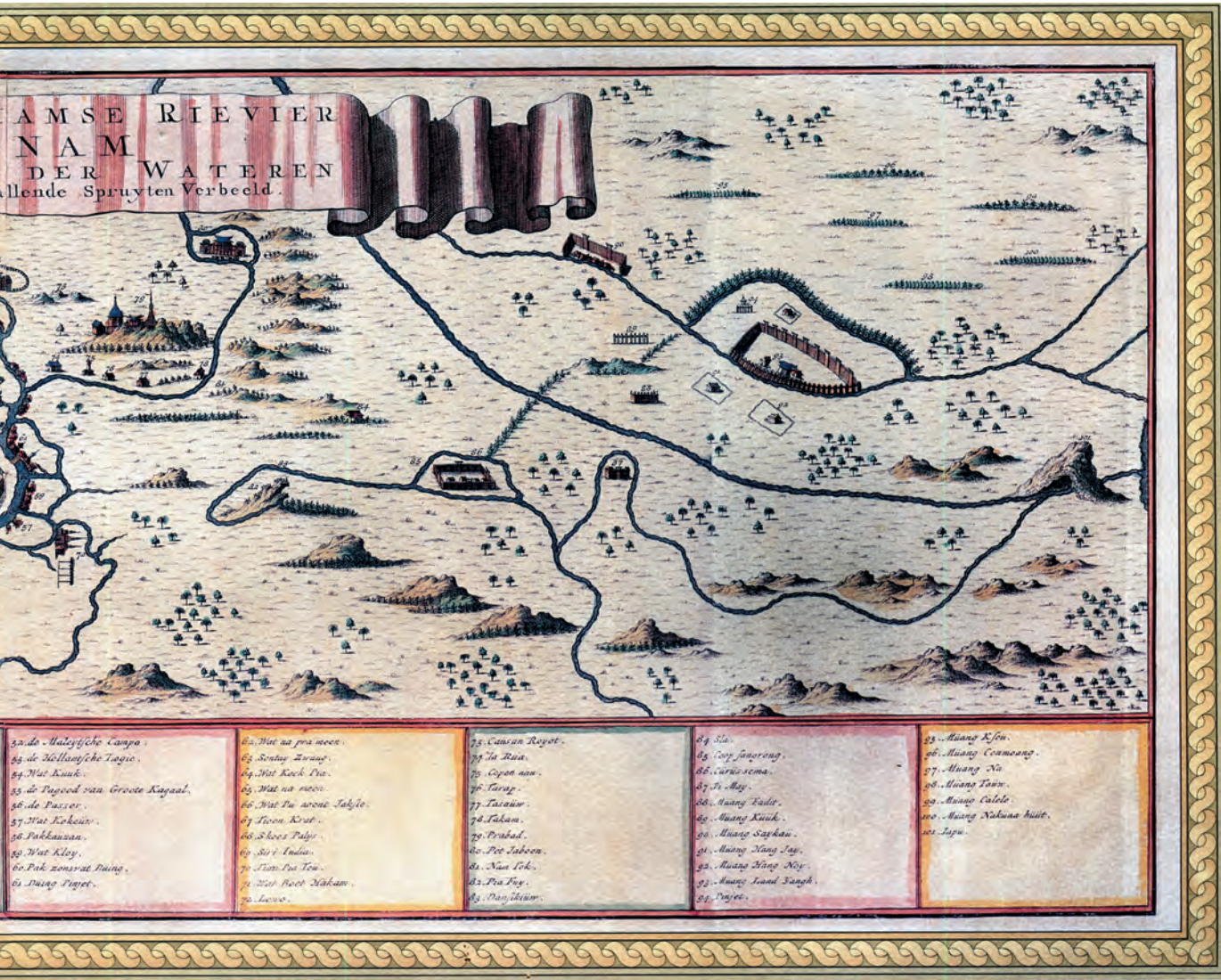
Figure 1. The Valentijn map.

residence in the East, he assiduously collected information on a wide range of topics. In the preface of his third volume, Valentijn lists many of his informants who supplied him with maps and information, but not from whom he obtained the information with which he drew VAL.

Scrutinizing VAL

The VAL map has been repeatedly shown in recent publications; and when shown in full, this usually occurred in much reduced form so as to fit on a printed page.⁵

⁵ See E.W. Hutchinson, *Adventurers in Siam in the Seventeenth Century*, London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1940, 49 (only a detail of the map); Charnvit Kasetsiri (ed.), *Ayutthaya and Asia*, Phrapadaeng Toyota Thailand Foundation, 2001, 34-5; Thawatchai Tangsiriwanit, *Krungsiayutthaya nai Phaenthi Farang* [Ayutthaya on Western maps], Bangkok: Matichon, 2006, 102 (only a detail);



In 1997, Remco Raben and Dhiravat na Pombejra reproduced one such miniature version of VAL, commenting: "This is probably the most remarkable of the seventeenth and eighteenth century Dutch maps of the Siamese kingdom, showing localities north of Ayutthaya."⁶ In the following analysis we shall see that the map is indeed remarkable, but also that it shows much more than just "localities north of Ayutthaya." Valentijn himself claimed, quite rightly, that such a beautiful, detailed map had never before been seen.⁷

Charnvit Kasetsiri and Michael Wright, *Discovering Ayutthaya*, Phrapadaeng: Toyota Thailand Foundation, 2007, 44-5.

⁶ Remco Raben and Dhiravat na Pombejra, "Tipping Balances: King Borommakot and the Dutch East India Company," in Remco Raben und Dhiravat na Pombejra (eds.), *In the King's Trail: An 18th Century Dutch Journey to the Buddha's Footprint*, Bangkok: The Royal Netherlands Embassy, 1997, 65.

⁷ Valentijn, op. cit., 60: "den loop van de schoone Rivier ... zoo uitvoerig vertoonen, als noit te

In his ambitious overview of VOC trading stations Valentijn often thanks informants, but for the section dealing with Siam he only mentions a single informant, namely Aernout Cleur, the “opperhoofd” or chief of the VOC station in Ayutthaya between 1703 and 1712, for sending him an account of the “revolution” that took place in Siam in 1688.⁸ In the text accompanying VAL he writes as if he personally went up river towards Ayutthaya, a blatant deception.

Figure 1 shows the general layout of VAL. Prominently in the middle is Ayutthaya, the old Siamese capital city, its walls arranged in a rough hexagon. The city is surrounded by a complex array of waterways. On the left side of the map we see the section of the Chaophraya River between Ayutthaya and the Gulf of Siam. The mud banks in the sea are intersected by three watercourses. In this left part, east of the river, a compass rose indicates that Ayutthaya lies to the north. The right half of VAL depicts, as we shall see below, a much larger region lying to the northeast of Ayutthaya.

A close look at VAL shows that it is a composite map. Consequently, this article is divided in three sections. First, I will examine the stretch of the Chaophraya River from the mouth of the river up to Ayutthaya. This is followed by a discussion on how he drew the capital city and its immediate surrounds. Finally, the area on the right side of the map will be scrutinized.

Section 1. The Chaophraya River from the Gulf to Ayutthaya

The course of the Chaophraya River between the Gulf and what was then the capital, Ayutthaya, is about 100 km in length. From 1604 onwards, the Dutch regularly plied up and down with sloops. In the National Archives in The Hague there are two well-known maps of that stretch of the river (Kaarten Leupe Vel 4: 266 and 267). There must have been copies of them in Batavia (present-day Jakarta) and Ayutthaya, and it is quite possible that these were from time to time updated. Of these two quite distinct maps, only one comes close to the one that served Valentijn to draw the left part of VAL, as can be seen from Figure 2 where both maps are placed next to the relevant part of VAL.

