



Illustration 1. Siamese royal vessel with rowers. Jan Luyken, Aart Dircksz Oossaan, 1687.

Letter from the Phrakhlang on behalf of King Somdet Phrachao Sua of Siam (r. 1703-1709) to the Supreme Government in Batavia, circa March 1703, and the answer from Batavia, 27 August 1703

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1 Introduction

Dhiravat na Pombejra, “Letter from the Phrakhlang on behalf of King Somdet Phrachao Sua of Siam (r. 1703-1709) to the Supreme Government in Batavia, circa March 1703, and the answer from Batavia, 27 August 1703”. In: *Harta Karun. Hidden Treasures on Indonesian and Asian-European History from the VOC Archives in Jakarta*, document 20. Jakarta: Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2016.

BY DHIRAVAT NA POMBEJRA

The Chaophraya Phrakhlang’s letter of 1703 to Governor-General Van Outhoorn and Council on behalf of Somdet Phrachao Sua, King of Siam, was written when the king had only very recently acceded to the throne. The minister still refers to the previous king’s funeral arrangements. King Sua (r. 1703-1709) was the eldest son of King Phetracha (r. 1688-1703) and before his accession had been Prince of the Front Palace (*chao wang na*). Though Siamese chronicle tradition¹ would have it that he was an unacknowledged son of King Narai (r. 1656-1688), there is no solid evidence to support this conjecture. He was later to cement his royal power after ruthlessly eliminating his half-brother Chao Phra Khwan and several other leading courtier-officials.² The letter dates from a time of mutual dissatisfaction between the

VOC and the Siamese court. After the 1688 Siamese “revolution” had overthrown King Narai and ushered in a new dynasty, things had looked promising for the Dutch. In December 1688, they had signed a new treaty with King Phetracha which reiterated all the VOC’s rights in Siam as enshrined in the previous VOC-Siam Treaty of August 1664, including “free trade” in Siam, an export monopoly on deerskins, and extra-territorial rights. Furthermore, it had confirmed the Company’s export monopoly on tin bought at Siam’s southern port town of Ligor (Nakhon Si Thammarat), initially granted in 1671.³ Much of this letter concerns discussions around and about the renewal of the 1688 treaty, now that a new monarch had come to the throne. The Dutch hoped to secure better trading terms, but the Siamese court was insisting on the old treaty conditions, formally re-endorsed by the Phrakhlang.

Dutch disaffection with their trade and position in Siam had set in soon after 1688, climaxing during King Sua’s reign. Around the time of this letter the VOC’s major problems in Siam concerned their trade in sappan wood, tin and textiles – as well as King Sua’s suspicious attitude towards the Dutch. In 1705 Gideon Tant, who served as *opperhoofd* (-head of mission) in Ayutthaya between 1699 and 1703, analyzed the obstacles to the company’s trade in detail.⁴ In spite of the treaty clause allowing them “free trade” in the Kingdom of

¹ Richard D. Cushman (tr.) and David K. Wyatt (ed.), *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*. Bangkok: The Siam Society, 2000, pp. 300-301.

² Nationaal Archief, Den Haag. VOC 1691, fols. 61-72, “Relaas van ‘t voorgevallene bij de ziekte en overlijden van den Siamse koninck Phra Trong Tham genaamt” by Arnout Cleur, c. 1703-1704. See also 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. 173-176.

³ George Vinal Smith, *The Dutch in Seventeenth-Century Thailand*. De Kalb: Northern Illinois University, 1977, p. 45; Han ten Brummelhuis, *Merchant, Courtier and Diplomat: A History of the Contacts between the Netherlands and Thailand*. Lochem-Gent: De Tijdstroom, 1987, pp. 40-41.

⁴ NA, VOC 1711, fols. 1-20, “Berigt” on the Company’s trade in Siam by Gideon Tant, 20 March 1705.



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Illustration 2. Mural from Ayutthaya period showing early foreign visitors.

Siam, the Dutch were forbidden from buying certain goods from private merchants. Hence one of the most important items for VOC (or just “their”) trade in Siam, the dye wood sappan, could only be bought from the royal warehouses at high prices. Concerning the supposed VOC export monopoly of tin from Ligor, Tant discovered to his dismay that a discrepancy in the texts of the 1688 Treaty led to the Dutch receiving far less tin than they expected, much of it going to the King of Siam instead. This was because in the Dutch version of the treaty, the VOC was to be allowed to export all the tin in Ligor except for what the King of Siam might wish to use for his own activities. The Siamese language version, however, stipulated that “all the tin” in Ligor “belonged to the king and may only be traded by His Majesty’s servants”.⁵ The misunderstanding most probably stemmed from the treaty not clarifying that the Siamese

kings claimed the right to receive tin from Ligor as tribute tax (*suai*). The Dutch regularly supplied Indian textiles to the Siamese market, usually printed or “painted” cotton cloth from the Coromandel Coast, Bengal and Gujarat. The persistent problem of the textile trade in Siam, however, was the Siamese crown’s insistence on pricing all the items they bought, even to the extent of buying cloth from the VOC at prices lower than what the Dutch had actually paid for them in India. Any unsold cloth was seized by the crown, making the trade a virtual royal monopoly.⁶ The Phrakhleng asks Batavia to replace the VOC *opperhoofd* Gideon Tant with a more suitable person. Tant was characterized as “a person inimical to the path of mutual friendship and ancient custom”. The minister had become exasperated by the Dutchman’s efforts to obtain a royal audience for the purposes of renewing and renegotiating the Dutch-Siamese

⁵ Ten Brummelhuis, *Merchant*, p. 45.

⁶ Ten Brummelhuis, *Merchant*, p. 45; Bhawan, *Dutch East India Company Merchants*, p. 177.



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treaty. In sharp contrast to the Company's "golden age" in Ayutthaya during King Narai's reign (1657-1688), when its servants acted as courtiers at the Siamese court, access to the king was now circumscribed by court protocol. In this letter, the Phrakhlang maintained that the precedent cited by Tant dated from a time when there was a crisis caused by French aggression in Siam, leading the king (Phetracha) to summon both Okluang Aphai Wari (Joannes Keyts) and Okluang Wisit Sakhon (Pieter van den Hoorn) to court in late 1688 to renew the 1664 Treaty. It was therefore against custom to request an audience with the monarch – the Phrakhlang was maintaining that all communication with His Majesty had to go through him. He included in this missive a strong attack on Tant's competence and integrity, virtually accusing him of corrupt trading practices.

