The illusion of verisimilitude : Johan Nieuhof's images of China

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Chapter 1 The First Dutch Embassy Visit to China and the Paris Manuscript

1.1 The historical background of the first Dutch embassy visit to China

Around the end of sixteenth century, Chinese silk, porcelain, lacquer, and other Chinese goods became known to Dutch merchants who ran their business in Lisbon. By reselling these articles in the Netherlands, they made huge profits and desired to develop the market. This ambition was further stimulated when two Portuguese carracks, the *San Jago* and the *Santa Catarina* were captured in 1602 and 1603, respectively. The cargoes of Chinese porcelain, raw silk, gold, lacquer, furniture, and other Chinese goods were auctioned off in Holland and yielded almost six million guilders in profits.[69] Unsurprisingly, such tremendous profits encouraged Dutch merchants to consider the possibility of direct business with China.

Soon, the opportunity to trade directly with China presented itself. At the end of sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, the arrival of wealthy refugees from the Southern Netherlands and the increasing wealth in the north created great funds for large-scale adventures. A number of Dutchmen who had visited Asia in Portuguese service also provided much valuable information on Asia.[70] Furthermore, because

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[69] On 25 February 1603, a Portuguese ship, the *Santa Catarina,* was also captured and her cargo was sold in Holland. More information on the profit gained from these cargoes and the import of Chinese porcelain in the seventeenth century, see C. J. A. Jörg and Patricia Wardle, *Porcelain and the Dutch China trade* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1982), 17.

[70] The information about China in Holland might start with early travel experiences, for instance, the observations by Dirck Gerritsz Pomp included in the *Tresoor der Zeevaert* (The treasury of navigation), which was published by Lucas Jansz. Waghenaer in 1592. Similarly, Jan Huygen van Linschoten's *Reys-gheschrift vande navigatien der Portugaloysers in Orienten* (1595) and *Itinerario*

Amsterdam had already developed into a centre for the publication of travel accounts, maps, and atlases, it was not difficult to acquire appropriate maps and other geographical materials showing the route to Asia.[71] All these factors demonstrated to the Dutch people that the time had come to initiate direct trade between the Netherlands and Asia, and in 1595 the first Dutch ships successfully set sail for Asia. The round-trip voyage to Southeast Asia took two years but it showed the possibility of opening up trade with Asia.[72] As a result, a number of ports prepared to fund such trade, and various "distant trade companies" were rapidly set up.

In 1601, a Dutch ship registered under one of these "old companies" arrived on the Chinese coast but was not able to open up trade with China. In 1602, various companies in the Netherlands merged into a new single organization—the *Verenigde Oost Indische Compagnie* (VOC, the United East India Company), which subsequently developed into the most successful and powerful commercial enterprise of the day.[73]

In addition to looking after the commercial needs of the Netherlands' trade with Asia, the VOC's directors in Batavia realized the importance of promoting intra-Asian trade and especially of establishing a trade relationship with China. The profits obtained from the intra-Asian trade could be used to pay for the products shipped to the Netherlands, which would greatly reduce remittances of bullion to Asia and so facilitate this

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(1596) also served as guides for the Dutch on their voyages to Asia and China at that time. See F. S. Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2003), 15.

[71] Kees Zandvliet, *Mapping for Money: Maps, Plans and Topographic Paintings and Their Role in Dutch Overseas Expansion during the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Amsterdam: Batavian Lion International, 1998), 50–55.

[72] Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline*, 16.

[73] On the founding of the VOC, ibid., 17–36.

long-distance trade.[74] Due to its vast territory and its geographical proximity to and political connections with other countries in Asia, China was of great strategic significance. Nevertheless, attempts to trade directly with Chinese ports encountered difficulties. Above all things, the Chinese authorities continued to pursue an isolationist policy and forbade any trade with foreign countries, apart from what private Chinese merchants were allowed to trade. In addition, there were few good opportunities for the Dutch as Portugal had largely monopolized the Chinese market from its foothold in Macao. This made it very difficult to establish communications between Chinese officials and the newcomers.[75]

In the first few decades of the seventeenth century, the VOC tried to access the Chinese market and break the Portuguese monopoly position by force. According to Jan Pieterszoon Coen (1587–1629), governor-general of the VOC, the Company's ships should "pester and harrass the whole coast of China as much as possible, so that the Chinese will be forced to make a negotiated settlement [with us], which will undoubtedly happen."[76] After they were repelled at Macao, the Dutch continued their cruise along the southeast coast of Fujian (福建) province and successfully occupied Penghu (澎湖). By diplomatic negotiations with Chinese authorities there, the Dutch

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[74] For more information about the intra-Asian trade, see Jan Nov De Vries and A. M. van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 386–93.

[75] Leonard Blussé, *Tribuut aan China 1601–1989 (中荷交往史 1601–1989)* (Amsterdam: Cramwinckel, 1989), 31–47.

[76] Jan Pieterszoon Coen, "Bescheiden Omtrent Zijn Bedrijf in Indie," ed. H. T. Colenbrander (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1919). This is cited from a letter of June 20, 1623: "maar daerenboven lancx de gantsche cust van China soon seer quellen ende incommoderen als doenlijck is, om de Chinesen daerdoor te constringeren, selffs raedt ende middel tot gevoechelijcke accomodatie te soecken, gelijck ontwijffelijkcken geschieden sall." Actually, in 1622 he assigned Commander Cornelis Reijersen to lead a fleet to China with a commission to negotiate the opening of free trade and to seek an opportunity to attack and occupy Macao. On June 22, Dutch troops landed on Macao but were defeated by the Portuguese after a fierce battle.

were eventually allowed to establish a port in Taiwan (台湾, also known to Europeans as Formosa) in return for their promise to stay away from the mainland.[77]

The Dutch colonisation of Taiwan was not only a milestone in the development of the VOC's intra-Asian trade strategy, as Taiwan soon became a way station in the trade between China and Japan, but it also brought massive profits from the production of sugar, the trade in deerhides, and taxes paid by Chinese settlers in Taiwan.[78] Still, direct access to the Chinese market did not become easier because of this. In the 1650s when China was going through the disruptive transition from the Ming Dynasty to the Manchu Qing Dynasty, the Dutch found their situation imperilled by Zheng Chenggong (郑成功, known to Europeans as Koxinga or Coxinga), a Chinese military leader who was loyal to the Ming Dynasty and successfully raised a rebellion in southern China. During his rebellion against the new emperor, Zheng Chenggong built up a naval force and planned to conquer Taiwan as a refuge for people fleeing from the Qing Dynasty.[79] His naval force attacked Dutch ships in order to control the coastal areas and take over Dutch shipping routes and trading profits. Consequently, Taiwan's strategic position as a Dutch base of operations was seriously impeded and the profits from Taiwan significantly declined, which also began to endanger the Dutch

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[77] For the battles and negotiations from 1622 to 1624, see John E. Wills, *Pepper, Guns, and Parleys: The Dutch East India Company and China, 1622–1681* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 20–24.

[78] By doing so, the VOC could reduce the quantity of silver that was sent from Holland to Asia. For more information on the importance of the trade with China in the intra-Asian trade, see E. M. Jacobs, *Merchant in Asia: the Trade of the Dutch East India Company during the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2006), 285.

[79] Blussé, "No Boats to China: The Dutch East India Company and the Changing Pattern of the China Sea Trade, 1635–1690," 67.

trade with Japan.[80] The need to establish new connections with the mainland became more urgent.