A close look at the middle map (Leupe 267)⁹ shows that this map, registered in the Dutch National Archives as “Kaart van de Rivier van Siam, van de Zee tot aan de Stad Siam ofte Judea” (groot 0.53-0.42 El. ofte Judea, 17de eeuw) [circa 1687/8 AD] comes close to Valentijn’s depiction. First, the scale is virtually identical. Second, both show three watercourses cutting through the mud bank (no other contemporary maps have this feature). Third, the loops in the river are drawn in an almost identical manner. Fourth, on the Dutch map more than twenty locations are identified, all of which found their way onto VAL’s register (of which more below), such as the “Small Buffalo Field,” the “Large Buffalo Field,” the “Potters’ village,” and the “Company’s

vorens van iemand geschied is.”

⁸ *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* (Volume 3, Book 6, Chapter 1, 80): “Beknopt verhaal van den wonderlijke verandering voorgevallen in ‘t Koninkrijk Siam in ‘t jaar 1688, *den Schrijver door den Heer Arnold Cleur behandigd*” (my emphasis).

⁹ An “early seventeenth century Dutch map,” as published in Larry Sternstein, *Thailand: The Environment of Modernisation*, Sydney: McGraw-Hill, 1976, 83.

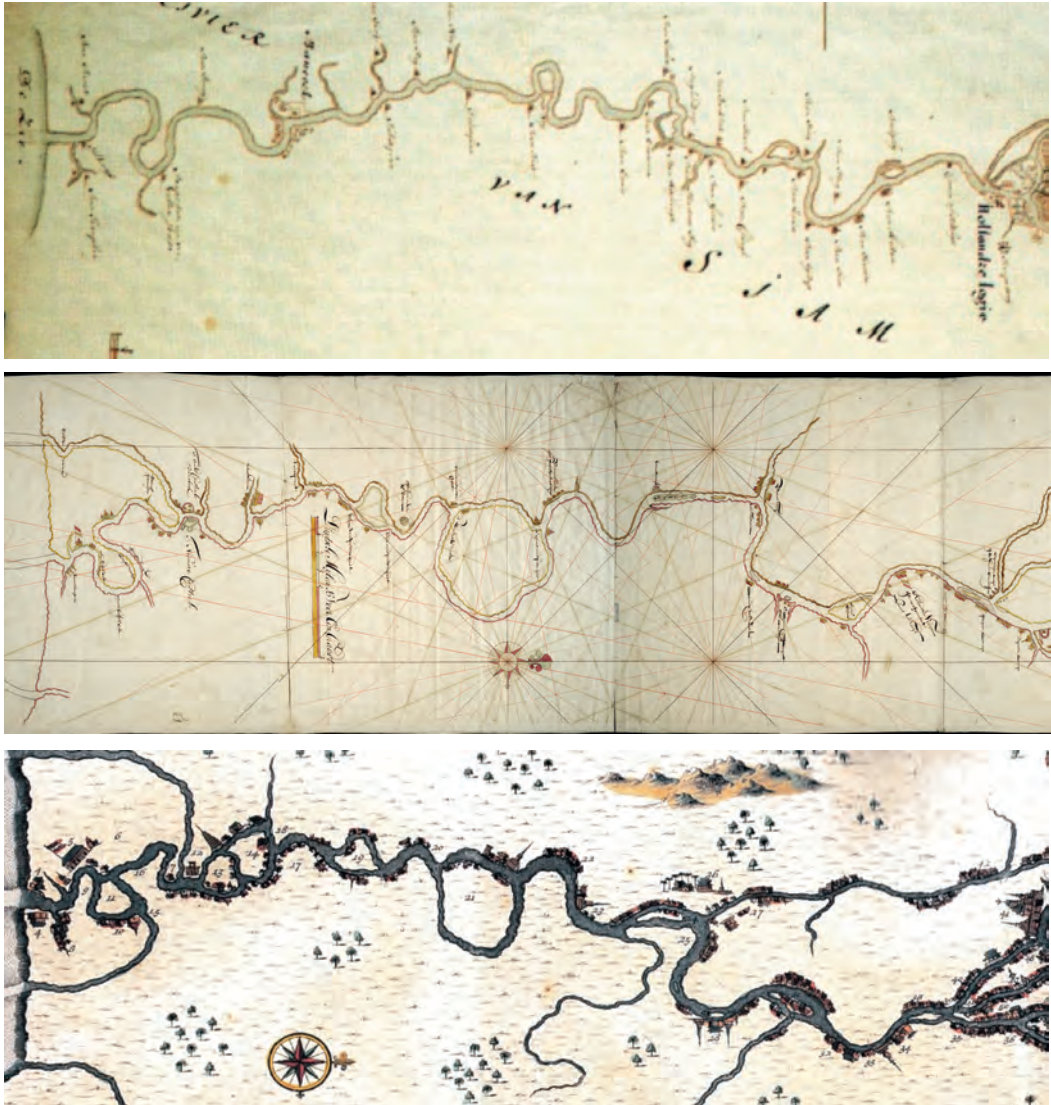


Figure 2. Above, Leupe 266; middle, Leupe 267; below, left side of VAL, each depicting the stretch between the mouth of the river and Ayutthaya.

garden.” Even the compass rose with eight segments is present in both maps east of the river.

While Leupe 267 shows a number of silhouette drawings of plants, houses and larger buildings along the sides of the river, this feature is much elaborated on VAL. An obvious difference between VAL and Leupe 267 is that on VAL the landscape is filled with indications of vegetation and an occasional range of mountains. This landscape, as will be argued later in this article, must have been inspired by a copy of an indigenous Siamese map that will be introduced in Section 3.

One of the most interesting differences between VAL and other contemporary maps of this part of the world is that on the former, instead of place names, Valentijn wrote numbers, beginning on the left side at the mouth of the Chaophraya River with number 1 (the western entrance to the Chaophraya River), and ending on the far right

with number 101. Beneath the map a register is printed in ten columns, listing an explanatory entry for each number. Almost always this register provides the name of a location, sometimes in Dutch, but more often in Thai in the way 17th century Dutchmen transcribed Thai words. Occasionally it lists an aspect of the landscape, such as a mountain pass or a waterfall.

This register has hitherto escaped the notice of historians, probably because on various small-size reproductions the cyphers were difficult to detect and the register was virtually illegible. However, as we shall see below, this register contains some interesting, sometimes even surprising bits of information. Table 1 has the first forty-one entries, relating to the left part of the map, deciphered and translated into English.