Although Gideon Tant left for Japan in July 1703 to assume the position of *opperhoofd* at Deshima and was replaced by Arnout Cleur, Dutch conflicts with the Siamese royal court were to be further exacerbated by the Siamese court's protocols, leading to the Dutch closing down their Siam factory. Protocol was again at the heart of the conflict. A diplomatic incident occurred in 1705 when the Dutch commissioner Joan van Velsen was snubbed by King Süa's court. The Siamese were offended that the Governor-General had not replied to the king's previous letter, and King Süa made his displeasure clear. Van Velsen was intimidated, his every request refused, and in the end he was not even granted a royal audience. As a final insult, the two Persian horses brought by Van Velsen as Batavia's gifts to the king were taken into the Royal Palace for ten days, then returned to the Dutch in a miserable condition. The VOC had little choice but to leave Ayutthaya, although

it was not a total withdrawal. An employee was left in residence at the Company lodge, and another one was detailed to look after the Company's warehouse "Amsterdam".⁷

The Phrakhlang refers more than once in this letter to the relationship between the King of Siam with the "Prince of Orange". This was, on the Siamese side, no mere formality. The Ayutthayan-court had always stressed the importance of direct correspondence with the Princes of Orange (the "King of Holland"), or failing that a bilateral relationship between the two rulers. The Dutch Republic seems to have been an alien concept. Yet all the while Ayutthaya maintained a steady diplomatic contact with Batavia because the Governor-General was seen as a ruler in his own right as well as being in charge of VOC's affairs in Asia.⁸

The court of King Süa, like that of King Phetracha before it, saw the Dutch East India Company as purveyors of luxury goods (notably Indian textiles), buyers of merchandise from the royal warehouses and finally as facilitators in the kings' quest for quality Javanese horses. Thus, even allowing for King Süa's wary attitude towards Europeans and the rise of Chinese influence at the court, there was always a place for the VOC to occupy in the trading world of Ayutthaya. But for the Dutch matters were not so clear. The perennial dilemma of the VOC in its last half century or so in Ayutthaya was whether to leave this troublesome post, or to stay on despite falling profits.⁹ The closure of the Siam office in 1705-1706 was to be but a temporary one – by June 1706 the Dutch *opperhoofd* Arnout Cleur was back in the Company's riverside residence, a mere musket's shot away from the walled city of Ayutthaya, carrying on a frustrating and flagging trade.

⁷ Bhawan, *Dutch East India Company Merchants*, pp. 177-178.

⁸ Bhawan, *Dutch East India Company Merchants*, pp. 29-33.

⁹ Bhawan, *Dutch East India Company Merchants*, p. 179.



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Secondary works



2 Transcription of the Dutch text

DAGHREGISTERS VAN BATAVIA, 19 FEBRUARI 1704.

[fol.85]

Translaat Maleytse missive van den presenten berckelang ofte rijxbestierder tot Siam aan Haar Edele de Hooge Regeringe tot Batavia geschreven.

Desen brief komt van den sjapia berkalang aan Willem van Outhoorn gouverneur generaal en de raden van India die wegens d'E. Compagnie het bestier der zaken mitsgaders de regeringe door [fol. 86] geheel India zijn toebetrouwt, hebbende den gouverneur generaal die verstandig is door zijn opregte handelinge de weg van onderlingen vrundschap en goede overeenkomste met het Siamse rijck en den Prince van Orangie mitsgaders de Compagnie verbetert, soo datter tegenwoordig niet het minste verschil en is, sijnde alle's Compagnies saaken door gheheel het Siamse rijck vast ende bestendig in allen deelen sonder dat er eenig verandering ontstaan is. Want ick mij ten hoogsten bekommert om met den gouverneur generaal in eendragt te leven en alles in toecomende in beter toestant te brengen. Mijn genadige vorst en heere Somdat Bormat Boesti Prapoudi Tsjouw Dzjhouhou heeft aan mijn gelast om de weg van goede overeenkomste met de Prince van Orangie te bevestigen en heeft Zijn Hoog Aansienelijke Mayesteyt seer gunstig van den gouverneur generaal gesproken en gelast om alle's Compagnies zaaken te begunstigen en te verbeteren met deselve meerder voordeel te bewijzen als voorheen bewesen is, ende dat met dubbelde winste.

Het opperhoofd heeft op dynsdag den 6 van de 3 maand van het paardejaar aan mijn gesonden Lowang Tronpanet, en laten versoecken om ten hove te mogen komen, eerder een brief van mij na Batavia afging, want dat ten tijde van Lowang Apywaree en Lowang Witsit Sakoen, sijlieden versogt hadde om voor den coninck te mogen verschijnen en haar die gunste door Zijn Hoog Aansienelijke Mayesteyt toegestaan was, alles volgens het verbond in den beginne gemaakt, dat hij zijn tegenwoordige mayesteyt oock om deselve gunste voor den gouverneur generaal soude versoecken en dat het verbondschrift mogte vernieuwt en bekrachtig werden. Ick hebbe dit aan Zijn Hoog Aansienelijke Mayesteyt bekend gemaakt, die daarop zijn gunste en genegentheyt aan den gouverneur generaal en rade van India heeft gelieven te bethonen, gebiedende aan mij om te doen hetgene de oude contracten quamen te melden, waarop ick aan Lowang Tronpanet belasten om aan den capitain te seggen dat hij het verbondschrift in de logie en onder den capitain berustende was, soude bij mij brengen, dat ick dan het contract soude vernieuwen en agter aanschrijven, gelijk als Zijn Hoog Aansienelijke Mayesteyt belast hadde volgens het versoeck van den capitain aan mijn gedaan. Het opperhoofd sond den tolck Lowang Trongpanet weder en liet seggen dat hij het schriftelijk contract niet konden senden off medebrengen omdat te vernieuwen ten ware Zijn Hoog Aansienelijke Mayesteyt hem gelieven te begenadigen om voor hem te mogen verschijnen, gelijk ten tijden van Lowang Apia Waree en Lowang Witsit Sakoen geschiet