Under these circumstances, the VOC's directors in Batavia decided to employ diplomatic means to secure permission from the Manchu government for direct trade. The dynastic transition seemed to provide an excellent opportunity to open up China and start up its contact with the outside world. Therefore, when Martini conveyed a message to Batavia in 1653 that the Chinese emperor intended to grant all foreigners the right and freedom of trade in the city of Canton, the Dutch immediately realized that they needed to seize the opportunity.[81] This time, their strategy was to obtain trading privileges in China through diplomacy with the new Manchu government, to which end they sent an embassy to negotiate these matters with Chinese authorities in Peking.[82]

The governor-general and council in Batavia set out very comprehensive instructions for the ambassadors, Pieter de Goyer and Jacob Keijser,[83] two experienced merchants of the Company who led this mission.

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[80] Blussé, *Tribuut aan China 1601–1989*, 67. Zheng Zhilong started direct trade in silk between mainland China and Japan in 1641, which forced the VOC to open up other supply routes. Also see Kops, "Not Such an 'Unpromising Beginning': The First Dutch Trade Embassy to China, 1655–1657," 540. By the mid-seventeenth century, the competition between Zheng Chenggong and the VOC for the Japanese market was fierce and the VOC portion was always significantly smaller than Zheng's.

[81] See Lach and Van Kley, *Trade, Missions, Literature*, 483; Olfert Dapper, *Gedenkwaerdig Bedryf der Nederlandsche Oost-Indische Maetschappye op de Kuste en in het Keizerrijk van Taising of Sina* (Amsterdam: Jacob van Meurs, 1670), 3; Pieter van Dam and F. W. Stapel, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie* ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1927), vol. 1, bk. 2, p. 606, n. 3, and Edwin J. Van Kley, "News from China: Seventeenth-Century European Notices of the Manchu Conquest," *Journal of Modern History* 45: 4 (Dec., 1973): 569.

[82] The VOC's attempts to negotiate direct trade with China are also described in the VOC's instruction to the ambassadors, which is preserved in the National Archives of the Netherlands, The Hague; see VOC 879, "Bataviaes Uitgaand Briefboek," 1655, Instruction fol. 366–371. It is thanks to Natalie Everts' great help with the transcription and translation of these Dutch archives of the seventeenth century that I could complete my research.

[83] De Bruyn Kops has given a detailed background introduction of these two leaders of this embassy visit to China. De Goyer was assigned as chief merchant and commander of the VOC fleet to the Philippines and chief merchant in Sumatra and Siam in 1648. Although he was accused of trading for

In addition to being ordered to negotiate with Chinese authority for direct trade, they were also instructed as follows:

> and because you people will make a journey through this land, which until now, as far as we know, has never been carried out by any Dutch man, you will come across many strange things that never have been seen or heard of or known to exist. Therefore, you people shall take perfect notes of all these things, the one after the other, and describe everything which befalls you precisely. You have been assigned a steward to accompany you, an artful drawer, who will capture all the towns, villages, palaces, rivers, fortified and other strange buildings you will pass by, depicting their correct shape and appearance. We shall also supply you with the description and a map made by the Jesuit Father Martinus Martini who, as he himself has stated, wandered through all parts of the kingdom of China. During your journey, on many other occasions, it can be most useful to you. Therefore, we thought it necessary to hand these over to you, among other documents, for corroboration. (Ende aangesien Ul. op deese landtreyse, die noch noyt onses weetens door eenich Neederlander is gedaen, veele vreemdicheden die noyt gesien of gehoort en sijn, sullen ontmoeten, soo sullen Ul. van ‘teen en ‘tander perfecte aanteeckeninge doen, ende alles correct beschrijven ‘tgeene Ul. in den wech weedervaren mocht, sijnde

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personal gain in 1649 and was ordered to return to Holland, he was appointed to lead the embassy to China in 1655 because of his past performance. Jacob de Keijser was promoted to full merchant status in 1650 and in 1651 was made chief merchant in Tonkin. See Kops, “Not Such an ‘Unpromising Beginning’: The First Dutch Trade Embassy to China, 1655–1657,” 544–45.

> den hofmeester die Ul. meede gegeven wert, een constich teyckenaer, door welcken alle steeden, dorpen, paleysen, rivieren, vasticheeden ende andre merckweerdige gebouwen, die Ul. voorbij passeeren mocht, in haare rechte forme ende gestaltenisse connen afgebeeldet werden. Sullende oock de beschrijvinge ende een gemaeckte caerte van den Jesuijten pater Martinus Martini, die meest alle de deelen des Coninckrijckx van China soo hij seyt selver doorwandelt heeft, in uwe reyse, ende veele andere geleegentheeden meer, seer dienstig weesen connen. Hebbende daeromme noodich geacht UL. Deselve onder andere papieren tot hunne speculentie mede ter handt te doen stellen.)[84]

The Gentlemen Seventeen not only desired to obtain trading privileges in China, but they also sought to gather knowledge about China including visual information, for which purpose they specifically commissioned a steward with drawing skills to depict scenes of China in " their correct shape and appearance." It so happened that Johan Nieuhof was enlisted in this position.

1.2 Johan Nieuhof and his commission

Johan Nieuhof was born on 22 July 1618 in the small German border town of Uelsen in the county of Bentheim. His father, a native of the Dutch town of Kampen, was burgomaster of Uelsen, which suggests that Nieuhof may have received a good education when he grew up. Furthermore, as Uelsen is on the border with the Netherlands, this may have given Nieuhof the opportunity to search for fortune and adventure in Amsterdam. It was

[84] See VOC 879, "Bataviaes Uitgaand Briefboek," 1655, Instruction fol. 366–398.

here that Nieuhof's adventurous life began. In 1640, when he was twenty-two years old, he followed his uncle Alexander Picard on a voyage from Amsterdam to Brazil in the service of the Dutch West India Company (W.I.C.).[85]

The W.I.C. had tried to establish a plantation colony after conquering a large part of Portuguese Brazil. However, in 1645 most of the conquest territory was lost again and the W.I.C. managed to retain only one fort in Brazil until 1654. During his stay in Brazil, which ended in 1649, Nieuhof must have witnessed these events and he likely acquired plenty of knowledge and experience that would stand him in good stead in his later career. At that time, Dutch Brazil was home not only to merchant settlers and soldiers of the W.I.C. who were there for strictly commercial or military purposes, but many artists, scientists, and writers, were also present to record exotic scenes and to scientifically document this new territory in detail. These were either commissioned by the W.I.C. or worked under the patronage of Prince Johan Maurits (1604–1679), who had been appointed as governor-general of the Dutch colony of Brazil. For instance, in 1636 Frans Post was among the artists and scientists who sailed to Brazil with a commission from Johan Maurits to record various aspects of Brazilian life and of its landscape, fauna, and flora.[86] He produced many drawings of Brazil and after his return to the Netherlands elaborated them into paintings

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[85] The Witsens were patrons of many talented people who served the Dutch abroad. See Nieuhof, *Voyages & Travels to the East Indies 1653–1670,* v–x. In the introduction, Reid provides information about Nieuhof and the background about the publication of this book. On Nieuhof's background, also see Nijenhuis, "Johan Nieuhof," 36–44.

[86] On the artistic activities in Brazil in the seventeenth century, see Rebecca Parker Brienen, *Visions of Savage Paradise: Albert Eckhout, Court Painter in Colonial Dutch Brazil* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 12–24.

that showed the Dutch vivid images of this distant land.[87] Nieuhof would have noticed and learned from these artists and their works during his stay in Brazil.