Table 1. Valentijn map, entries 1–41

	Original	Translation/Identification	Leupe 267 ^a
1	De Wester Rivier	The western river (Tha Chin River)	West revier
2	De Oost Rivier	The eastern river (the former Bang Hla River, now known as Khlong Dan, running from the Chaophraya to the Bang Pakong River)	
3	De Modder Bank	Mud bank	clearly drawn with three waterways
4	S'Konings Waght huys	King's guardhouses (drawn at both sides of the mouth of the river, these were possibly among the forts built during 1686-88 by Phetracha from Bangkok to the river mouth, as related by Desfarges)	
5	Comp ^s Pakhuys Amsterdam	VOC warehouse Amsterdam	clearly drawn, marked with Dutch flag
6	Een Stompe Piramide	A blunt tower (<i>prang?</i>)	stompe pieramijda
7	S'Konings Tolhuys	The King's toll house (shown on La Loubère's map).	
8	Bantiauw Pia	Ban Chaophaya	baantiampia
9	't Groot Buffels Velt	Large Buffalo Field	groot buffels velt [placed east of river]
10	Propeden	Phra Pradaeng	Prapendingh [slightly further north]

11	't Kleyne Buffels Velt en 't Nieuw gemaekte Gat	Small Buffalo Field and the newly made waterway (no contemporary map mentions the newly dug canal).	clijne buffels velt
12	't Fortres Banckok	Bangkok fortress (Leupe 267 shows also the new fortress, built in 1688 by the French)	T'oude Casteel Bankok
13	Talquan	Talat Khwan (Nonthaburi; Valentijn reverses the order with No. 14)	t'alatquiant
14	Talque	Talat Kaeo	talat kieww
15	Tabeck	Tabeck (drawn near the mouth of the Samrong Canal, not on any known map. Possibly Valentijn was guided here by the La Loubère map in the French edition, where the custom house is called Tabanque)	
16	de Fruyt-Thuynen	Fruit trees	
17	de Pegusche Campo	Peguan camp (Pak Kret)	
18	de Fruyt-Thuynen	Fruit trees	
19	't Kleyne Miskite gat	Small Mosquito Passage	klijn musquiten Gadt
20	Passer	Market place	Passeer onder de boom [market under the tree]
21	't Groot Miskite gat	Large Mosquito Passage	t'groot musquiten Gadt
22	Potte-Bakkers Dorp	Potters Village (Sam Khok)	Varaans ^b hoek ofte Pottebakkers dorp
23	Ban Frang	Ban Trang or Ban Sang (on La Loubère: Ban Tran)	Ban Trangh
24	't Lang Eyland	Long Island	t'lange Eijlandt
25	Radja kram	Ratchakhram (now a tambon, just north of the Bang Sai Arts and Crafts Center)	Radhiacram

26	Wat tipa	Wat Yi Pae (just west of Bang Sai Hospital)	
27	Ban Thracy	Ban(g) Sai ^c	Baantharij
28	S'Konings Pagood	King's Pagoda (Wat Chumphon Nikayaram, Bang Pa-In. Valentijn reverses the order with No. 29)	s'Coninx Pagoot ofte canoijen
29	S'Konings Zaal	King's Hall (Aisuriyathipat Maha Prasat at Bang Pa-In)	Coninx rust Zaal (King's resting hall)
30	't Chinesche Eyland	Chinese Island (Ko Phra)	Chinees Eijlant
31	Consen	Krasen (Bang Krasan, a tambon just south of Amphoe Bang Pa-In)	
32	'S Konings Tolhuys	King's toll-house	Siams tol huijs
33	'S Comp ^s Thuyn	Company's garden	de Hollandsche thuijn ofte Wat Pamsat
34	Wat Profaat	Wat Prot Sat	Wat Pamsat
35	De Peguse Campo	Peguan Camp	Peguse Campo
36	De Japanse Campo	Japanese Camp	Japanse Campo
37	Chineze Huijsen, en Arac- Branderyen	Chinese houses and burning (i.e., distilling) arrack	
38	'S Konings werf	King's Shipyard	
39	de Hoek van de vermoorde Makassaren	The corner of the murdered Macassars ^d	de gewesen Campo off den vmoorde macassare
40	de Makassaarse Campo	Macassar Camp (on La Loubère's map of Ayutthaya)	
41	'S Konings Goude Pagood	King's Golden Pagoda (Wat Chai Wattanaram)	d goude Pagoot

^a L=present on the Leupe 267 map; text means present on the map in this text.

^b "Varaan" means a monitor lizard, suggesting there was a place called Monitor Lizard Corner here.

^c During the 17th and early 18th century, the consonants ทร were still pronounced "thr."

^d Accused of plotting a rebellion, many Macassars were killed in September 1686.

The correlation between VAL and Leupe 267 shows that either Valentijn found Leupe 267 in the VOC map collection in Amsterdam,¹⁰ or the person who supplied Valentijn with this part of the composite map must have copied a map that was closely related to the one that ended up in the National Archives in The Hague as Leupe 267. No less than thirty-two items that are written on Leupe 267 found their way onto Valentijn's map and were written in its register. Most significant is No. 39, "the corner of the murdered Macassars," an item that was hitherto only found on Leupe 267.

Of the remaining nine items that are not on Leupe 267, Valentijn must have supplied some himself, such as the King's guardhouses at both sides of the mouth of the river. Some he may have gleaned from La Loubère's *Du royaume de Siam* that was published in 1691. Other items may well have come from descriptions of this stretch by earlier travelers, such as No. 7 (the King's toll house), Nos. 16 and 18 (the fruit trees).¹¹ But Nos. 26 and 31 (Wat Yi Pae and Consen/Krasan) as well as Nos. 37, 38 and 40 must have been provided by Valentijn's informant in Ayutthaya.

At No. 11 there is the intriguing information that the so-called Lat Pho canal near the village of Phra Pradaeng had recently been dug, shortening the first large loop of some nineteen kilometers in the Chaophraya River. The Thai Geographical Encyclopedia states that the digging of the Lat Pho Canal took place in 1722.¹² If this is true, the map with this information should have been sent to Valentijn between 1722 and 1726 when he wrote his opus magnum, during the time when at first Hendrik van der Burg and later Gregorius Hendrik Paagman were "opperhoofd" in the Dutch Lodge near Ayutthaya.

However, the date of the digging of this shortcut has been wrongly assigned to that year in Thai sources. The mistake goes back to Prince Damrong, who had found a reference dated Chulasakarat 1084 (1722/3 CE) on canal digging in the Royal Chronicles and assumed it referred to the Lat Pho canal. As Tanabe pointed out long ago, the description in the Chronicles relates to the Tret Noi canal, and anyway that date must be wrong.¹³ Therefore it remains unclear when exactly the Lat Pho canal was dug, and the information that it was "recently dug" cannot be used to determine when this information was sent to Valentijn.

¹⁰ Around 1700 the collection of VOC maps in Amsterdam was standardized and made into an atlas by Isaac de Graaf (the so-called "kaartenboek"). See G. Schilder, "Het cartografisch bedrijf van de VOC," in P. van Mil (ed.) *De VOC in de kaart gekeken, 1602-1799*, 's-Gravenhage: SDU uitgeverij, 1988, 32-5.

¹¹ La Loubère specifically mentions the existence of fruit trees near Bangkok and Talat Khwan, and they are drawn on the Courtaulin map.

¹² *Akkharanukrom Phumisat Thai*, Vol 3, 1248, as cited by Robert V. Hubbard, *The History of Inland Waterway Development in Thailand*, Part I: Canal Construction in the Chao Phraya River System, Central Thailand, Ann Arbor: Department of Geography and Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan, 1977, 25-6; See also Yoshikazu Takaya, *Agricultural Development of a Tropical Delta: A Study of the Chao Phraya Delta*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987, 186.

¹³ Shigeharu Tanabe, "Historical Geography of the Canal System in the Chao Phraya Delta from the Ayutthaya Period to the Fourth Reign of the Rattanakosin Dynasty," Kyoto: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Discussion Paper No. 95, 1977, 11-12.