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was opdat dan personelijck soude konnen horen wat gunste de Compagnie toegestaan wierden, waarop ick tegens het opperhoofd liet seggen, dat sulx tegens de gewoonte is en dat in het slangejaar ten tijden van Lowang Apia Waree en Lowang Witsit Sakoen, sijlieden versogt hadden dat het contract soude beschreven en agteraan mogt gestelt werden, welck door Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt geordineert wierden dat Lowang Apia Waree, Willem Keis en Lowang Witsit Sakoen, Pieter van den Hoorn, daarna voor Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt sijn verscheenen omdat te dier tijd de France seer veel quaad deden in de negorij off landen van Ambongian Boery door welcke gelegentheyt haar E. Edelens ter audiëntie bij Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt toegelaten sijn en alsdoen het verbond vernieuwt ende beschreven² is geworden, hebbende ick noyt gesien hetgene den capitain voorgeeft, want sulx tegens de gewoonte comt te strijden. Ick hebbe op het alderonderdanigste aan Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt die mijn heer nu geworden is, versogt dat hij den capitain dog liefde te begunstigen, om hem ter audiëntie te laten komen, dog hebbe tot nog toe sulcx niet konnen vercrijgen. Ick hebbe gesegt dat den capitain menigmalen heel wel gehandelt en opregtelijck den weg van vrundschap tusschen den Prince van Orangie en Sijn Mayesteyt onderhouden heeft en dat hij wenschte om voor Sijn Mayesteyt te mogen gebragt werden, gelijck als Lawang Apil Waree en Lawang Witsit Sakoen, begunstigt waren. Het opperhoofd heeft gesegt dat hij al mijn seggen den gouverneur generaal soude afschrijven, waarop ick tegens hem seyde dat hij sulx wel mogt doen, en Haar Hoog Edelen verstandigen wat Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt mij geboden hadde aan den capitain te seggen. Op woensdag den 6e der 4 maand van het paardejaar soo quam Lawong Trompanet en Ombon Witsit Nasa medebrengeende het opperhoofd en tweede persoon bij mij in de woninge van den berkalang alwaar alle mantrys, officieren en 'sconings dienaren [fol. 87] soo Maleyers, Chinesen, Moren als Siammers bijeen vergadert waren. Den capitain versogt aan mijn dat ick hem bij sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt soude brengen, dog ick seyde tegens het opperhoofd dat sijn versoek tegens de manier van 't Siamse rijck strijdig was, dewijl te deser tijd, seyde ick, den ouden vorst overleden en van de verganckelijckheyt tot de eeuwigheyt overgegaan was en dat nu 12 dagen lang van seer veel moeyelijckheden was overvallen geworden om de tombe van 't lijk met haar chieraden toe te stellen. Dog indien den capitain eenige zake voor te stellen hadde, dat ick deselve Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt soude voordragen, en waarom hij soo haastig was om voor Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt ten gehoor gebragt te werden, dat den capitain het contractschrift maar soude brengen, dat dandeselve vernieuwt, getekent en den weg van onderlingen vrundschap met den Prince van Orangie voortaan meerder bekrachtigt en sterker gemaakt soude werden, waardoor de Compagnie meerder voordeel soude bekomen dan voorheen.

Den capitain heeft mij daarop gelieven te seggen dat hij Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt moest versoeken dat de Compagnie in haren handel mogt bevestigd en het verbond als vooren vernieuwt ende verzegeld werden, seggende wijders, indien der in eenig artikel yets gesegt of gestelt wierd, dat met het oogmerck niet overeenkomt, dat dan hij capitain in persoon of wel de andere die in sijn plaats tot hoofden wegens de Compagnies handel tot Siam aangestelt wierden aan wien den gouverneur generaal en



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raden van India recommandeeren om in alles wel te handelen sonder verschil ofte ver-
werringe sulx soude betragten, maar indien hij capitain of sijne navolgers die tot hoof-
den van 's Compagnies handel tot Siam, soo mede den gouverneur generaal en raden
van India ergens tegens quamen te misdoen en geen vergenoeging gaven, dat ick dan
oock niet gehouden soude zijn vergenoeging te geven na mijn bevassing, soo komt het
seggen van den capitain seer wel overeen met dat van Lawangapy Waree en Lowang
Witsit Sakoen, en hebbe het seggen van den capitain opgeschreven en hetselve aan Sijn
Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt bekend gemaakt. Toen heeft Praya Angkana mij gebo-
den om het verbond te beschrijven en te teeckenen agtervolgens 't verbond en contract
met den Prince van Orange opgereggt en dat op de wijze als het met Loang Apia Waree
en Lowang Witsit Sakoen volgens het voorgeeven van den capitain soude gemaakt
sijn. Hierop heb ick aan den capitain beloofd dat hij op den zondag den 8e dag van de
4e maand van het paardejaar met het contractschrift bij mij soude komen en dat men
dan het verbond soude vernieuwen en tekenen, dog het opperhoofd wilde niet bij mij
komen maar sond den tolck Loang Trongpanit met een geschrift bij mij luydende als
dat Kididjongtan versogt om aan sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt bekend te maken
als dat in het verbondschrift ten tijden van Pytery Dya Pytry gemaakt, vastgesteld was
dat de thin van Ligoor in het verbond mede beschreven en begreepen soude zijn en
dat Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt door Praya Angkana geboden en geordonneert
hadde dat het in 't verbondschrift soude ingelijft werden en de Ligoorsen thin daaron-
der begrepen blijven, welck voortijds oock soo geschiet is, sijnde volgens ordre het ver-
bondschrift getekent en door hetselve te stercker bekragtigt geworden en tegenwoor-
dig aan beyde de sijden verzegelt. Den capitain heeft door het senden van dit schrift
aan mijn gesonden doen blijcken dat hij tegens de manier van Lawang Apia Waree en
Lowang Witsit Sakoen komt te misdoen, volgende hij daarin sijn eygen wil, op het
opperhoofd segd wel dat de Compagnie begunstig is, en om haar wharen te handelen
vastgeseten waren volgens het oude verbondschrift dat voorheen op versoek beschre-
ven en getekent was, maar ick segge dit moet verstaan werden, soo lange het presen-
te opperhoofd ofte wel dengenen die hem in sijn bedieninge komen te vervangen om
's Compagnies zaken in het Siamse rijk te bestieren opregt komen te handelen, maar
indien den capitain en andere opperhoofden die na hem 's Compagnies zaken toebe-
trouwt werden off den gouverneur generaal en raden van India niet wel handelen, en
het verbond overtreden, dat ick dan niet gehouden ben om oock wel te doen, dog den
capitain verdraeyd dien sin der woorden en verwerp deselve. En dit sijn geen nieuwe
woorden in desen tijd versonnen, maar voorheen ten tijden van Lawang Apy Waree
en Lowang Witsit Sakoen gestelt geworden, welcke manier nu nog gevolgd werd, dog
het [fol. 88] opperhoofd volgt sijn eygen wil en meend de goede sin tot sijn voordeel, en
dat hem tegen is laat hij blijven. Ick hebbe het verbond willen beschrijven maar hetsel-
ve niet connen verkrijgen, welck ick aan Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt hebben
moeten bekend maken, waarop Sijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt heeft gelieven te
gebieden, indien men het verbondschrift niet wilde laten opmaken en beschrijven op
de wijze als door Lawang Apia Waree en Lowang Witsit Sakoen geschiet was, daar het
den capitain versogt heeft, sal dat als een misdaat die den capitain opnieuw begaat aan-



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gemerkt moeten werden, strijdig tegens de manier in het doen van Lawang Apia Waree en Lawang Witsit Sakoen, willende den capitain alleen dat tot zijn voordeel is wel beschreven en ondertekent hebben, welck niet wesen kan, waarop g'ordineert wierd aan den capitain nog eenmaal te vragen wat hij van meyning is, en indien hij het verbond niet wil laten beschrijven, soo is aan mijn gelast om aan den gouverneur generaal en raden van India te schrijven om een ander opperhooft die verstandiger is na herwaarts te senden, die genegen is om de weg van onderlinge vrindschap met de Prince van Orange gemaakt te onderhouden. Ick ben genegen geweest om het verbondschrift te vernieuwen en te onderteecken, waardoor de Compagnie meerder voordeel als voorheen soude konnen verkrijgen, dog het opperhooft heeft Lowang Trongpanit aan mij gesonden en laten seggen dat hij een brieu aan den gouverneur generaal tot Batavia hadde afgesonden, en dat verhoopte dat er een ander capitain die meerder verstant hadde om den dienst van de Compagnie te connen behertigen soude gesonden werden en hij weder na Batavia hoopte te keeren.