In July 1649, Nieuhof decided to return to his hometown via Amsterdam, and as Anthony Reid speculates, could have carried with him a fine collection of notes and sketches he made during his stay in Brazil.[88] It is believed that the commission to make drawings of Chinese scenes for the VOC was based on a recommendation from Cornelis Witsen to his fellow members of the Gentlemen Seventeen after he had seen Nieuhof's drawings of Brazil. In any event, in 1653 he set off to Asia in the service of the VOC. The voyage to Batavia took eight months including one month rest and refitting at the Cape of Good Hope of which Nieuhof made a detailed description.[89] In his book on China, Nieuhof discusses his decision to go to East India and join the embassy to China.

> After my return from the west-Indies, where I had sometime remained, my occasions invited me from home (a contrary course) to the East-Indies; where, not long after my arrival at Batavia, it was order'd by the General Maatzuyker, and the Honorable Council then residing there, to send Peter de Goyer, and Jacob Keysar as Ambassadors, with Credentials, and a considerable Train of Attendants, to Peking in China, to the Grand Cham of Tartary, the now Emperor of China, impowering

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[87] Joaquim Sousa Leão Filho, *Frans Post, 1612–1680* (Amsterdam: A. L. van Gendt, 1973), 24–42; also see Brienen, *Visions of Savage Paradise,* 32–33.
[88] Nieuhof, *Voyages & Travels to the East Indies 1653–1670*, vi.
[89] Ibid., 150.

> to Negotiate concerning a free and mutual Commerce with them in his Kingdoms and Territories.[90]

He also mentions this assignment in his posthumously published book, *Voyages & Travels to the East Indies, 1653–1670*:

> Whilst I tarried at Batavia, an embassy was sent from the general director Johan Maetzuicker and the other directors of the East-India company, to the *Cham of Tartary*, who some few years before had conquered the most potent empire of China, to treat about a free commerce betwixt the two nations, which had several times before been attempted and sought for by the Dutch, but was as often refused by the Chinese. Jacob de Keisar and Peter de Goyer being appointed ambassadors, two yachts, viz. the *Koudekerke* and *Bloemendael*, man'd with 90 men, and provided with several fine presents for the emperor were got ready for their transport, and I was ordered to go aboard the Bloemendael in the quality of steward.[91]

This book also offers another version of how he came to join the embassy as a steward:

> The ambassadors embark'd the 14th of July 1655, and set sail the same day from the road of Batavia. The 4th of September they arrived in the city of Kanton, and the 4th of May 1656, in the city

[90] Nieuhof, *An embassy from the East-India Company of the United Provinces, to the Grand Tartar Cham, Emperor of China*, 3.
[91] Nieuhof, *Voyages & Travels to the East Indies 1653–1670*, 157.

> of Nanking, and the 16th of July at Peking. After some stay there, they returned the 21st of November to Nanking, to Kanton the 28th of February 1657, and came into the road of Batavia the 21st of March, where they gave an account of their negotiation to the Dutch council of the Indies: Of all which I have given you an ample account in my Chinese voyage, published first in Low Dutch, and since translated into several other languages, and printed at Amsterdam for Jacob Meurs, with many cuts [engravings] and draughts of places, living creatures, fruits and other remarkable things.[92]

Nieuhof's experiences and the accounts of his commission in this period not only provide a foundation for the further study on the authorship of the Paris manuscript; they also provide important background for an examination of the drawings in the Paris manuscript and the illustrations in the printed book. Although the first Dutch diplomatic visit to China did not accomplish its purpose, the travel account by Nieuhof achieved great success in Europe. After Nieuhof returned from China to Holland, he was frequently visited by people who were curious about China and urged him to publish his account.

The book was published in 1665 by the Amsterdam printer Jacob van Meurs with the support of Cornelis Witsen.[93] It was regarded as the most comprehensive representation of China of the time. However, Nieuhof did not have the chance to enjoy this publication triumph because after only a

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[92] Ibid., 157. However, it is unclear whether this description was written by him or his brother Hendrik Nieuhof, who was later also responsible for the publication of his book of East India.
[93] According to the preface by Hendrik Nieuhof, the book was dedicated to Hendrik Dirksz and Cornelis Witsen, see Nieuhof, *Het Gezantschap*, 3.

three-month stay in Amsterdam, he had left the Netherlands in October 1658 and after a voyage of about seven months arrived back in Batavia on 18 July 1659.[94]

Not long after, he was ordered on board of the ship *Henrietta Louisa* and set sail from Batavia to Ambon (which he called Amboyna) on 23 December 1659.[95] He made an impressive description of the islands Buru (Bouro) and Ambon, including their villages, surroundings, local plants, and so on.[96] On 3 May 1660, he set sail to Batavia and arrived there on the twenty-ninth. No sooner had he arrived than he received orders to go to Japan.[97] He set sail with Jan van der Laan, the commander of fifteen ships with orders to sail to Taiwan and attack the city of Macao and to take heed of Zheng Chenggong's activities.[98] But the Dutch fleet was devastated by a violent storm and it had to be repaired at the Dutch base in southwestern Taiwan. Nieuhof wrote regretfully of "the season for our intended voyage to Japan being past, as forced against my will to unload my ship here, and the design against Makao [Macao] being laid aside for that time, because Koxinga was abroad with a powerful force." So he was dispatched to negotiate with Zheng Chenggong, only to bring back Zheng's reply that he was too busy planning his campaigns in China.[99] Nonetheless a few months later Zheng Chenggong invaded Taiwan and forced the Dutch to surrender after a siege of nine months on 1 February 1662.[100]

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[94] Nieuhof, *Voyages & Travels to the East Indies 1653–1670*, 159.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid., 160–68.
[97] Ibid., 168.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid., 169.
[100] Ibid., 173–74. According to Reid, the war between Zheng Chenggong and the VOC was also recorded in his *Voyages & Travels to the East Indies 1653–1670*, probably by his brother Hendrik rather than by Nieuhof himself.

Nieuhof left Taiwan on 11 December 1660 and sailed for the Persian port of Gamron to load a cargo of sugar. [101] He reached his destination on 6 April 1661 via Colombo and set sail for south India on 2 June 1661, and there he spent the next five years.[102]

Between June and August 1661, he visited some Coromandel ports and cities including San Thomé, Punto Pedro, Negapatan, and Paliakatte. By that route he arrived again in Colombo on 7 October, where he was not only a supervisor but also treasurer of the train of artillery for the campaign against the city of Kolang [Quilon] in December. He was also involved in the conquest of Cranganor in January 1662. He was ordered to take charge of settling everything and repairing the castle in Kolang, where was stationed for the next two years.[103] He left Kolang in March 1664 and was put in charge of the Dutch post of Tuticorin until May 1665 when he returned to Quilon to resolve some problems.[104] However, he ran into trouble with Commissary Rijcklof van Goens, and was summoned to Colombo where he remained under arrest for eleven months.[105]

After his release in August 1667, he was sent to Batavia where he stayed there for three more years, "without being engaged in the company's service, and in 1670 returned thence into Holland." During this period, he still kept making drawings, and he wrote that "During those three years, I had sufficient opportunity to take a full view of the city, both within and without, in which I was so curious, as not only to make draughts of all its

[101] Ibid., ix.
[102] Ibid., 209.
[103] Ibid., 219.
[104] Ibid., 257.
[105] Ibid., 257. This experience is also discussed in Bodel Nijenhuis, "Johan Nieuhof," 48–50.

public structures, but also of such plants and trees as grow in and about that city."[106]

In 1669 he sent a letter to the VOC defending himself against accusations of malpractices committed at Kolang.[107] This letter was first discovered by Blussé during his study of Nieuhof.[108] In this letter he claimed that he was not able to pay the Company 8,227 *Rijksdaalder* as a free man. Finally it seems that the patrons of his book on China, the Witsen family, helped him to return Holland from Batavia in 1670. He arrived at Amsterdam in 1671 and successfully proved his innocence to the Gentlemen Seventeen. It is likely that at the time he also brought back his works and material about the East Indies, which were again left with his brother.