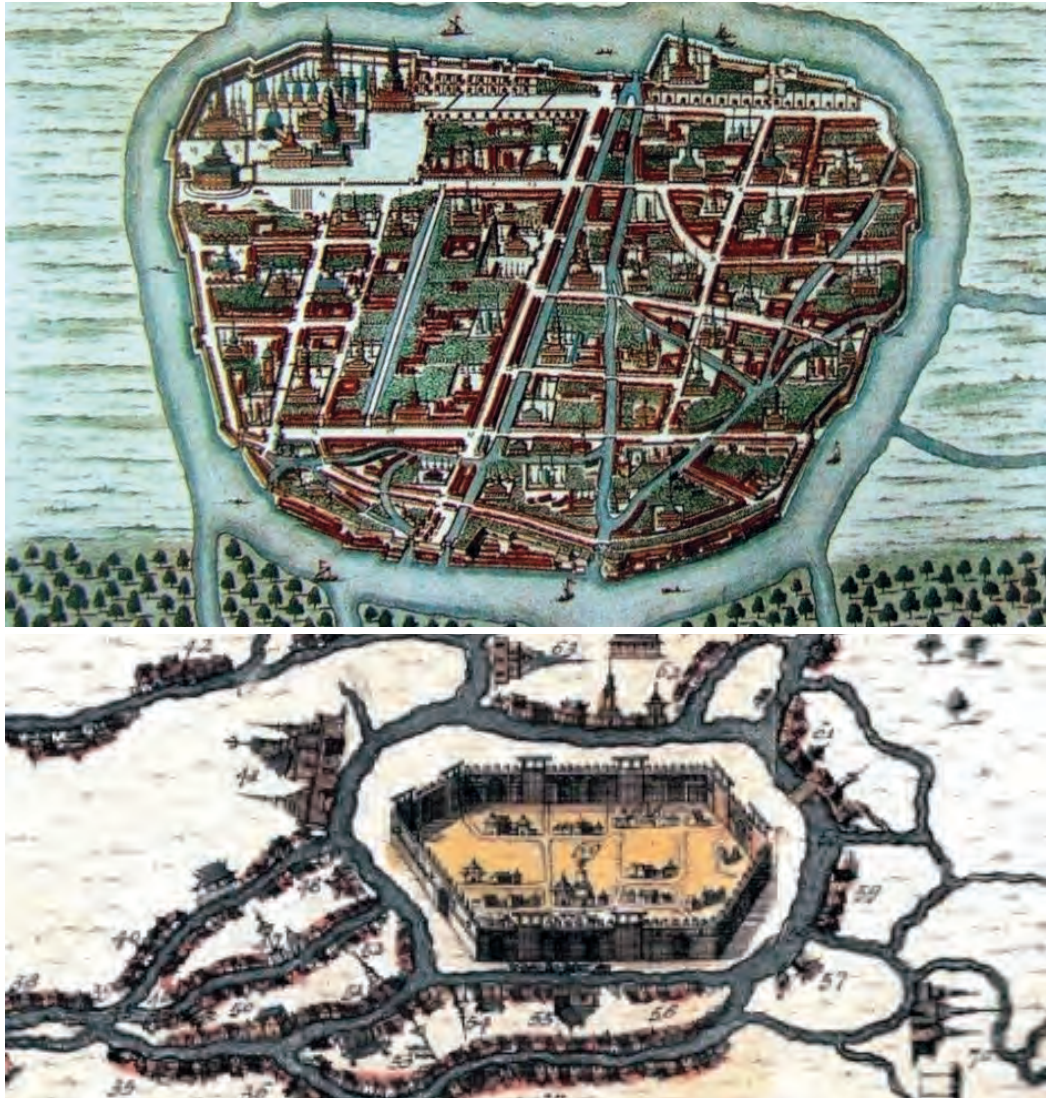


Figure 3. Above: Valentijn's copy of Vingboons map of Ayutthaya. Below: Detail of the central part of VAL, Ayutthaya and surroundings.

Section 2. Ayutthaya and surroundings

In his *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, opposite page 60 of the section dealing with Siam, Valentijn published a separate map of Ayutthaya. Although he does not mention his source, apparently he copied it from Vingboons' "Afbeldinge der Stadt *Iudiad* Hooft des Choonincrick *Siam*."¹⁴

The two illustrations in Figure 3 show that Valentijn was guided by the Vingboons map on the general shape, but changed the curvy city walls into a tall hexagon, and drew a number of fanciful "Oriental" entrance doors. Also, the street plan bears no

¹⁴ Martine Gosselink, *Vingboons tekent de wereld van de 17de eeuw*, Den Haag: Nationaal Archief, 2007, 132.

likeness to that on the Vingboons map or any other European depiction of Ayutthaya. It seems likely that Valentijn wanted to draw Ayutthaya's defense in a style similar to the depiction of the protective walls of Chiang Khan, Vientiane and Nakhon Ratchasima on the right side of his map (see Figure 4).

Just as on the left side of VAL, in the middle many locations around the city have been assigned with a number, each one leading to an entry in the register. In undertaking this deciphering I have often taken recourse to the work of Patrick Dumon, the creator of the interactive maps of Ayutthaya.¹⁵ As far as we could identify the list, an English translation of these entries is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Valentijn map, entries 42–80

	Original	Translation/Identification	Other maps ^a
42	Banklang	Ban Klang .	N
43	Wat hua `t pan	Wat Hua Taphan	N
44	War Pret	Wat Phraek (at Ban Phraek, on the Lopburi River; identified by PD)	N
45	Tay kouï	Tai Kou (PD suggests: ท้ายคู <i>thai khu</i> , "end of moat/canal," meaning the canal in No. 49)	N
46	de Makassaarse Campon	Macassar Settlement	
47	de Moorse tempel	Temple of the Moors	N
48	de Franse Campon	French Settlement	
49	Küt Zam	Khu Cham (คูจาม or Cham Canal, as identified by PD)	N
50	de portugesche Campon	Portuguese Settlement	
51	Wat May	Wat Mai (PD suggests Wat Mai Bang Kaja วัดใหม่บางกะจะ).	N
52	de Maleytsche Campo	Malay Settlement	
53	de Hollantsche Logie	Dutch lodge	
54	Wat Kuuk	Wat Khok (วัดโคก or the Monastery of the Mound, as identified by PD)	N
55	de Pagood van Groote Kagaal	Pagoda of the large Kagaal (Wat Phananchong, with a giant Buddha; the meaning of "Kagaal" is unclear).	
56	de Passer	The market	N

¹⁵ These can be found on Dumon's interactive map, see www.ayutthaya-history.com.