Den capitain die 's Compagnies zaken op Ligoor waargenomen en nu alhier tot Siam alles bestiert heeft, heeft seer veel misdaan in vergelijckinge van de andere opperhooften die voorheen hier geresideert hebben, doende hij veel saken na eygene meninge en sinnelijckhede dat tegens den weg van onderlinge vrindschap komt te strijden, handelende hij dwaaselijck met in zijn negotie meerder winst te willen nemen waardoor de Compagnie schaden comt te lijden, hebbende den capitain geen beleyd van saaken. Want als den gouverneur generaal cleden en andere rariteyten off wharen oversenden om te vercoopen, soo rekent den capitain op de cleden en coopmanschappen die hij aan de thresoriers verhandelen wil eerst eygene winst, nemende den prijs veel hoger, soodat hij seer veel komt te misdoen tegens 'tgene de manier van handeling der vorige capitainen is die met de schatmeesters hebben genegotieert tot groot voordeel. Wanneer ick den prijs der cleden, en andere soorten van coopmanschappen die de capitains in vorige tijden tegens de prijs van de tegenwoordigen capitain vergelijckt, soo is de prijs nu veel meer als voorheen, en wanneer ick de monsters met de cleden vergelijck en besiet, soo weet het opperhooft niets te seggen en daarom ben ick van gevoelen dat de capitain liegt en de schult ten onregte op den gouverneur generaal legt als hij segt dat deselve soude geordineert hebben voor wat prijs de goederen moeten verkogt werden. En wanneer den prijs geboden wert volgens de waarde als voorheen geaccordeert was, soo heeft den capitain daar geen behagen in, maar wil de goederen verkopen sooals hij komt te eyssen, seggende dat die veel hoger van prijs zijn als de prijs der goederen van andere handelaars die tot Siam komen negotieeren. Ick hebbe verboden dat de woorden van den capitain geloofd werden, die soo vast op den hogen prijs blijft staan, want ick niet anders kan bevroeden, dan dat een capitain zijn leugen op Haar Hoog Edele schrijft, konnende het niet wesen dat deselve sulx soude geboden hebben maar wel dat U Edele Hoog Agtbare gebieden dat het opperhooft de waren op 't bieden van de gewoonelijcke prijs den coop met de tresoriers soude sluyten.

Het opperhooft komt alle jaren te misdoen tegens de weg van onderlinge vrundschap dewijl hem verstant ontbreect, willende de goederen dierder verkopen en de winst voor hemselfen houden, welck niet opregt gehandelt is, strijdende tegens de weg van



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onderlinge vrundschap tot nadeel van de Compagnie. Den capitain heeft geen overleg off beleyd en daardoor begaat hij meerder misslagen als de vorige capitainen die voordesen in den dienst van de Compagnie alhier geresideert hebben. Soo het opperhoofd hier nog langer de de zaken van de Compagnie sal blijven waarnemen sal hij geen veruoevinge geven en den weg van vrundschap niet onderhouden, waardoor hij de Compagnie seer veel schaden sal toebrengen, hebbende hij menigmalen misdaan gelijk als veelmalen gerepeteert is, en het nu nog maal aan de gouverneur generaal come te verstendigen alsdat den capitain de prijs der goederen soo hoog blijft houden opdat sulx aan hem mag verboden en het verschil niet langer uytgereckt werd.

Wanneer Sijn Hoog Aansienelijke Mayesteyt was komen te overlijden, sijnde geweest op saterdag den 10e dag [fol. 89] van de 3e maand in 't paardejaar, heb ick den capitain laten versoecken om op het spoedigste daarover na Batavia te schrijven en den schipper van 't schip aan te pressen om ten eerste te zeylen eer de moessoun verlopen soude sijn, waarop het opperhoofd aan mijn versogt dat het contract mogte vernieuwt ende getekent werden volgens ouder gewoonte, 'twelck ick op dien dag oock aan Sijn Hoog Aansienelijke Mayesteyt hebbe bekend gemaakt, die daarop gebeden heeft dat ick het verbondschrift soude laten opmaken en tekenen gelijk van outsher gebruyckelijck geweest is, bevelende wijders dat den schipper van 't schip met den eersten en sonder vertoeven soude vertrecken na Batavia eer de mousson verliep, den capitain niet volvoert maar leugenen tot verschoninge gebruyckt om sigselvs los te maken en te bevrijden, voorgevende dat ick al te lang, tot de mousson gedaan was, hadde gewagt. Alle de coopliden, soo Chinesen, Siammers en Pegunesen, die de huyden van hertebeeste en ossen aan den capitain komen vercoopen, waardoor de Compagnie winste geniet, die sijn aan mij comen klagen dat sij in vorige tijden de vellen aan den capitain in 't packhuys leverden met een vaste prijs, sijnde onderscheyden in drierley soorten. En wanneer de vellen ontfangen waren, soo wiert daarvoor de waarde aan silvergelt gegeven en dat sonder verschil. En dan wiert aan de handelaars van buyten de prijs der vellen voldaan en de personen welcke veel huyden opcogten en in de packhuysen leverden, aan denselven wiert een catty silver gegeven, dog die weynig huyden aanbragten, aan die wiert 15 1/2 thayl, oock wel 10 thayl gegeven, sijnde dit alhier de gewoonte geweest. Dog den capitain die in 4 jaren 's Compagnies zaken alhier waargenomen heeft, heeft dese gewoonte maar een jaar onderhouden. Daarna heeft hij haar niets gegeven, nog de gestelde prijs der huyden gehouden, schietende bovendien nog de huyden van de wijfjens uyt, schoon die niet gebroken sijn, hetwelck tot schaden der vercoopers van de vellen streckt en het haar seer beswaart 'twelck door geen van de vorige opperhoofden die wegens de Compagnie alhier gelegen hebben oyt geschiet nog gedaan is. Maar het tegenwoordige opperhoofd is een persoon die sig geheel tegens de weg van onderlinge vrundschap en het out gebruyck in veel deelen misgaat.