In fact, this was to be his last sojourn in Holland. As Reid has commented, "even though he was now fifty-three years old and might have been expected to enjoy his literary fame in Europe, Johan Nieuhof once again prove restless to explore yet more quarters of the world."[109]

He set off again in December 1671 and his ship, the *Pijl,* arrived in Table Bay within sight of the Cape of Good Hope on 8 April 1672. On 6 June, the ships *Boog* and *Pijl* continued their passage towards the island of Madagascar which they first sighted on the twentieth.[110] There Nieuhof traded with local chiefs, and once he "brought back 22 slaves, 13 cows, some sheep and other provisions."[111] On 29 September 1672, he was near the Cape of Konquifo and went ashore to visit the local king in hopes to exchange some of his commodities, but he never returned. Even though the

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[106] Nieuhof, *Voyages & Travels to the East Indies 1653–1670*, 263.
[107] This letter is preserved in the National Archives of the Netherlands, The Hague; see VOC 1266, fol. 1006–23.
[108] See Blussé and Falkenburg, *Johan Nieuhofs Beelden van een Chinareis 1655–1657*, 15.
[109] See Nieuhof, *Voyages & Travels to the East Indies 1653–1670*, x.
[110] Ibid., 324.
[111] Ibid., 325.

directors of the Chamber of Amsterdam finally dispatched a vessel to search for him in May 1676 at his brother Hendrik's request, the local ruler claimed that he knew nothing.[112] It was believed that he and those accompanying him were killed after setting foot on land.[113] In 1682, ten years after his presumed death, Nieuhof's publications on Brazil, *Gedenkweerdige Brasiliaense Zee en Lant-reize*, and the East Indies, *Zee en lant-reize, door verscheide gewesten van Oostindien*, were produced by the same publisher that had released his book on China and which was now in the hands of the widow of Van Meurs. These books had less influence and appeared in fewer editions and translations than his book on China.

In all, Nieuhof's biography shows that this adventurer actually devoted much of his life to travel and the business of trade, and that he enjoyed making drawings of whatever he encountered. Except for the drawings of China, Brazil, and the East Indies and two maps, it seems that Nieuhof did not leave any other works of art. In any case, he was interested in recording exotic lands, the costume and customs of the people, and the like, but he did not seek a career as a professional draftsman. Therefore, even if he may have received some artistic training, Nieuhof's sketches made in China and elsewhere should be judged as the work of a traveller and reporter of the world rather than as the products of a professional artist or draftsman.

1.3 The Dutch envoys' court voyage and their adventures in China

Besides the two ambassadors, Pieter de Goyer and Jacob Keijser, the full VOC delegation included six waiters, four other merchants, two interpreters, a surgeon, a drummer, a trumpeter, and a steward, namely, Johan Nieuhof.

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[112] Ibid., 326.
[113] For a more detailed description of Nieuhof's life, ibid., 324–326.

The envoys set sail from Batavia on 14 June 1655, heading for Canton. A month later they came in sight of Macao, a Portuguese town encircled by walls and connected to the mainland via a narrow strip of sand and rocks. On 18 June, they dropped anchor in the roadstead of Hutoumen (虎头门), "a delightful place and very convenient for trade." They waited there for around two weeks until several mandarins accompanied them to Canton. There they met the viceroys of Canton and got an interview which ended with a conclusion that nothing could be decided on the spot; orders from Peking had to be awaited.[114] A few months later they received permission to travel to Peking. Moreover, the Chinese emperor supplied them with a veritable fleet to carry not only the delegation and all its baggage but also a large escort of Manchu soldiers commanded by three mandarins. Messengers were sent ahead to inform the magistrates of the towns along their route to prepare to welcome the guests. The preparation took such a long time that impatience started to grow with the Dutch delegation. Finally, the junks set off on 17 March 1656. The distance from Canton to Peking is around two thousand miles along rivers and numerous canals. As the voyage relied on the wind and, more often, the efforts of the oarsmen and pullers, the junks proceeded slowly and with many difficulties: in narrow rivers the current might grow swift and turbulent so that the junks darted between rocks and overhanging cliffs, and some oarsmen fell into the water and drowned.[115] Fortunately, the poor voyage conditions encountered by the

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[114] For a more detailed description on the route and experience, see Kops, "Not Such an 'Unpromising Beginning': The First Dutch Trade Embassy to China, 1655–1657," 553–58.

[115] Nieuhof had described the miserable conditions that the embassy encountered on their voyage. For instance, "Kregen 's nachts een geweldig onweer, ene van onze jonken, daar 's keyzers schen kadie in was, woey de mast over boord en kaakte dwars an de wall, met groott perijkell om te bersten, doch de vlijticheid van 't volk bracht." See Blussé and Falkenburg, *Johan Nieuhofs Beelden van een Chinareis 1655–1657*, 36–37.

envoys were compensated for by the great hospitality of the many provincial governors and city officials who presented magnificent banquets when the envoy group passed these towns or cities. These occasions offered excellent opportunities for the Dutch delegation, especially Nieuhof, to closely observe China, its cities and its people, their costume and customs, Chinese houses and their interior decorations, and all other exotic things.[116] The group eventually reached Peking on 16 July and they stayed there for around four months awaiting the tribute meeting with Chinese emperor and his officials. After that, they set off from Peking on 16 October and returned to Canton on 28 January 1657.[117] The Company had hoped to obtain trading privilege for permanent access to China, but when the envoys eventually returned back to Batavia on 31 March 1657, they had failed to obtain free trade. The Qing government only granted the Dutch the right to pay tribute every eight years, to the disappointment of the Company.[118] So the VOC had to content itself with carrying on the China trade via Chinese junks visiting Batavia.

The route north is particularly well depicted in Thévenot's version, which marks the major cities and towns that the envoy group stopped by or passed through on their way to Peking. Although this map (fig. 1.1) only describes the route in a rough geographical sketch, it offers people clear information as to how the envoy travelled through China. As Thévenot explains in the introduction of his version of Nieuhof's work, "I have also

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[116] The Dutch envoy had been often hospitably treated by Chinese local officials. See Nieuhof, *An Embassy from the East-India Company of the United Provinces, to the Grand Tartar Cham, Emperor of China*, 45, 56, 73, 74, 77, etc.

[117] The general description of the Dutch envoy's route and experience in China, see Gianni Guadalupi, *China Revealed: The West Encounters the Celestial Empire* (Vercelli: White Star, 2003), 113–24. Also see Kops, "Not Such an 'Unpromising Beginning': The First Dutch Trade Embassy to China, 1655–1657," 553–58.

[118] On the achievements gained in the first Dutch envoy visit to China, see Kops, "Not Such an Unpromising Beginning: The First Dutch Trade Embassy to China, 1655–1657," 535–78.

had the route engraved in the shape of a maritime map, which is one of the most remarkable parts in this *Relation*, as it shows people who were under the Dutch mission marked exactly their path and route, and therefore it will serve as a standard to examine maps of China."[119]

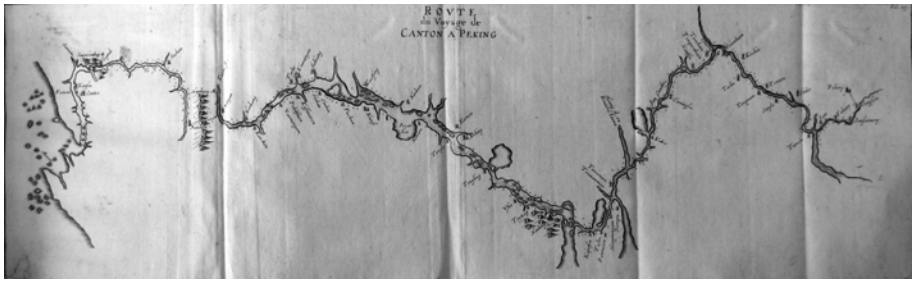

Figure 1.1. Map of the route of the Dutch envoy visit in China in Thévenot' *Relation*, 1666.