57	Wat Kokeüw	Wat Ko Kaeo (วัดเกาะแก้ว or the Monastery of the Crystal Island, opposite the southeast corner of the island, as identified by PD)	N
58	Pakkaüzan	Pak [Khlóng] Khao San (ปากคลองข้าวสาร or the Mouth of the Husked Rice Canal, identified by PD)	N
59	Wat Kloy	Wat Kluai	N
60	Pak zonsvat Düing	Pak Khlóng Wat Doem (identified by PD)	N
61	Düing pinjet	Thung Phaniat (ทุ่งเพี้ยยอด the Island on which the Elephant Kraal was situated)	N
62	Wat na pra meen	Wat Na Phra Men (วัดหน้าพระเมรุ the Monastery facing Mount Meru)	N
63	Sontay zwang	Sontay Zwang ^b (from the image, this is clearly the monument now known as Phukhaothong, the Golden Mount)	N
64	Wat Kock Pia	Wat Khok Phraya (วัดโคกพระยา the monastery of the Phraya Knoll)	N
65	Wat na meen	Wat Phraya Men (on Sra Bua Canal)	N
66	Wat Pu noont Jaksie	Wat Phra Non Chaksi (PD: just south of Singburi town)	N
67	Tioen Krat	Choeng Klat (PD: a village in Singburi Province)	N
68	S koes Palys	King's Palace	
69	Siri India	Sri Ayutthaya (Iudia, in Valentijn written as India, a common misspelling, possibly the engraver's fault)	
70	Tiau Pia Teü	[Wat] Chao Phraya Tai (now called Wat Yai Chai Mongkhon)	N
71	Wat Boet Hakam	(not identified)	N
72	Lewo	Lopburi	
73	Caüsan Royot	Khao Sam Yot (PD: mountain north-east of Lopburi)	N
74	la Rüa	Tha Ruea (“Boat Landing” on the Pasak River)	N

75	Copen nau	[Ban] Khok Manao (PD: a village on the Pasak River, just east of Tha Ruea)	N
76	Tarap	Tha Rap (“Flat Landing” in Ton Than village, Amphoe Sao Hai, just west of Saraburi town, on the Pasak River)	N
77	Tasaüw	[Ban] Tha Sao (PD: a village on the Pasak River)	N
78	Takam	Tha Kham (not identified, but the position suggests Kaeng Khoi, where the Pasak River bends northwards)	N
79	Prabad	Phrabad (Phra Phuttha Bat, a well-known pilgrimage site, known to 17th century Dutch traders).	
80	Pet Jaboen	Phetchabun (town on the Upper Pasak River)	N

^a N = not found on 17th century maps

^b “Sontay Zwang” perhaps comes from an older name. “Son” may be สวน *suan* garden, or even คลอง *khlong* canal (see no. 60 where khlong is rendered as “zon.”) “Tay” may be ท้าย *thai* behind or end; ไต้ *tai* below; or ชัย *chai*, victory, as Phukhaothong was probably a victory monument. “Zwang” may be: สวน *suan* garden; or สวรรค์ *sawan* heaven; orสว่าง *sawang* bright; or ไฉสวรรย์ *aisawan* ruler, as in Wat Phutthaisawn. Alternatively, Sontay Zwang may be a rendering of Saint Anges, the nearby French seminary.

This list of names contains some well-known locations, such as the residences of foreign communities, but there are also many places that are not shown on any of the contemporary maps of Ayutthaya and its surrounds. At the time Valentijn wrote his books more than twenty-five depictions of the city had been published,¹⁶ but when specific locations are mentioned, these usually showed some places within the city: a few palaces; monasteries and street names; as well as the location of various groups of foreigners beyond the city walls. In his treatment of Ayutthaya, VAL diverges from all these existing maps in three ways. In the first place, he drew the walls like nobody had before. Second, within the city he identified only the royal palace. More importantly, he located beyond Ayutthaya in all directions monasteries, villages and some prominent features that cannot be found on any other European map of that time.

Of the thirty-eight locations between No. 42 and No. 80, no less than twenty-eight items had never appeared on a 17th century European map. The person who supplied Valentijn with this information must have travelled widely outside the city, fairly accurately positioning a number of villages and monasteries. While the members of the Dutch trading office did make excursions, it is most unlikely that they systematically explored and mapped Ayutthaya's wider surroundings.

¹⁶ Thawatchai, *Krung Si' Ayutthaya nai Phaenthi Farang*, 112-25.

Another indication that the information is indigenous is the set from No. 74 to No. 80: here is a clear sequence moving northwards, prompted by somebody who knew the way along the Pasak River in detail, all the way up to Phetchabun, a town about 280 km north of Ayutthaya, beyond the reach of a Dutchman.

There are thus many names on the middle of VAL that were never mentioned in Dutch sources, yet they were transmitted to Valentijn by a Dutch informant. This suggests that Valentijn's informant had gained access to an indigenous map, which he copied together with a large number of Thai place names, transcribed in the way a Dutch person in the early 18th century wrote Thai words.

From No. 81 onwards a different sequence is apparent, suddenly the locations move in an eastern direction towards Nakhon Ratchasima, moving to a part of Mainland Southeast Asia that will be examined in Section 3.

Section 3. The right side of the map

Valentijn himself wrote about this part of his map:

I shall not bother with describing the other places that are situated further north, for the reader can see them clearly printed here with some mountains, habitations and villages with their Siamese names. At the same time is shown how the river Me Nam higher up north, originating from the inner lake of Tsjamay [Chiang Mai] in the north of Tartary (taking, some say, 15 or 16 days' travel above the borders of Siam) and thus like a broad stream passes the town Ayutthaya and runs further to the sea, where it rushes with great force, since in the upper reaches three large rivers having joined it.¹⁷

This statement shows that Valentijn thought he was supplied with a map of the upper reaches of the Chaophraya River.

While up to No. 83 the map may be regarded as at least partly reflecting the Dutch personal experience of the Siamese countryside, from No. 84 onward we enter what clearly was terra incognita to the Dutch.

¹⁷ *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, Vol. 3, Pt. 2, Book 6, Ch. 1, 62: "Ik zal my ook niet ophouden met de verdere plaatsen, hooger op om de Noord leggende, te beschryven, alsoo de Leser die klaar genoeg hier uitgedrukt siet, met dese en gene gebergten, of wel vlekken en dorpen met hare Siamse naamen, en tegelyk ook aangewesen, hoe de Rivier Me-nam al hooger om de N. uit het Binnen-Meir van Tsjamay, in 't N. na Tartaryen zyn oorsprong, zoo zommige willen wel 15 a 16 dag reisen boven de grensen van Siam neemt, en dus met een swaren stroom van 't N. na 't Z. langs de stad Judia, en zoo verder na de Zee toe loopt, en met een groot geweld daar in stort, na dat boven drie groote stroomen sig met den anderen vereenigd hebben."



Figure 4. The right side of VAL.

Table 3. Valentijn map, entries 81–101

	Original	Translation/Identification
81	Nam Tok	Namtok (PD: the waterfall น้ำตกเจ็ดสาวน้อย Nam Tok Chet Sao Noi, in Muak Lek District, Saraburi Province, on a trade route to the northeast; now a national park)
82	Pia Fuy	Phaya Fai (PD: an escarpment and pass in today's Pak Chong District, Saraburi Province)
83	Dansikiüw	Dan Sikhiu (ด่านสี่คิ้ว, a frontier post, 40 km west of Nakhon Ratchasima)
84	Sla	Perhaps สระ, <i>sa</i> , pond (perhaps Sa Chorakhe, crocodile pond," now in Amphoe Dan Khun Thot)
85	Coop sangrong	Khok Samrong (“Mound with wild almond trees,” name of a town in Lopburi Province, but also of a village just east of Khorat.)
86	Cürüs sema	Nakhon Ratchasima (นครราชสีมา Europeans misplaced it on their maps)
87	Pi May	Phimai (พิมาย, a town on the right bank of the Mun River)