Ick hebbe aan de handelaars van huyden, soo Chinesen, Siammers en Pegunesen gelast dat sijlieden de vellen aan den capitain in 't packhuys soude brengen, seggende het opperhoofd is 't alleen die tegens den weg van vrundschap misdoet. Maar de vorige capitains en den gouverneur generaal en raden van India hebben altijd heel wel met het Siamse rijk gehandelt en aan de coopliden jaarlijx gegeven, gelijk als het de gewoon-



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te was. Ick kan alles niet seggen wat dat die luyden wel aan mij geclaagd hebben. Indien den gouverneur generaal en raden van India sulx in toecomende niet voorkomen, soo sal het met de negotie niet wel kunnen gaan en de voordelen verandert werden. Want soo kunnen Haar Hoog Edele haar oogmerck niet bereycken maar schaden komen te lijden en geen voordeel nog winsten hebben, dewijl hierdoor de weg van onderlinge vrundschap met de Prince van Orangie niet opregtelijck gehouden werd. Ick moet bekend maken alsdat den tegenwoordigen capitain soo hij nog langer in Siam blijft om 's Compagnies zaken te derigeeren, dat hij de weg van opregte vrundschap door zijn menigvuldige misslagen geheel bederven sal, dewijl hij niet wil doen dat de gewoonte van Siam is. En so de Compagnie niet wel handelt sal het tot de schaden van deselve zijn waardoor alle de voordeelen sullen ophouden die de Compagnie soo menigvuldig geniet. En daarom gelieven Haar Hoog Edele liever een ander opperhoofd te maken om 's Compagnies handel alhier te drijven. Indien deselve verstandig is en den weg van onderlinge vrundschap tusschen ons en den Prince van Orangie met onsen vriend de Compagnie komt te onderhouden volgens de gewoonte van 't Siamse rijk, soo sullen alle 's Compagnies zaken met veel meer winst en voordeel voorgeset werden als voordesen oyt geschiet is, en voortaan veel, ja dubbelde winst genieten.

Eyndelijck alle hetgene van stuck tot stuck gemelt staat sal strecken tot bekragtinge van de weg van onderlinge vrundschap tusschen Zijn Hoog Aansienelijcke Mayesteyt Probat Somdat Boesitrapoudi Tsjouw [fol. 90] Dzouhou mijn genadige vorst en heere welcker suyvere en opregte vrundschap tot in eeuwigheyt sal duuren indien der in de toecomende geen misslagen strijdig tegens het verbondschrift ende de gewoonte van 't Siamse rijk begaan werden. Den gouverneur generaal en raden van India gelieven te overwegen ende te besorgen dat alles na waarheyt en in opregtigheyt geschieden.

Geschreven op dynsdag in de vierde maand van 't paardejaar.

DAGHREGISTERS VAN BATAVIA, 27 AUGUSTUS.

Antwoord van de Hoge Regering in Batavia aan Somdet Phrachao Sua of Siam, 27 Augustus 1703.

[fol. 352]

Uit de brief die 's Compagnies residenten in Siam met de recent van daar gearriveerde schepen aan de Gouverneur-Generaal en de Raden van Indië hebben geschreven, hebben zij met uitnemende vreugde gelezen hoe het God de Heere belieft had de vorige koning uit deze wereld te halen, en dat de kroon van het Siamse rijk weer op het hoofd van zijne tegenwoordige Majesteit gekomen was door een wettige erfenis en successie.

De Gouverneur-Generaal en de Raden van Indië betuigen hierover hun bijzondere blijdschap en wensen Zijne Hoog Aanzienelijke Majesteit in zijn rijk en met zijn regering alle heil en voorspoed van de hemel toe, opdat Zijne Hoog Aanzienelijke Majesteit zijn koninkrijk dagelijks meer en meer mag zien bloeien en bevestigd worden, zowel tot meerdere luister en glorie van Zijne Majesteit als tot welstand van zijn onderdanen. En ook van de Compagnie die als een oprechte en trouwe bondgenoot van het Siamse rijk gedurende zovele jaren haar handel daar heeft gedreven. Gelijk Zijne Majesteit



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zich kan verzekerd zijn van de oprechte intentie en vredelievendheid van de Hollandse natie, evenzo willen de Gouverneur-Generaal en de Raden van Indië ook aan de gunst en toegenegenheid van Zijn Hoog Aanzienelijke Majesteit ten aanzien van de Compagnie niet in het minst twijfelen. Wij verwachten van zijn goedheid dat het Zijne Majesteit zal gelieven (indien dit al niet geschiet is) de aloude contracten en privilegieën te vernieuwen die tussen het Siamse rijk en de E. Compagnie voorheen zijn gemaakt.

De Gouverneur-Generaal en de Raden van Indië maken verder aan Zijn Hoog Aanzienelijke Majesteit bekend dat zij in plaats van het gewezen opperhoofd Gideon Tant, die in dienst van de Compagnie naar Japan is vertrokken, weder tot opperhoofd in Siam hebben aangesteld de gewezen secunde Aarnout Cleur¹.

[fol. 353]Eindelijk gaan nevens deze [brief] tot een bewijs van de oprechte genegenheid en bereidwilligheid die de Gouverneur-Generaal en de Raden van Indië aan haar dienst toedragen deze volgende geschenken, in de hoop dat deze Zijne Hoog Aanzienelijke Majesteit niet onaangenaam zullen zijn, bestaande in:

5	stuks karmozijnen stoffen purper
5	stuks dito dito violet
x	stuks dito dito rood
x	stuks dito dito kaneelkleurig
x	lakenras schaar purper
600	stuks <i>sompacken</i> ²
100	stuks <i>sanen</i> ³
40	stuks gouden Perzische stoffen
10	stuks gouden <i>taatsen</i> ⁴
112	stuks diverse glaswerken
x	stuks kassen rozenwater
6	stuks gouden potloodpennetjes
6	stuks zilveren dito
6	stuks tfilagrine instrument kokertjes
6	stuks schildpadshoornen kokertjes
40	stuks diverse brillen met gouden, zilvere en ivoren randen
x	stuks geëmailleerde verrekijker met een gouden bus
375	lb nagelen
50	lb foelie dito
15	lb notemuskaat dito
10	lb kaneel dito
6	stuks fijne karabijnen
10	stuks gewone dito

¹ Arnout Cleur, opperhoofd te Ayutthaya 1703-1712.

² Sompacken, sompak, een textielsoort gebruikt aan het hof.

³ Sanen, misschien “sannoos”?; een witte katoensoort van Bengalen.

⁴ Taatsen, *taad*, een zijden textielsoort.



TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DUTCH TEXT

- 24 stuks kaliber musketten
- x vergulde snaphanen
- x dito karabijnen
- x donderbussen met kopere lopen

Geschreven in het Kasteel Batavia op het eiland Groot Java in het koninkrijk Jacatra op 27 augustus 1703, de Gouverneur-Generaal van Nederlands India, Willem van Outhoorn.