Thévenot's comment affirms the credibility of Nieuhof's experience in China. In Van Meurs's edition, this route is also represented but it is somewhat different (fig. 1.2). Like the different styles of text and illustrations, the map in Thévenot's version is concise and simple and shows only the route, while in Van Meurs's edition the route is traced on a map of China, which may be based on Martini's *Atlas.* Comparing both of them with a modern map (fig. 1.3) of China on which are identified all the cities and towns the Dutch envoys passed, one finds that the maps in both books represent a rather accurate route of the Dutch embassy in China. Unlike Martini's map, which generally represents China from a distance, Nieuhof's map and the descriptions in the text enable the readers to follow his travels through China.

[119] Thévenot, *Relations de divers voyages curieux,* Introduction, unnumbered.

Figure 1.2. Map of the route of the Dutch envoy visit in China from J. Nieuhof, *Het Gezantschap der Neerlandtsche Oost-Indische Compagnie, etc.* (Amsterdam, 1665).

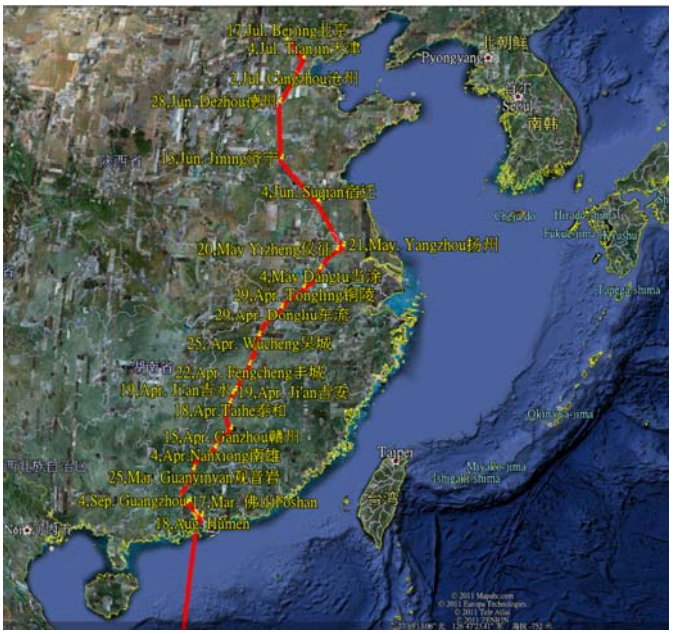

Figure 1.3. Map showing the Dutch envoy route in China from 1655 to 1657.

1.4 The Paris manuscript

The Paris manuscript is in brown hardcovers between which there are ten signatures of papers bound by cotton thread. Each signature consists of twelve sheets of paper and each of these is folded in half; so the twelve sheets of large paper become twenty-four smaller pieces of paper measuring 24cm by 17cm.[120]

In the search for the circumstances how the Paris manuscript was produced, a poem written by the contemporary poet Joachim Oudaen about the experiences of the painter Neun (probably the Jan van Goyen follower, Pieter de Neyn [1597-1639]) of being caught in a downpour reveals a way of drawing common at that time, that is, artists made sketches on the spot and executed finished drawings later in their studios based on these sketches:

"Neun, who likes to draw landscapes, sets out for the open fields,
But soon the sun pales and the air (loses) its sweetness.
He watches the clouds (harbingers of a heavy downpour)
And shortly he feels drop upon little drop: (the threat of a rain shower)
……..
He gets home so thoroughly soaked, dirty and wet
That he resembles a big friendly dog without a tail or a drowned cat.
This time he remembers something better than the appearance of meadows and fields,
And, so that he show it, he takes his brush and paints

[120] Therefore, there are in total 240 pages and 239 of them are filled with text and drawings and the rest of them remain blank.

> And he depicts his adventure, how the wind and rain beat him,
> How swiftly his legs moved, just as it appears before you."[121]

Seventeenth-century Dutch artists conventionally followed Karel van Mander's art theories and drew sketches in portable sketchbooks outdoors, particularly when they travelled to Germany, France, Italy, and newly discovered countries in Asia and Africa. Throughout their journeys to these places, they drew from nature and brought these sketches back to their studios for more refined reproduction. Hence the sketchbook was their constant companion. For instance, Jan van Goyen (1596–1656) made more than a thousand drawings, a significant number of which were made in the open air. He always put a sketchbook in his pocket when he left home. Although few of his numerous sketchbooks are still intact, the one in the Bredius-Kronig collection presents a good example of what a sketchbook looks like and how the sketches were made.[122] After returning to their studios, the sketches were either used as source for paintings or further elaborated into drawings for sale.[123] This was particularly the case for artists who had journeyed to foreign lands. Allaert van Everdingen and Jacob van Ruisdael, for instance, made drawings of Scandinavian landscapes when they travelled there, and Herman Saftleven drew the scenery of German towns and so forth during his journey in Germany.[124]

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[121] Peter Sutton, *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting* (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1987), 11.

[122] See Edwin Buijsen, *The Sketchbook of Jan Van Goyen from the Bredius-Kronig Collection* (The Hague: The Foundation: Bredius Genootschap, 1993).

[123] Many drawings had a highly finished quality for sale by Dutch artists in the seventeenth century. On the idea of finished drawings, see Francis Waring Robinson and Sheldon Peck, *Fresh Woods and Pastures New: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Drawings from the Peck Collection* (Chapel Hill, NC: Ackland Art Museum, 1999), 11–13.

[124] Wolfgang Stechow, *Dutch Landscape Painting of the Seventeenth Century* (1968; repr. Oxford: Phaidon, 1981), 167–69.

It is very likely that Nieuhof followed a similar procedure, making sketches outdoors and reworking the drawings afterwards. More specifically, he would use a sketchbook to quickly take down in pencil, chalk, or watercolour what he saw of cities, towns, architecture, plants, and whatever else seemed worthwhile to him in China. Afterwards, he would have reworked these rough sketches when he returned to Batavia or the Netherlands. Therefore it is unlikely that the Paris manuscript (the account presented to the Gentlemen Seventeen) was the original sketchbook used by Nieuhof on the spot, especially as the accompanying text has been very neatly written. A deeper review of its characteristics will further prove this argument.

In the text and drawings of the Paris manuscript there are two series of numbers marked in the upper right or left hand corner; one is written in pencil and the other in pen.[125] The pencilled numbers appear consistently on the pages filled with text and drawings, indicating the sequence of the specific page in the whole manuscript. The pen-marked numbers, however, are not consistent and only appear on pages filled with drawings. Additionally, it is noteworthy that another series of numbers occasionally appears in the middle of some drawings, which do not correspond with the two above-mentioned series of numbers, but seem to coincide with the specific sequence of the drawings.[126] Taking the drawing in (figure 1.4), for

[125] The two sets of page numbers written in pencil and ink are actually different from each other. The numbers in pencil are paginated from the beginning to the end, including the text and the drawings. The numbers in sepia ink run from drawing f7 (1) to drawing f29 (7), then from drawing f35 (11) to drawing f46 (17), and stop at drawing f49 (19). This sepia ink is quite similar to the ink used to illustrate the frame.