88	Müang Fadit	Mueang Fa Daet (in Kalasin Province)
89	Müang Kük	[Wiang] Khuk (ເວີຍໂກກ; on the right bank of the Mekong River, just west of Nong Khai town)
90	Müang Saykaü	Mueang Sai Kaeo (Houai Sai, on the left bank of the Mekong opposite Chiang Khong)
91	Müang Hang Jay	Greater Mueang Han (Nong Han, the biggest natural lake in Isan, lies beside Sakon Nakhon; Nong Han Kumphawapi, lies to the west, below Udon; they are linked in legend as the greater and lesser Nong Han; near the latter is a town, now Amphoe Nong Han, just east of Udon; this appears on the Military Map (see below) on the route to Lanxang)
92	Müang Hang Noy	Lesser Mueang Han (see no. 91)
93	Müang Land Yangh	Mueang Lan Xang (Vientiane, until 1707 the capital of Lan Xang, situated on the left bank of the Mekong River)
94	Pinjet	Phaniat (elephant enclosure)
95	Müang Kseu	Mueang Sua (PD: an old name of Luang Prabang)
96	Müang Conmoang	Mueang Khammouane (Khammuan) (now Thakhek in the province of Khammouane, in Laos on the left bank of the Mekong, opposite Nakhon Phanom)
97	Müang Na	(unidentified)
98	Müang Taiw	Mueang Taiw (possibly the place indicated on the James Low map of 1824 with the word “Tháie”)
99	Müang Calele	(unidentified)
100	Müang Naküna Hüüt	Nakhon Wat (Angkor Wat)
101	Lipü	Li Phi (a waterfall on a branch of the Mekong River in Laos near the present Cambodian border)

Valentijn was possibly given an indigenous map, perhaps similar to the Military Map discussed below, showing the area to the east and northeast of Ayutthaya. Because he believed this showed the area to the north of Ayutthaya, he rotated the city and everything above it by 90 degrees anti-clockwise (see Figure 5). The scale is greatly

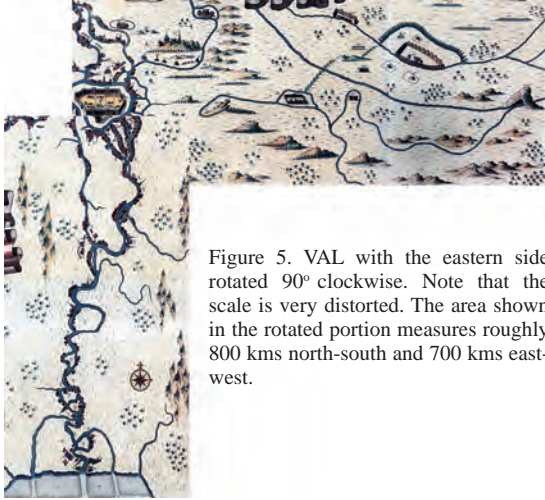


Figure 5. VAL with the eastern side rotated 90° clockwise. Note that the scale is very distorted. The area shown in the rotated portion measures roughly 800 kms north-south and 700 kms east-west.

compressed compared to that used on the river below Ayutthaya.

The division in the Chaophraya River, just below the scroll, is most likely at Chainat. The course of the rivers southward from there differs significantly from today. The main branch to the west descends from Chainat along the course of the Noi River. It then swerves eastward and then southward, reaching the northwest corner of Ayutthaya. The places shown, although marked close to Ayutthaya, are in fact in the upper part. No 44 Wat Pret

may be Wat (Phraya) Phraek, now in Sangkhabori, formerly known as Phraek Si Racha, a major border town in the Sukhothai and early Ayutthaya eras. No 67 Tien Krat and No. 66 Wat Pu noont Jaksie are clearly Choeng Klat and Wat Phra Non Chaksi, now in Singburi province, formerly important places along the Noi River which have declined since the main course of the river shifted to the Chaophraya's current channel.

The east branch descends from Chainat, probably along the current course of the Chaophraya, then swerves east towards Lopburi along two channels. Interestingly the southerly of these two channels, here shown as the most densely populated, has since disappeared without trace. It then descends south towards the northeast corner of the city along what is now called the Old Lopburi River. This map shows how much the course of the Chaophraya River has changed over the past three centuries.

In the middle of the right side of VAL lies the town Khorat or Nakhon Ratchasima (No. 86), a few buildings, surrounded by a square stockade with four gates. To the right of Khorat is the town of Phimai (No. 87), also a well-known location in the northeastern part of present-day Thailand.

All locations that could be identified from the right side of VAL lie in what is now northeastern Thailand and across the Mekong. Clearly depicted are the Rivers Mun and Chi, tributaries to the Mekong River. Between the Chi River and Mekong River lies No. 88 named Mueang Fa Daet (in present-day Kalasin Province).

Prominently on the far side of the Mekong River Valentijn drew a large city with a double line of defense and an elephant kraal. He recorded the name Lanxang, an old appellation of the city of Vientiane. Outside the city is an elephant-catching palisade (*phaniat*, No. 94) an essential feature of a major political center in early modern times.

Beyond the eastern bank of the Mekong River lies No. 95, which was identified as Mueang Sua, an old name for Luang Prabang,¹⁸ while No. 96 must be Mueang Khammouane opposite Nakhon Phanom, now known as Thakhek.¹⁹ The identification

¹⁸ Maha Sila Viravong, *History of Laos*, New York: Paragon Book reprint, 1964, 25; Peter and Sanda Simms, *The Kingdoms of Laos: Six Hundred Years of History*, Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999, 15.

¹⁹ I thank Asger Mollerup for pointing out that this place was called Khammouane by the Pavie mission.

of Mueang Na (No. 97) is tentative; it must be found across the Mekong River. No. 98, “Tháie,” found on the James Low map of 1824, is a place on the east bank of the Mekong, between “Cheúng Teng and “Cheúng Lakhan,” north of the kingdom of Champassac.²⁰ Mueang Calele could not be identified; perhaps an informant said there were เมืองข่าแหละ, *mueang kha lae lae*, many settlements of Kha (non-Tai) people. Naküna Hüüt must be Nakhon Wat, the Thai rendering of Angkor Wat. The final item, No. 101 refers to the Li Phi waterfall, presently near the border between Laos and Cambodia.

It has been shown the main region depicted on the right-hand side of VAL brings us hundreds of kilometers inside what we now call Thailand’s northeast, or Isan, and beyond, and not, as Valentijn assumed, to the upper reaches of the Chaophraya River. Since the course of the Chaophraya, Lopburi and Pasak Rivers did not match up with the Chi and Mun Rivers, I assume that Valentijn took recourse to a subterfuge: he drew a prominent scroll that obscured the upper reaches of the Pasak, Chi, and Mekong Rivers, and just above the scroll showed how they all could have flown together to become the upper reaches of the Chaophraya.

The right side of VAL depicts a region that was totally unknown to Europeans. Hence up to the late 19th century it was omitted from all European maps. None of the VOC traders had ever crossed the Dong Phaya Fai pass in order to reach the Sikhiu frontier post, or to go on to the towns of Phimai and Fa Daet. It is true that the name Khorat was sometimes recorded as a place lying inland, but Europeans did not know where it was. Some placed it on the Pasak River,²¹ another drew it on the Bang Pakong River.²² It was only as late as the end of the 19th century, with the travels of Aymonier and the cadastral triangulation by McCarthy, that the real extent of Siam’s northeast became clear to Europeans.²³ Nevertheless, 150 years before Europeans explored the region, Valentijn had produced a map where a number of northeastern towns are situated in the right order from west to east and where the Mun and Chi Rivers are shown to connect up to the Mekong.