3 English translation

DAILY JOURNALS OF BATAVIA, 19 FEBRUARY 1704 [FOL. 85]

[fol. 85]

Translation of a Malay letter written by the present *bercklang*¹ or prime minister of Siam to His Lordship the Supreme Government in Batavia.

This letter is from the *sjapia*² Phrakhleng to Willem Outhoorn Governor-General and the Councillors of Asia to whom the Honourable Company has entrusted the government of affairs and the rule over [fol. 86] the whole of Asia (the Indies). By his upright conduct of affairs, the wise Governor-General has improved the path of reciprocal friendship and good relations between the Kingdom of Siam and the Prince of Orange, as well as the Company, so that at the moment there is not the slightest dissension ruffles this. The [state of] all the business of the Company throughout the whole Kingdom of Siam remains stable and untrammelled in all parts [of the realm], there being not even the slightest alteration. [This is] because I do my utmost to live in concord with the Governor-General and to ensure that in the future everything will be in even better case. My gracious ruler and lord, Somdat Bormat Busti Prapoudi Tsjouw Dzjouhou³, has commanded me that I should affirm the path of the sound purpose with the Prince of Orange. His Most Illustrious Majesty has spoken most favourably of the Governor-General and commanded that all the affairs of the Company be encouraged and improved. And that [these] will enjoy even more advantages than has hitherto been the case, and that with a twofold profit.

On Tuesday the sixth [day] of the third month in the Year of the Horse, the chief merchant sent Lowang Tronpanet⁴ to me, and [through him] submitted a request that he may come to court, before a letter from me was dispatched to Batavia. For, in the time of Lowang Apywaree⁵ and Lowang Witsit Sakoem⁶, they had also submitted a request that they might pay their respects to the king. This favour was granted them by His Most Illustrious Majesty⁷, all in accordance with the treaty which was concluded at the very beginning. And that he [the chief merchant] might [now] also submit the same request to His Present Majesty⁸ on behalf of the Governor-General, and that this treaty might be revised and confirmed anew.

¹ *Phrakhleng*.

² *Chaophya*, also spelled *chao phraya*, highest rank in Siamese officialdom during the Ayutthaya period.

³ i.e. *Somdet Borom bophit phra phuttha chao yuhua*, generic term denoting His Majesty the King of Siam.

⁴ *Luang Song Phanit*, translator assigned to the VOC.

⁵ *Luang Aphai Wari*, rank and title royally conferred on the Dutch *opperhoofd* in Ayutthaya, in this case Joannes Keijts.

⁶ *Luang Wisitor Wiset Sakhon*, another title for the VOC *opperhoofd*, in this case Pieter van den Hoorn.

⁷ King Phetracha.

⁸ King Süa.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I announced this to His Most Illustrious Majesty, who thereupon has been graciously pleased to show his favour to and amity for the Governor-General and the Council of Asia. He commanded me to do that which was mentioned in the former contracts, whereupon I ordered Lowang Tronpanet to tell the captain that he should bring me the treaty which remains in the keeping of the captain in the factory to me. That I should [thereupon] revise the contract and when this had been accomplished date it, in accordance with what His Most Illustrious Majesty has commanded me, acquiescing in the request the captain had submitted to me.

The chief merchant then dispatched the interpreter Lowang Trongpanet back to say that he could not send the written contract⁹ or bring it with him for revision, unless His Most Illustrious Majesty should grant him an audience at court, just as it had come to pass in the days of Lowang Apia Waree and Lowang Witsit Sacoen. This would be so that he [the chief merchant] might personally be able to hear what favours would be granted the Company. Hereupon, I had the chief merchant informed that such was contrary to the tradition, and that in the Year of the Snake, in the days of Lowang Apia Waree and Lowang Witsit Sakoen those people had [also] requested that that the contract should be written and, as the final act, dated. At that time, His Most Illustrious Majesty had commanded that Lowang Apia Waree, Willem Keis¹⁰ and Lowang Witsit Sakoen and Pieter van den Hoorn¹¹ should present themselves before His Most Illustrious Majesty because this was the time at which the French were committing widespread despredations in the *negeri* or countries of Ambongian Boery. On that occasion Their Worships were granted admittance to a personal audience with His Most Illustrious Majesty and in this wise in those days the treaty was revised and written down.¹² I have had no personal experience of what the captain has asked for, because such is contrary to the custom. I have most humbly besought His Most Illustrious Majesty, who is now my liege lord, that he might be disposed to grant the captain the favour of permitting him to attend an audience, but I have not been granted this permission.

I have said that on many an occasion the captain has dealt very fairly, and has sincerely maintained the path of friendship between the Prince of Orange and His Majesty, and that he wishes to be granted an audience with Your Majesty, in the manner that Lawang Apia Waree and Lawang Witsit Sakoen were favoured. The chief merchant has said that he will write to the Governor-General about all I have said. To this, I replied to him that he might do so, and inform His Most Excellency of what His Most Illustrious Majesty had commanded that I should say to the captain.

On Wednesday the sixth day of the fourth month in the Year of the Horse, Lawong Trompanet and Ombon Witsit Nasa¹³ [came to me]. They brought with them to me the chief merchant and the second person [his deputy] in the residence of the Phrakhleng,

⁹ Uncertain reading.

¹⁰ Probably Joannes (or Johannes) Keyts, *opperhoofd* in Siam 1685-1688.

¹¹ VOC *opperhoofd* in Siam 1688-1691.

¹² Uncertain reading.

¹³ *OkmünWisit Phasa* or *Wiset Phasa*, a translator.



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where all the ministers, officers and servants of the king [fol. 87], as well as Malays, Chinese, Moors and Siamese had gathered together. The captain requested that I should conduct him into the presence of His Most Illustrious Majesty, but I told the chief merchant that his request was at odds with the manner of the Kingdom of Siam, in view of the fact that, said I, the former ruler¹⁴ had expired and had passed from this transient life to eternity, and now for the last twelve days [I had] been extremely busy settling a myriad of affairs so that the tomb for the body would be embellished with ornaments. Nevertheless, should the captain have several matters to put forward, that I would personally announce these to His Most Illustrious Majesty, and why did he act so impetuously in wanting to bring these to the ears of His Most Illustrious Majesty. [I also said] that all the captain had to do was the bring the contract, and that then the same would be revised, [and] signed and that the path of mutual friendship with the Prince of Orange would henceforth be affirmed even more strongly and reinforced, which would bring the Company even more benefit than it formerly had enjoyed.