[126] Moreover, the numbers from drawing fol. 132 (59) to drawing fol. 229 are marked in very light sepia ink within the frame, at some random place in the drawing. Sometimes, they are not consistent with the number marked outside of the frame. For instance, in one drawing, the number outside the frame is fol. 77, but fol. 78. In this case, it is possible that Nieuhof initially had plans for the number of the drawings but made changes in the later actual execution.

example, the number “155” (fig. 1.4.1) is marked in pencil on the upper right, corner indicating the page number of this drawing in the whole manuscript, while another number “n°71” in red ink (fig. 1.4.2) appears in the middle of this drawing. By counting its sequence in the drawings in the manuscript, we find that this drawing is the seventy-first of the eighty-one drawings. The existence of these two series of numbers suggests the possibility that the number and content of the drawings was planned and organized before the production of the whole manuscript began. That said, it is likely that the manuscript was carefully arranged in the stable environment of an artist’s studio or a printer’s shop well after the images and text were first drafted.

Figure 1.4. Drawing folio 155 in the Paris manuscript.

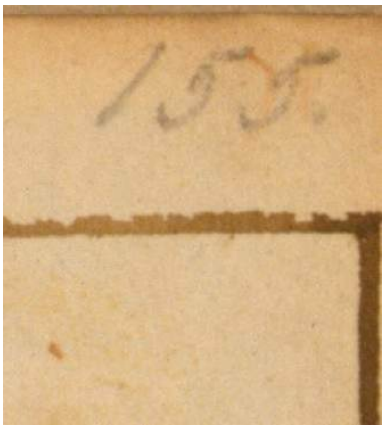

Figure 1.4.1. Number 155 on the right-hand corner of the drawing folio 155.

Figure 1.4.2. Number 71 in the middle of the drawing folio 155.

As a matter of fact, other details that show that the Paris manuscript is a reproduction. First of all, all the sheets of paper are of the same quality and on some of the pages a cross-shaped watermark is recognizable. This is the upper part of a common seventeenth-century watermark (fig. 1.5),[127] which indicates that all these papers came from the same supplier rather than from scattered sources, and that this album is not a collection of loose pieces of work.

[127] For more information about such watermarks, see Frits Lugt, *Dessins flamands du dix-septième siècle* (Brussels: Bibliothèque Royale Albert I, 1972), 130, cat.91.

Figure 1.5. Watermark in the paper of the Paris manuscript.

Second, it can be seen that the whole text is written in the same sepia ink and that all the drawings are depicted in the same pencil, chalk, ink, or watercolour. Given the fact that the Dutch envoys spent one and a half years travelling along waterways from south China to Peking and that they encountered countless severe storms and various difficulties, it would be extremely difficult, if not entirely impossible, for Nieuhof to have had either the proper environment or the time to produce such a well-executed and well-preserved manuscript. Consequently, it is likely that this manuscript was produced afterwards rather than on the spot during the journey.

Thirdly, there are graphite grids regulating the text so that it presents a neat appearance and there are rectangular frames in dark brown ink that delineate the boundaries of the sketch. Moreover, some frames of the drawings are unevenly trimmed and some letters in the text appear beyond the binding thread, where they could not have been written after binding.[128]

[128] For instance, the frame is incomplete in the drawings f23, f103, f112 and f130. And some letters on page 100, which have been folded in the same signature as page 117, are written in the narrow folding space.

Therefore, the binding and trimming apparently took place after the production of the text and the drawings.

These features of the appearance of the manuscript reveal that this is not a sketchbook carried by Nieuhof during his journey in China; instead, it is a reproduction made in a stable environment after the completion of the journey. That is to say, there must have been other original sketches made by Nieuhof on site, which I would just call the original sketches rather than the Paris manuscript. Except for the aforementioned sketches mentioned by Thévenot and Hendrik Nieuhof, the likelihood of the existence of original sketches is supported by the case of the English artist William Alexander (1767–1816) who had an experience similar to that of Nieuhof. Alexander made a great number of drawings of China when he accompanied the British envoy to visit the Chinese emperor Qian-Long's court in 1792–94 and published the watercolours of China at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[129] Considering that Alexander made endless sketches and drawings, of which some 870 survive, it is not difficult to imagine that Nieuhof also produced a great number of sketches in his journey.[130] If that is the case, these original sketches have unfortunately been lost.

1.5 The authorship of the Paris manuscript

Blussé and Falkenburg have discussed whether the authorship of the Paris manuscript should be attributed to Johan Nieuhof in their essays, but

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[129] William Alexander was appointed as one of the draughtsmen to the English Envoy to China in 1792. His illustrations of China were later published in the book on this journey. See Erasme Gower, *An Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China, Including Cursory Observations Made, and Information Obtained, in Travelling through That Ancient Empire and a Small Part of Chinese Tartary* (London, 1797). The remarkable series of prints in this book came to be a significant source of China in the eighteenth century. See also Frances Wood, "Closely Observed China: from William Alexander's sketches to his published work," *British Library Journal* 24 (Spring 1998): 98–121.

[130] On the sketches made by William Alexander, see Wood, "Closely Observed China: From William Alexander's Sketches to His Published Work," 98.

they hold different opinions on this issue. Based on an analysis of the artists' working method—specifically that they were first depicted in pencil and chalk and later in pen—and the comparison with the two maps made by Nieuhof, Falkenburg argues that Nieuhof was only involved in the preliminary depiction in black chalk, and that someone else improved the rough sketches.[131] That is to say, the drawings in the Paris manuscript were co-made by Nieuhof and some unknown draftsman and Nieuhof was not involved in the final phase of producing the manuscript that was supposed to be submitted to the VOC.[132] This complex assumption could explain some inconsistent depictions in pencil, chalk, and pen, and some coarse and unreasonable representations of China; but there is no direct evidence that points to the existence of an unknown draftsman.

As a matter of fact, to explain the coarse and inconsistent depictions in pencil and chalk and in pen, however, a much simpler and more likely explanation should not be ignored, namely that Nieuhof was not a professional draftsman and he needed to recompose the images again and again. In addition to Nieuhof's occupation and his personal interests, which were mainly travel and trade as discussed above, the technical analysis of his works suggests that he was not a terribly good artist. The two maps entitled "de Kerck valley van 't Eylant Sant Helena" help substantiate this point.[133] They are supposed to have been made on Nieuhof's return voyage to Holland in 1658,[134] and scholars are certain that Nieuhof made them

[131] Ibid., 73.
[132] Ibid., 79.
[133] These two maps are donated by Mr. J. T. Bodel Nijenhuis. He has also discussed these two maps; see Nijenhuis, "Johan Nieuhof," 44–46.
[134] They are now collected in the library of Leiden University and the number of these two maps is: UB Bijzondere Collecties (KL); Bodel Nijenhuis; COLLBN 002–12–037; COLLBN 002–12–099.

because one is signed "Nieuhoff Fecit" (Nieuhof made [this]).[135] One map of the valley on the island Saint Helena (fig. 1.6) depicts its subject from a bird's-eye view and displays the massed array of hills with marks, which are explained in the right column. A group of Dutch ships appears in the harbour near the entrance to the valley. Tiny figures engaged in a battle are depicted here and there between the hills; and two groups of people stand out of the landscape at the lower right corner of the map. Although this map contains much information, compared with some contemporary professional maps, for instance, the manuscript map of Ceylon (fig. 1.7) made at the request of Rijcklof van Goens in 1666,[136] it is obvious that Nieuhof's map lacks specificity and refinement. Nieuhof's perspective and the brush strokes used to present the hills, figures, and other elements are too rough to be helpful to sailors or explorers in this foreign land.