Hitherto it has been established that the left side of VAL is based on Dutch maps and it was shown that the middle of VAL differed from all contemporary European maps. It was suggested that there might have been an indigenous map of Ayutthaya’s surroundings, and that Valentijn’s Dutch informant had made a copy, transcribing many Thai words. The examination of the right side of VAL leads to the conviction that at least for this part, Valentijn’s information must have been derived from an indigenous Siamese map. And indeed, there exists a printed version of an indigenous map covering the northeastern part of present-day Thailand. A coloured-in version

²⁰ See the reproduction of the map in Henry Ginsburg, *Thai Art and Culture: Historic Manuscripts from Western Collections*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000, 37.

²¹ John Crawfurd, *Journal of an Embassy to the Courts of Siam and Cochin China*, Singapore, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987 [reprint of the 1828 edition], opposite 1.

²² Printed in Ginsburg, *Thai Art and Culture*, 43.

²³ Étienne Aymonier, *Voyage dans le Laos*, 2 Vols, Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1895–1897; James McCarthy, *Surveying and Exploring in Siam*, London: John Murray, 1900.



Figure 6. The coloured version of the Military Map ascribed to King Ramathibodi I.

was published in 2004 and is here reproduced (see Figure 6).²⁴ Its legend reads *Phaenthi yutthasat khrang ratchakan khong Phrabatsomdetphra Ramathibodi thi nueng*, "Military map from the reign of King Ramathibodi I." Hereafter this map shall be referred to as the "Military Map."

Sternstein dated the map (of which he located six copies in the Survey Department, three of them coloured) as "c. 19th century based on original from c. late 18th century."²⁵ We see on the Military Map far to the left at the bottom the city of Ayutthaya, to the right the Mekong River, central are the Mun and Chi Rivers. Far to the left, at the bottom we see Ayutthaya. The map covers thus the whole stretch of the northeast.

In 1970 Victor Kennedy noted in his detailed study of the Military Map that it had

²⁴ Santanee Phasuk and Philip Stott, *Royal Siamese Maps. War and Trade in Nineteenth Century Thailand*, Bangkok: River Books, 2004, 51.

²⁵ Larry Sternstein, "A Catalogue of Maps of Thailand in the Museum of the Royal Thai Survey Department, Bangkok," *Journal of the Siam Society*, 56, 1, 1968, 63.

much in common with VAL.²⁶ In fact the list of similarities exceeds what Kennedy observed.

1. The orientation is similar.
2. In both maps the Mun and Chi Rivers meet up and join the Mekong River.
3. The depiction of Nakhon Ratchasima and Vientiane as major quadrangles are not unlike their representation on the Military Map.
4. The distribution of landscape items, plants and mountains, typical features of indigenous Siamese maps, are similar.
5. The depiction of the mountain over the Lphi waterfall is similar to the way various mountains are drawn on the Military Map.
6. The ordering of towns all along the major trade routes is identical.
7. The appearance of some towns on the right side of VAL, such as Mueang Fa Daet with its castellated walls, are not found on Dutch maps. They reflect indigenous cartographic traditions.
8. On the Military Map lines indicate land routes, complete with the information how long it will take to march each stretch. Many of the relatively few items on the right side of VAL are places on these land routes.

Kennedy explained the remarkable similarities between VAL and the Military Map by assuming that in the early 18th century Europeans must have known of the location of places like Sikhiu, Khorat, Phimai, Mueang Fa Daet, Vientiane and six towns in upper Laos. As we have noted above, this was clearly not the case.²⁷

Kennedy also assumed that the name Ramathibodi I referred to King Phra Phutthayotfa (r. 1782–1809). While it is true that on 11 November 1916 King Vajiravudh proclaimed this name to be the official Thai designation of the first king of the Chakri dynasty,²⁸ like some of his other proclamations, the new name was not widely accepted. Moreover, after a careful analysis of the Military Map, Kennedy came to the conclusion that it was in no way “even a partial coverage of either Rama I’s personal campaigns or the campaigns during his reign.”²⁹ Apparently, Kennedy overlooked the fact that the name Ramathibodi was already a well-established designation of some Ayutthayan kings. Thai historians knew that from 1351 to 1369 Ramathibodi I ruled Ayutthaya. Naturally, this does not mean that the Military Map dates from the early 14th century. The reference may simply be understood as indicating a venerable historical background. Moreover, Kennedy failed to take into account that the Military Map was not drawn from a Bangkok perspective, but that all the routes were drawn from Ayutthaya, the city that until 1767 was the capital city of Siam.

²⁶ Victor Kennedy, “An Indigenous Early Nineteenth Century Map of Central and Northeast Thailand,” in Tej Bunnag and Michael Smithies (eds.), *In Memoriam Phya Anuman Rajadhon*, Bangkok: The Siam Society, 1970, 315-48.

²⁷ Kennedy, “An Indigenous Early Nineteenth Century Map,” 320-1.

²⁸ Walter F. Vella, *Chaiyo!; King Vajiravudh and the Development of Thai Nationalism*, Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1978, 136-7.

²⁹ Kennedy, “An Indigenous Early Nineteenth Century Map,” 348.

The correlation between VAL and the Military Map indicates that there existed a precursor of the Military Map at the time that Valentijn collected information for *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*.

In 1996, a remarkable set of seventeen hand-drawn maps were discovered in a remote part of the Grand Palace in Bangkok. Eight years later, a well-researched analysis of these rare objects was published by Santanee Phasuk and Philip Stott.³⁰

On one of the seventeen Royal Maps the upper part of what is now northeastern Thailand is depicted, and the authors noted that it showed a remarkable similarity to the Military Map. A clear correlation is shown by juxtaposing a section of the Royal Map of upper Isan with the same area depicted on the Military Map. From Figure 7 it is clear that the Military Map and the map of the upper part of the northeast are part of the same map-making tradition. The Royal Map appears more authentic, particularly in the way fortified towns are drawn with crenelated walls, the customs post is indicated with the three poles of the gateway, and the way lesser towns are drawn.



Figure 7. Left, a segment of the Military Map and right the corresponding segment of the ninth of the recently discovered Royal Maps (Santanee and Stott, *Royal Siamese Maps*, 133).

Most importantly, on both the Military Map and the ninth of the Royal Maps roads are depicted as lines, with distances marked in days of travel. These travel distances were essential pieces of information for planning a major military exploit. With this information, an army could be spread over the landscape, each section taking a different route towards the adversary, the central authority being able to determine a moment of departure for each troop, so that the various parts would arrive at their destination at approximately the same time.

Particularly intriguing is No.101, near the right edge of VAL. The name Li Phi refers to cataracts on a western branch of the Mekong in present-day southern Laos, also known in Thailand as Somphamit waterfalls. On VAL these are shown as a river passing under a mountain. This can only be understood by studying the way that Liph is depicted on the so-called "ethnographic" map, No. 13 of the Royal Siamese Maps (Figure 8).³¹ There map the artist attempts to show that the right branch of the river cascades down over mighty rocks. After having completed that scene, the rock was depicted in such a way that it would come into conflict with the course of the wider left branch. He decided to draw the main course in such a way that the observer would deduct that the rock merely obscured a small stretch of the left branch, an elegant, if unusual solution.

