

Bhawan's study demonstrates that doing an archival study is like interviewing. The answers one gets depend highly on the questions and the perspective of the researcher. She has looked differently to more or less the same sources as others did before her. The result is a study that cannot be disregarded by anyone who has a serious interest in the history of Ayutthaya. Its importance goes far beyond Dutch–Thai relations. Her sources are so close to reality that she could write a book that sometimes has the character of an ethnographic study.

Han ten Brummelhuis

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*A Traveler in Siam in the Year 1655: Extracts from the Journal of Gijsbert Heeck*. Translated and introduced by Barend Jan Terwiel, transcribed from the handwritten Dutch manuscript by Renée Hoogenraad. Chiang Mai, Silkworm Books, 2008, v+124 pp., pb, illus.

The history of Thailand during the Ayutthaya period (c. 1350–1767) is known for the paucity of contemporary indigenous written sources. Historians are often obliged to consult foreign, especially Western, records in which the kingdom of Ayutthaya was known as Siam. Generally consulted, because they are already published and translated into English and/or Thai, are the accounts by French missionaries and diplomats. In recent years, a few more European source publications have appeared, such as the collection of writings by the Dutch merchant Jeremias van Vliet (2005), and the records of the English East India Company in Siam (2007). Among the Western sources, Dutch records are probably the most extensive, but still very much underexplored and less accessible except to a limited number of researchers who read Dutch. To improve the situation, Dutch and Thai scholars have combined forces to make Dutch historical texts accessible to a broader public. The volume under review is the first in the series of source publications by the Editorial Committee for VOC Texts about Siam. Barend Jan Terwiel, one member of the committee, undertook the task to translate and introduce the journal of Gijbert Heeck.

Gijsbert Heeck was a medical attendant in the service of the VOC (the Dutch East India Company), which operated in the kingdom of Ayutthaya from 1604 to 1765. He originally wrote this journal during his two-month visit to Ayutthaya in 1655. The introduction by Terwiel explains the discovery of the manuscript. The text was first published in 1910–1911 in its original language, with many omissions. The version under review presents the first publication of the full text, both in original Dutch and in English translation.

The journal has two levels. Firstly, it is an account of what Heeck observed each day in Siam. Secondly, the author expands his story by adding some information and assumptions with reference to his previous knowledge. Heeck's powers of observation and representation give a vivid picture of seventeenth century Siam.

In the introduction to the book, Terwiel points out the value of Heeck's journal for Thai history in several areas: foreign relations of Siam regarding the Dutch and the Portuguese; historical geography of the lower Chao Phraya River; gender studies; Dutch settlements and technology transfer in Siam; and social and cultural life of Ayutthaya. But Terwiel also reminds the readers of the limitation of Heeck's powers of observation. The journal betrays its author's lack of understanding or appreciation in particular when it concerns the indigenous court and religious rituals and beliefs. While the Siamese King (Prasatthong) is portrayed as

despotic and cruel, Buddhist monks are called "disciples of Satan". (p. 42) Still, Siam's material wealth, such as expressed in the construction of temples, managed to impress the Dutchman. It is typical for European observers of Asia in Heeck's time to refer to their superiority based on their adherence to Christianity, but often to be awed by the material prosperity of the East. After all, one must also bear in mind that Heeck's intolerance was not directed only at some habits of the Siamese, but is also shown in his harsh judgment of his colleague Joost Schouten, who was executed in Batavia for having committed sodomy, an act considered as offending God.

The journal provides some information on Siam's foreign trade policy (including bans of export of wood and rice), and more extensively on the microeconomics (petty trade) of the kingdom. The author records the practice of various professions in the region between the capital city and the mouth of the Chao Phraya River: farming, potting, woodcutting, boatbuilding, the cultivation of fruit plantations, etc.

Heeck's journal is very informative if one wants to study the state of relations between different groups in Siamese society. It suggests several levels of unequal and exploitative relationships between the king and his subjects, between the court elite and commoners, between the Dutch Company and the Siamese court, and between VOC European employees and their indigenous female partners. Having related

an act of open hostility between the Dutch and the Portuguese at the river mouth in the beginning of his journal, Heeck then describes the actual relations between the Dutch and the Portuguese living in Ayutthaya as a “Machiavellian friendship”. (p. 61)

This translation of Gijsbert Heeck’s journal has been executed with great care and accuracy. Baas Terwiel has done terrific work in interpreting and identifying Dutch corruption of Thai words. The VOC maps and illustrations reproduced here are of good quality and very useful. This book and the above-mentioned recent publications on this topic will help broaden new horizons in the study of Ayutthayan history. It is also valuable for those who are interested in historical European perceptions of the East, *inter alia*. We look forward to reading the next book in this series, the account of another VOC employee, Cornelis van Nijenrode, from the year 1621.

Bhawan Ruangsilp

Anthony Farrington and Dhiravat na Pombejra, eds, *The English Factory in Siam 1612–1685*, 2 vols. London, British Library, 2007, 1,439 pp.

Almost a century ago, as part of Prince Damrong’s project to give Siam a western-style national history based on source materials, five volumes of selected seventeenth-century records copied from western archives were printed by the Wachirayan Library in both English and Thai. For some reason, the selection was rather over-weighted with documents on the English East India Company (EIC), and the collection has since been a major source for studies on early relations between England and Siam. In this new publication, Anthony Farrington, scholar and archivist, has taken the EIC documents from the Wachirayan collection and added another two hundred sources. Some of the additions are complete documents, while many others are extracts which refer to Siam and the EIC. Most of these additions come from the India Office Records. A few are from other collections in the British Library, from the Records of Fort St George (Madras), from published anthologies such as Purchas and Hakluyt, and from the British Public Record Office. The editors state, ‘The aim of the present collection has been to trace all surviving material on the English factory in Siam and to present it, as far as possible, in its original form.’ The 759 documents, running to 1,300 pages, must be an exhaustive compilation of seventeenth-