Thereupon the captain was pleased to take it upon himself to say that he must request His Most Illustrious Majesty affirm the Company in its commerce and the treaty as in the past revised and sealed. He went on to say that, should in any article anything be said or proposed which did not tally with this goal, that he, the captain, would then personally intervene to have this changed, or that else others would be appointed in his place to be chief merchants in charge of the Company trade to Siam, to whom the Governor-General and the Councillors of Dutch Asia should recommend that they deal with all matters without discord or confusion. [However, I said] that should the captain or his successors as captain of the Company trade to Siam, or indeed if the Governor-General and Councillors of Asia, should happen to cause offence and prove in some sway unsatisfactory, then I would also not be encumbered in any way from speaking my mind. What the captain had to say agrees pretty much with that said by Lawangapy Waree and Lowang Witsit Sakoén. And I wrote down the captain's words and made the same known to His Most Illustrious Majesty.

Then Praya Angkana¹⁵ commanded me to commit the treaty to words and sign it, after which the treaty and contract with the Prince of Orange [could be considered] to have been extended, and that in the fashion in which it had been done with Lawong Apia Warwee and Lowang Witsit Sakoén, according to the directions the captain had laid down. Thereupon I promised the captain that on Sunday the eighth day of the fourth month in the Year of the Horse he could come to me with the contract, and that the treaty would be revised and signed. Despite this [concession], the chief merchant refused to come to me, but sent to me instead the interpreter Lowang Trongpanit with a letter, announcing that Kididjongtan¹⁶ had requested His Most Illustrious Majesty make known that the treaty drawn up in the time of Pytery Dya Pytry¹⁷ had been con-

¹⁴ King Phetracha.

¹⁵ Probably from the Siamese expression *phra ongan*, or *phra ratcha ongan*, meaning "royal command".

¹⁶ Gideon Tant, *opperhoofd* in Siam 1699-1703.

¹⁷ Pieter de Bitter, VOC Commissioner who negotiated the Dutch-Siamese Treaty of August 1664.



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firmed that the tin from Ligor also be so described and incorporated in the treaty. And that His Most Illustrious Majesty through Praya Angkana had ordered and commanded that as had happened in days gone by, as this was commanded and was noted down in the treaty, and by doing this have been confirmed even more strongly, and now that the [the matter of the] Ligor tin would be incorporated in it. This is what has formerly occurred, being according to orders written in the treaty and by the same strengthened, and at present sealed by both sides.

By sending this letter the captain has revealed to me that he has strayed from the path of Lawang Apia Warwee and and Lowang Witsit Sakoén. In this he is following his own will. The chief merchant does say that the Company is favoured in being able to trade its wares, guaranteed by the terms of the former treaty which was drawn up in former times and made and signed at the request [of both parties], but I declare that this should be understood as: as long as the present chief merchant or whomsoever will come to replace him in his office, in their management of the Company business in the Kingdom of Siam do come to deal in all probity, [then all will be well]. However, should the captain and other chief merchants to whom the business of the Company is entrusted, or if the Governor-General and the Councillors of Asia do not want to trade fairly, thereby breaching the treaty, then I shall not be obliged to deal fairly. Nevertheless, the captain twists the sense of the words and repudiates the same.

And these are not new words thought up on the spur of the moment, but composed earlier in the time of Lawang Apy Waree and Lowang Witsit Sakoén, whose manner of conducting affairs is still adhered to. However, [fol. 88] the chief merchant dances to his own tune and claims whatever in the contents favours his own advantage, and conversely, that which does not please him, he leaves undone. I was desirous of writing out the treaty anew, but was unable to procure the text which was kept in the VOC factory, the which I had to make known to His Most Illustrious Majesty. Hereupon His Most Illustrious Majesty was pleased to command that, if people were not prepared to have the treaty drawn up and written down in the same way as was done by Lawang Apia Warwee and Lowang Witsit Sakoén, considering the fact that this is what the captain had requested, this would have to be construed as yet another offence perpetrated by the captain, conflicting with what Lawang Apit Waree and Lawang Witsit Sakoén had done. The captain would have only that which was to his advantage written and signed, which is out of the question. Thereupon an order was given to ask the captain to give his opinion just one more time. And, in the event that he should refuse, to have the treaty written out, then I was commanded to write to the Governor-General and the Councillors of Asia [asking them] to send hither another more sagacious chief merchant. Somebody who will be predisposed to foster the path of mutual friendship made with the Prince of Orange. I have been prepared to revise and sign the treaty, by which the Company should be able to accrue more advantage than [it] previously [did]. However, the chief merchant has sent Lowang Trongpanit to me in order to announce that he [the chief merchant] had [already] sent a letter to the Governor-General in Batavia, and he hoped that another captain who would be better informed about fostering the service of the Company would be sent, and that he hoped to return to Batavia.



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The captain who had run the Company affairs in Ligor, and now has managed everything here in Siam, has made very many more mistakes compared to the other chief merchants who have resided here previously. He carries out a great deal of business as he thinks fit and feels that it should be done, which contravenes the path of mutual friendship. He has acted foolishly by wanting to make more [personal] profit, which has been to the detriment of the Company. The captain shows no discretion in business. Because, when the Governor-General sends textiles and other curiosities or goods here to be sold, the first thing the captain does when he negotiates with officials from the Treasury is to calculate his own profit. He then sets the price much higher and by so doing greatly encroaches upon the manner of trading pursued by the former captains, who negotiated with the Treasury officials to great advantage. When I compare the price of the textiles and other merchandise of the captains of former times with the price demanded by the present captain, then that price far exceeds what it formerly was. And when I compare and inspect the samples of the textiles, the chief merchant has nothing to say [to justify what he does]. And therefore I have the feeling that the captain is lying and unjustly shifts the blame onto the Governor-General when he says that the same[e.i. the Governor-General] would have ordered the prices for which these goods must be sold. And when the price offered is according to the price which was previously agreed, the captain is greatly displeased about it, and insists on selling the goods at the price which he demands. He says that these are much more expensive than the wares of the other merchants who come to trade in Siam. I have forbidden that the people take the captain at his word, which is fixed on such a high price, for all I can think is that the captain has entered his lies in [embezzled] the account of the Honourable Company, as it is beyond belief that the latter would have ordered this, but that unquestionably Your Excellency has ordered that the chief merchant should conclude the sale of the goods with the Treasury officials at the usual price.

Every year the chief merchant commits trespasses against the path of mutual friendship and [it seems] that he has taken leave of his senses. His desire is to sell the goods at a higher price and keep the profit for himself. This is not fair trade and is in contravention of the path of mutual friendship to the detriment of the Company. The captain neither consults nor does he display any discretion and for this reason commits more offences than the former captains, who earlier resided here in the service of the Company. Should the chief merchant remain here any longer directing the business of the Company, he will prove unsatisfactory and fail to uphold the path of friendship, the which will cause the Company untold damage. On so many occasions he has offended as has so frequently been reported on many occasions, and now the time has come yet again to inform the Governor-General that the captain is setting the price of the goods so high, that he should be forbidden to do this and the discrepancy [in price] will no longer be tolerated.

When His Most Illustrious Majesty passed away, being on Saturday the tenth day [fol. 89] of the third month in the Year of the Horse¹⁸, I requested that the captain write

¹⁸ 3 February 1703.