³⁰ Santanee and Stott, *Royal Siamese Maps*.

³¹ Santanee and Stott, *Royal Siamese Maps*, 157, 161.

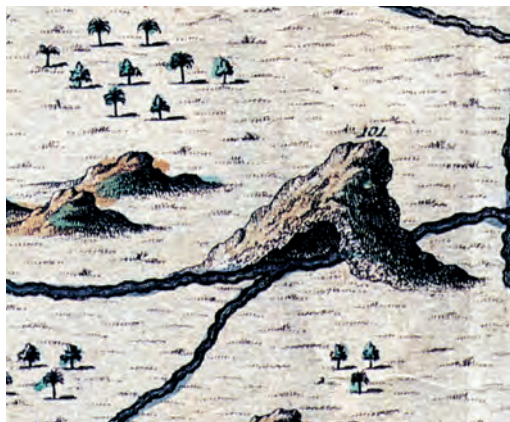


Figure 8. Li Phi falls on the Royal Maps (left) and VAL (right)



Figure 9. Phaya Fai escarpment on VAL; depiction of hills on Royal Maps



Figure 10. Buildings at Buddha's Footprint, Saraburi, on VAL and on a 19th-century mural

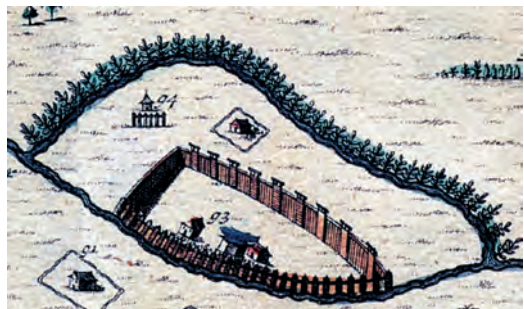


Figure 11. Vientiane on VAL and from an 18th-century plan

Looking at Li Phi in VAL, it is clear that the two maps must be related, even though in a roundabout way. A person unfamiliar with the traditional Thai drawings of various features in the landscape may easily misunderstand the drawing and deduct that the larger branch actually passed under a mountain. This is what Valentijn and his engraver seem to have done.

This is one of several indications that the Dutch had seen an indigenous map drawn in a similar style to the Royal Maps. The depiction of the escarpment of Phraya Fai (No. 82) not only captures the distinctive landscape but also uses the same distinctive style of illustration (Figure 9). The depiction of the cluster of buildings at the Buddha's Footprint in Saraburi (No 79) captures the distinctive shape of the *mondop* over the Footprint (Figure 10). The rendering of Vientiane shows the layout of the walls and rivers rather accurately (Figure 11).

It is thus clear that not only the Military Map, and map No. 9 of the Royal Siamese Maps must have had precursors that in the very beginning of the 18th century were available to Valentijn's informant, but also map No. 13 must have had a fore-runner going back to that time.

Some coincidences

By a curious coincidence, the problem of getting a large army to reach an enemy city is for the first time described in detail in the account of the reign of Ramathibodi I in the Royal Chronicles. The son of Ramathibodi I, Prince Ramesuan, was sent with an army of 5000 men to defeat the Cambodians. The first Siamese troops arrived late in the evening at the "city of Cambodia."³² The Cambodian defenders, noting that their opponents were fatigued and that they had not yet assembled their army, decided to attack. The Siamese vanguard, not having had time to establish a stockade, was routed and, fleeing back, collided with the main army; and the royal honour was disgraced by the inhabitants of Cambodia. Hearing of his son's plight, the Siamese king then asked his older brother Borommaracha to go and assist his nephew, Ramesuan. Borommaracha raised an army,³³ hurried to the scene, and was victorious. He returned with considerable quantities of rice, and a large number of Cambodian inhabitants were forcibly removed to Ayutthaya.³⁴

It is not clear where the battle took place, but we may be sure that "the city of Cambodia" does not refer to Angkor, for Angkor was besieged by the Siamese for the first time in the 15th century. The battle of Ramesuan and his uncle is likely to have taken place along the Chanthaburi-Chonburi-Khorat frontier, where various battles between the Siamese and the Cambodians took place during the late 13th century and throughout the 14th century.³⁵

After Ramathibodi I died, probably in 1369, Ramesuan was chosen to succeed, but not long after he made way for his uncle Borommaracha, whose reign is marked by a series of military exploits in areas north of Ayutthaya.

The second coincidence is that the same Borommaracha sent an envoy to the Chinese emperor, and the *Ming Shi-lu* recorded on 10 February 1374 that the envoy

³² เมืองกรุงกัมพูชาธิบดี เพลาพลบคำ

³³ According to the British Museum Version the army went in boats (ทับเรือ).

³⁴ R. D. Cushman, *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, Bangkok: The Siam Society, 2000, 11.

³⁵ L. P. Briggs, *The Ancient Khmer Empire*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, N.S. Vol. 41, Pt. 1, Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1951, 257. The list of sixteen towns that paid allegiance to Ramathibodi I does not include Khorat.

of “the king of the country of Siam (Hu), presented a gold memorial of felicitation for the coming New Year’s Day, offering tribute of local products *and presented a map of their country.*” (my emphasis)³⁶ This must be the earliest reference to Siamese map-making. I very much doubt that this map, presented to the Emperor, has been preserved. At least it establishes, however, that as early as the 14th century a map-making tradition existed.

Conclusions

At the end of the 17th century when Valentijn collected information for his monumental work, the Dutch in Ayutthaya supplied him with a map especially created for the occasion. All the details that were drawn on the left side and the middle were based on personal experience. For the right part they had recourse to a forerunner of what I have called the Military Map. The Dutch engraver who prepared the fold-out in Valentijn’s *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indiën* took over some of the indigenous features, such as the stockades and the way a mountain was shown over the Lphi waterfall. Also, the river system of the northeast formed a guide and is still recognisable, even when it was not reproduced faithfully.

Since the course of the Chaophraya, Lopburi and Pasak Rivers did not match the version of the indigenous military map sent to him, Valentijn decided to link the easternmost Pasak River with all waterways on his copy of the Military Map. By drawing a massive scroll over VAL he created the impression that behind the scroll and upwards, just beyond VAL’s upper borderline, the Pasak River connected with the Mekong and the Chi, thus validating the title.

In essence the military map of Figure 6 covers the same region that I have noted for the right half of VAL. More important, the orientation is the same. In addition, the same place names such as Mueang Fa Daet, Nakhon Ratchasima and Phimai are shown as well as the fact that Mun and Chi Rivers meet up and empty into the Mekong River.

I did not follow Kennedy’s assumption that the person who copied the name Ramathibodi I meant the first king of the Chakri Dynasty. That name had long been in use to indicate Chao Uthong, the ruler who, at an auspicious moment in 1351, moved the capital Ayutthaya westwards to its current location. The congruence between the right side of VAL and the Military Map strongly suggests that at the very beginning of the 18th century a precursor to the Military Map was shown to the Dutch. This means that the indigenous tradition of making military maps is older than hitherto assumed.

Finally, the use of the name Ramathibodi I may not be a device to claim an early date but rather a remarkable instance of a record that was copied numerous times, but always retained the label of its origin.

³⁶ Geoff Wade, translator, *Southeast Asia in the Ming Shi-lu: an open access resource*, Singapore: Asia Research Institute and the Singapore E-Press, National University of Singapore, document 603, accessed December 28, 2016.