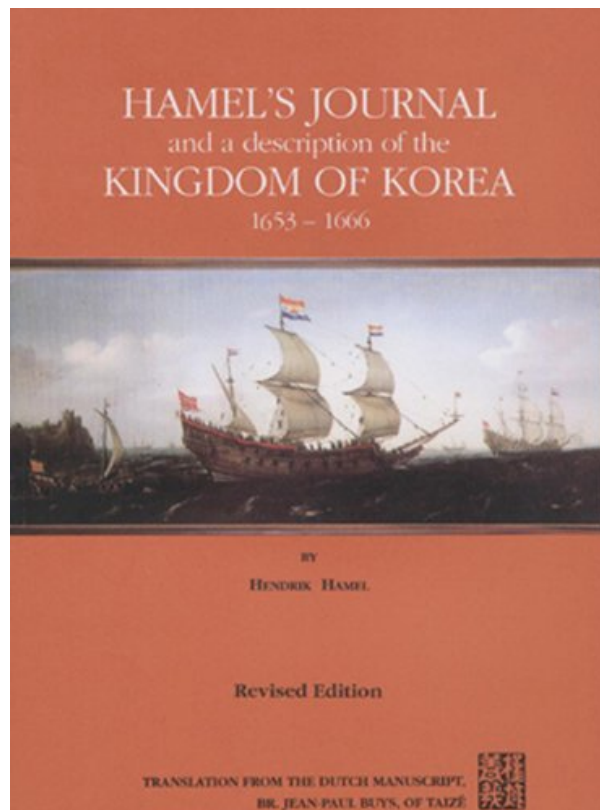


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The first Western account of Korea is the glory of a group of sailors shipwrecked on Cheju-do. Some thirteen years later, after escaping to Japan, Hamel gave the outside world a firsthand description of Korea, an almost unknown country until then. Dr. Jean-Paul, who is Dutch, has made the first translation based on the original manuscript.

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Worthy history worth telling

By M. Smith

Crashed on the shores of a forbidden kingdom unknown to the Western world, a young Dutch bookkeeper and 35 of his shipmates found themselves in uncharted territory in 1653. Unlike the Japanese or Chinese who customarily sent shipwrecked foreigners on their way, the Korean court flatly refused and instead intended the survivors to spend the rest of their days as guests in their kingdom. For thirteen years, that's exactly what happened.

All told, only 8 out of the original 64 members of the Sperwer made it back to their homeland after living in Jeju, Seoul and later split between three cities in the Jolla region. Hamel's observations were well recorded and still provide a fascinating look into life in seventeenth century Korea. This revised edition contains plenty of supplementary information. A small treasure worth reading.

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For Korean Scholars as well as the Adventurous and Imaginative

By Sherri L. Ter Molen

Hamel captures 17th century Korea in the pages of his journal where he details his shipwreck and subsequent thirteen years of captivity since the ruler of the Hermit Kingdom does not want the sailors to have the chance to tell the outside world about the existence of his country. Eventually, some of the sailors make a dramatic escape, and Hamel's account is published. Having some prior knowledge of Korean culture and history (even if it is derived from sageuk, Korean historical dramas) might be helpful for readers of this short volume. Nevertheless, it might be enjoyed by mature readers who once enjoyed the fanciful tale of Dinotopia because Hamel's journal is not entirely unlike the fictional journal of Arthur Denison. Therefore, this book should have wide appeal for Korean scholars and the adventurous and imaginative at heart alike.

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