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[135] See Nijenhuis, "Johan Nieuhof," 44–46; also see Blussé and Falkenburg, *Johan Nieuhofs Beelden Van Een Chinareis 1655–1657*, 71. "Fecit" always appeared in the works of art in early-modern times, which implies the artist made it.

[136] Copies have been made in 1670 at Batavia and again in 1683 made in Middelburg. See Zandvliet, *Mapping for Money,* 133–134.

Figure 1.6. Johan Nieuhof, "Affbeeldinge van 't eijlandt Sant Helena," 40×51 cm, 1658, Leiden University Library, COLLBN 002–12–037.

Figure 1.7. Manuscript map of Ceylon made at the request of Rijcklof van Goens in 1666, Middelburg. Bibliotheque Nationale, Coll. Société de Géographie 2.

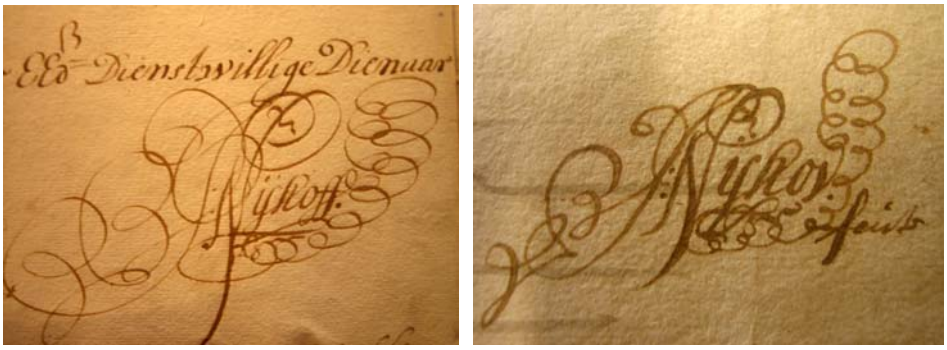
The other map (fig. 1.8) shares many similarities with the drawing of a Chinese river gorge—folio 35 in the Paris manuscript (fig. 1.9)—particularly in the manner of depicting the shape of the hills next to the water. In both works, there are two ranges of mountains standing opposite each other and they are represented as being of an enormous size. Moreover, the mountains in both works have been rendered with watercolour. These similarities suggest that they are made by the same hand, namely, Nieuhof; and the coarse brushstroke also indicates that his artistic skills are not professional. Therefore, when considering the authorship of the Paris manuscript and dealing with its inconsistent representations and coarse depictions, Nieuhof's lack of artistic skill should be considered first, a point we will return to in later chapters.

Figure 1.8. Johan Nieuhof, "De Kerck-valley van 't Eijlant Sant-Helena," 40.5×51.5 cm, 1658, Leiden University Library, COLLBN 002–12–099.

Figure 1.9. Drawing folio 35 in the Paris manuscript.

Apart from his artistic skill, other evidence, including his signature and his written account, suggests that Nieuhof is indeed the author of the Paris manuscript. In the inscription of this manuscript, the signature "Nieuhoff" (fig. 1.10, *A*) appears on the right corner. Although it is more smoothly and beautiful written than the signatures on the maps (as shown in figure 1.10, *B*), they share the same style of writing. The slight difference can be attributed to the fact that they were made under quite different circumstances—those on the maps while on the journey and that on the Paris manuscript being produced specifically for the Gentlemen Seventeen during Nieuhof's stay in Amsterdam. Moreover, the similarities in handwriting are more obvious if we compare the writing in the text of the Paris manuscript (fig. 1.11) and the captions of the maps (fig. 1.12). For instance, the way of writing the letters "h" and "m" are exactly the same. As the maps and the Paris manuscript were finished accomplished in the same

year, the similarity of the handwriting suggests that Nieuhof made the Paris manuscript.



(A) (B)

Figure 1. 10. Nieuhof's Signatures. *A,* the signature signed on the Paris manuscript; *B,* the signature signed on the map "De Kerck-valley van 't Eijlant Sant-Helena."

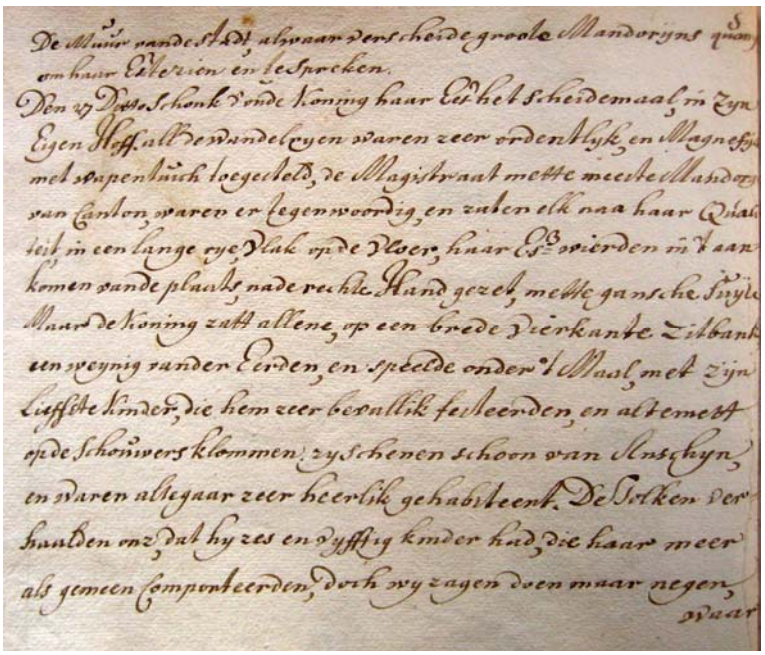


Figure 1.11. Handwriting in the Paris manuscript.

Figure 1.12. Handwriting on the map "De Kerck-valley van 't Eijlant Sant-Helena."

Besides the handwriting, Nieuhof's accounts from different sources also prove his authorship of the Paris manuscript, a point specifically discussed by Blussé. In the course of looking for the source of Nieuhof's printed book on China, he found many valuable documents including Nieuhof's 1669 letter to the directors of the Amsterdam chamber.[137] In this letter, in which he argues that he was not guilty and should not be charged, he traces his career from 1653, the year he entered into VOC service:

[137] The handwriting in the letter to the directors of the VOC is however much clumsy. But considering the fact that this letter was written in a circumstance when Nieuhof was anxious and eager to prove his innocence in 1669, eleven years after the production of the Paris manuscript, his handwriting is somehow different from the Paris manuscript would be understandable.

To this day, when I am writing this letter to defend my honour and the worth of my writings. On 23 October 1653, I set sail from the Vlie in the service of the Amsterdam Chamber on the small yacht the *Kalff*, as a midshipman with a salary of *f* 12 per month. After a long and difficult voyage, I arrived in Batavia. After some months, I was enlisted as a steward to join the renowned embassy to visit the Emperor of China. After having returned [from China], I was ordered to keep the ship's log on the ship the *Peerle*, on which I sailed for the Fatherland, where I arrived safely in 1658.

Here I received orders from Your Honours to describe the journey I had made, which I immediately obeyed with pleasure, putting my best effort into it, stretching my meagre intelligence to the utmost. After some months, I submitted this [the description of the journey] to Your Honours at a plenary board meeting, together with a travel map, for which I did gain no little honour alike unto that of various men of learning at that time. Afterwards, this encouraged me so much, that, on 23 October 1658, I departed from the Vlie aboard the beautiful return ship, the *Arnhem*, with the rank of junior merchant and arrived safely in Batavia again on 8 July 1659.