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to Batavia about this with all speed and to impress upon the skipper of the ship to sail first, before the close of the monsoon. Hereupon the chief merchant had besought me [asking] that the contract might be revised and signed, according to the ancient custom, the which I made known to His Most Illustrious Majesty on that very same day. He thereupon commanded that I should draw up the treaty and sign it, just as was the custom of yesteryear, furthermore giving orders that the skipper of the ship should sail immediately and depart for Batavia without delay before the monsoon was over. The captain did not [carry out this order] but told lies in order to excuse and free himself from [his predicament], letting it be known that I was the one who had tarried too long, until the monsoon was past.

All the traders, be they Chinese, Siamese or the people of Pegu, who come to sell the hides of deer and oxen to the captain, which makes a profit for the Company, have come to me to complain that in former times they delivered the hides to the captain at the warehouse for a fixed price, according to the three qualities into which these hides were divided. And, when the hides were received, then the value was handed over in silver coin and that without any problems. Then the price of the hides was paid to the external traders, and the people who sold many hides and delivered them to the warehouse, those same people were paid a cattie of silver, however, those who brought only a few hides, were given 15½ taels, even 10 taels, as that is the custom here. Nevertheless, the captain who has run the affairs of the Company here for four years, only respected this custom for one year. After that he gave them nothing, not even kept to the price set for the hides. Furthermore, he was unwilling to accept the hides of female animals, unless they were undamaged, the which caused the sellers of the hides a loss and upset them greatly. This had never ever before been done by any one of the former chief merchants who have been posted here in the name of the Company. However, the present chief merchant is a person inimical to the path of mutual friendship and ancient custom, and gives offence in many ways.

I have ordered the traders, be they Chinese, Siamese or the people from Pegu, that they should deliver the hides to the captain in the warehouse, saying that it is only the chief merchant who abuses the path of mutual friendship. However, the former captains and the Governor-General and Councillors of Asia have always dealt fairly with the Kingdom of Siam and have annually given the traders [the hides], according to the custom. I cannot [possibly] repeat everything about which the people have complained to me. Should the Governor-General and the Councillors of the Indies not prevent this in the future, then the commerce will not be able to continue and the privileges will be changed. In this wise, His Excellency will not be able to reach his goal but will suffer losses and enjoy neither privilege nor profit, besides on this account the path of mutual friendship with the Prince of Orange cannot be sincerely maintained. I must announce that the present captain, should he remain yet longer in Siam to direct the affairs of the Company, through his myriad offences will completely spoil the path of true friendship, because he refuses to honour the customs of Siam. And as the Company does not trade fairly, this will be to the detriment of the same through which all the privileges which the Company has so often enjoyed, will be stopped. Therefore, would it please



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Your Excellency to appoint another chief merchant to run the the Company business here. If the same is gifted with common sense and will be able to maintain the mutual friendship between us and the Prince of Orange with our friend the Company in accordance with the customs of the Kingdom of Siam, then will all the business of the Company be continued with much greater profit and advantage, as it was in the days before [this upset], yea indeed from now on even enjoy a doubled profit. In conclusion, all that is mentioned item by item will serve to strengthen the path of mutual friendship between His Most Illustrious Majesty Probat Somdat Boesitrapoudi Tsjouw [fol. 90] Dzouhou, my gracious lord and ruler, which pure and sincere friendship will endure forever if in the future no offences are committed there which are contrary to the treaty and the customs of the Siamese realm. Would the Governor-General and the Councillors of Asia be pleased to deliberate and take care that everything should take place according to the truth and sincerity.

Written on Tuesday in the fourth month of the Year of the Horse.

DAILY JOURNALS OF BATAVIA CASTLE, 27 AUGUST 1703.

Reply from the Supreme Government in Batavia to King Somdet Phrachao Seuwa (r. 1703-1709), 27 August 1703.

From the letter that the Company's residents in Siam have written [and sent] with the ships recently arrived from there, addressed to the Governor-General and members of the Council of the Indies, they have read with exceeding joy how it had pleased God the Lord to take the previous king from this world, and that the crown of the kingdom of Siam has in turn come to the head of His Majesty the present king through lawful inheritance and succession.

The Governor-General and members of the Council of the Indies affirm their special gladness at this and wish His High and Distinguished Majesty in his kingdom and with his government all welfare and prosperity from heaven, so that His Majesty may see his kingdom flourish and be consolidated more and more, both to the greater splendour and glory of His Majesty and the well-being of his subjects. And also of the Company that has carried on trade there as a sincere and faithful ally of the Siamese realm for so many years. Just as His Majesty can be assured of the sincere intentions and peace-loving nature of the Dutch nation, even so the Governor-General and members of the Council of the Indies also do not wish to doubt in the slightest the favour and good intentions of His Majesty. We expect from his kindness that His Majesty will be pleased (if this has not already taken place) to renew the ancient contracts and privileges that were formerly made between the realm of Siam and the Honourable Company.

The Governor-General and members of the Council of the Indies further inform His Majesty that in the place of the former senior head Gideon Tant, who has departed for Japan in the Company's service, they have in turn appointed the former deputy, Arnout Cleur, as senior head in Siam¹⁹.

¹⁹ Arnout Cleur, executive trader in Ayutthaya 1703-1712.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Finally together with this [letter], as proof of the sincere regard and willingness to help that the Governor-General and members of the Council of the Indies bear to their service, the following gifts, in the hope that His Majesty will find them not displeasing, consisting of:

5	pieces of karmozijn cloth, purple
5	pieces of the same, violet
x	pieces of the same, red
x	pieces of the same, cinnamon-coloured
x	lakenras schaar purple
600	pieces of <i>sompacken</i> ²⁰
100	pieces of <i>sanen</i> ²¹
40	pieces of golden Persian cloth
10	golden <i>taatsen</i> ²² [ferrules?]
112	pieces of various glassware
x	cases of rosewater
6	golden pencil-holders [?]
6	silver ditto
6	filigree instrument tubes
6	turtle-shell tubes
40	various spectacles with gold, silver and ivory edges
x	enamelled telescope with a golden box
375	pounds of cloves
50	pounds of mace
15	pounds of nutmeg
10	pounds of cinnamon
6	fine carbines
10	common ditto
24	calibre muskets
x	gilded flintlocks
x	ditto carbines
x	blunderbusses with long barrels.

Written in the Castle of Batavia on the island of Great Java in the kingdom of Jaccatra, on 27 August 1703. [Signed by] the Governor-General of the Netherlands Indies, Willem van Outhoorn.

²⁰ Sompacken, *sompak*, a kind of cloth used in court wear.

²¹ Sanen, (= “sannoos” white cotton cloth from Bengal?)

²² Taatsen, *taad*, a silken textile.



4 Colophon

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