(tot heden toe, wanneer ik dese brieff tot verdediging van mijn eer en goedt schrijve. 't Is dan zulx dat ik den 23 October inden jaare 1653 met het jachtje 't *Kalff* voor de Kamer Amsterdam als adelborst à *f* 12 per maendt uit het Vlie ben 't seil gegaen, en naa een seer lange en swaare voyagie alhier te Batavia aan landt getreden. Naer 't verloop van enige maanden,

zoo ben ik meede op de roll gestellt om het vermaarde gezandtschap aen den Grooten Cham van Chijna en Tartarije als hoffmeester bij te woonen. Naa 't weder keren, zijn mij de scheeps-boecken gelast te houden op 't schip de *Peerle*, alwaar ik weeder meede naa 't Vaderlandt ben vertrocken, en in den jaare 1658 aldaer geluckig aangelandt.

Hier ontfing ik last van Uwer Edle om de gedaane voyagie te beschrijven het welke ik ook zeer gaarne en aanstondts ben naagekomen, voor zoo vele mijn gering en kleen verstandt vermochte, en dieses aen uwer Edle in volle vergaderinge naa enige maanden tijds overgeleverdt: beneffens een Reys-kaarte, 't welk beneffens mij doender tijdt bij verscheide geleerde luiden geen kleine eer toebrachte, en naderhandt zoodanig heeft aangemoedight dat ik den 23^{en}October 1658, met het kostelijke retourschip Arnhem uit het Vlie voor onderkoopman ben uitgeloopen en […] alhier ter rheede voor Batavia den 8^{en} Julij 1659 wederom geluckig was geanckert.)[138]

He also discusses his experiences in this period in his book *The East Indies*, which reads as the follows:

After we had sufficiently refreshed ourselves here [Saint Helena], and provided what necessaries we thought fit, or could get, we left his island the last day of May. We continued our former course, and without any remarkable accident, came in sight of

[138] See Johan Nieuhof's letter to the VOC in Amsterdam on 15 Jan. 1669, which is collected in the National Archives of the Netherlands, VOC 1266, fol. 1007. It is unsure whether this ship's book is about the ship the *Peerle* or about the journey of China.

> Holland, and the 6th of July 1658 arrived happily at Amsterdam. I took up my lodgings at my brother Henry Nieuhoff's, whom as well as most of my other friends, I had the good fortune to find in good health. Many of the most curious persons of that place came daily to see me, to take a view of the Chinese characters, and other draughts I had brought along with me.
>
> After I had tarried for three months in Holland, and dispatched my business both here and in Zeeland, I delivered the journal of my late voyage into China to my brother, in order to have it reviewed and printed, at the request of several persons of quality; with an intention to take a second voyage to the East-Indies, with the first fair opportunity, which was soon after offered me by the directors of the East-India company. 5 ships lay then ready for the East-Indies under the command of Mr. Adrian Aelmonde, viz. the *Arnheim*, burthen 500 tuns, with 40 guns and 430 men, John Tymensz master; the second the *Pearl* and three yachts; I was ordered aboard the first. We set sail all together from the Ulic the 22d of Dec. 1658.[139]

The experiences after his journey in China described here are basically consistent with the account in the above-mentioned letter. Both include a lot of information, not only about the requirement to describe the journey in China and his efforts to accomplish it, but also the exact duration of his stay in the Netherlands. This is very important because it implies that he had enough time to finish the report during his stay in the Netherlands, as he claims in this letter. The letter does not mention the exact date of his arrival

[139] Nieuhof, *Voyages & Travels to the East Indies 1653–1670,* 159.

in the Netherlands but specifies the date of his departure for Asia as 23 October 1658; while in the book *The East Indies*, the date of his arrival in the Netherlands is given as 6 July 1658, and his departure happens three months later without giving an exact date. If both correct, the duration of his stay appears to have been more than three months from 6 July to 23 October 1658.

The duration of his stay in the Netherlands can also be checked through the VOC archival records of ships, the *Peerle* and the *Arnhem*, which were taken by Nieuhof to sail to and from the Netherlands. According to the very detailed archival record, the *Peerle* (which was built in 1651 and belonged to the chamber of Amsterdam), departed from Batavia for Wielingen on 18 December 1657 and arrived at the Cape on 6 March 1658 and stayed there for thirteen days, and finally arrived at Wielingen on 24 July 1658.[140] The record also shows that the *Arnhem* (built in 1654 for the Amsterdam Chamber as well), departed from Vlie on 22 October 1658 and arrived in Batavia on 8 July 1659.[141] The VOC's records of these two ships confirm Nieuhof's accounts in his letter and in *The East Indies*, although the sailing records have him staying in the Netherlands for just under three months. More important, they indirectly verify the issue that Nieuhof had time to produce the Paris manuscript, because the Paris manuscript was supposed to have been made on 3 August,1658, ("de derden van den oogstm[aan] A.D. 1658"), which was during Nieuhof's stay in the Netherlands according to all the evidence.

Nieuhof's letter also confirms that after he returned to the Netherlands he received orders from the directors of the VOC to make a description of

[140] See De VOC. Scheepvaart tussen Nederland en Azië 1595–1795, voyage 5456.3. http://www.historici.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/DAS/detailVoyage/96284
[141] See De VOC. Scheepvaart tussen Nederland en Azië 1595–1795, voyage 0894.2.

his journey in China and that he fulfilled this commission with a narrative and a travel map. This means that besides the specific commission mentioned in the instruction to the ambassadors before the embassy visit to China, Nieuhof was also required to describe this journey after he returned to the Netherlands. This interpretation suggests that "the description," which we suppose to be the Paris manuscript, was probably produced afterwards rather than being made on spot. This may serve as further support for the previous assumption that the Paris manuscript is not the sketchbook used by Nieuhof in China. The presence of Nieuhof's signature, a comparison of the handwriting in this and his other works, and the consistent accounts in his letter and books all make it reasonable to conclude that Nieuhof is the author of the Paris manuscript.

Conclusion

On the basis of the arguments adduced above, we can reconstruct the historical moment and the process of the reproduction of the manuscript as follows. In 1653, Nieuhof set out to Batavia from the island of Vlie. After a few months in Batavia, the governor-general and council ordered him to join the embassy to China as steward (no exact date). During the embassy's visit to China, he made many sketches of landscapes, human figures, and other exotic matters during the embassy visit in China. After the visit in China in 1657, he returned to Batavia on the ship the *Peerle* and from there he sailed with the VOC fleet to the Netherlands on a passage during which he kept the ship's logbook. The passage was interrupted at the island of St. Helena where at the beginning of 1658 Nieuhof produced two drawings with topographical information. The *Peerle* arrived in Holland in July and Nieuhof lodged with his brother, Hendrik, in Amsterdam for three months.

Not long after his arrival in Amsterdam, he was required to submit a report to describe the journey in China. With a lot of effort, he completed the report and submitted it to the directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the VOC on 3 August 1658, within a month of his arrival in Amsterdam. During his stay in the Netherlands, he also went to Zealand to settle some business, and he was visited by many people who were curious about his trip to China and his knowledge about China. This may have further prompted Hendrik to publish his brother's experiences. It is not clear whether Johan had any thought of doing this before his journey through China. But certainly from the first half of the seventeenth century, exotic travel publications became popular in Holland; and Amsterdam was virtually the centre of travel publications, which reaped both publisher and the author plenty of profit. However, because the young adventurer could not wait any longer to proceed with the publication, he left all the materials to his brother to publish his travel account. In that sense, the Paris manuscript may be seen as a preparation for the publication of the travel journal.

Moreover, as Nieuhof had devoted most of his energy to the exploration of the world and the trade business, the Paris manuscript should be regarded as a work made by a happy storyteller and amateur artist who was interested in the exotic and fanciful world. This should serve as a good foundation for studying the text about and drawings of China in the Paris manuscript in detail.