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## **The Dutch East India Company's tea trade with China, 1757-1781**

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THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY'S TEA TRADE  
WITH CHINA, 1757-1781

*Dedicated to the memory of  
my maternal grandmother Liu Hehua  
and paternal grandfather Liu Daoman*

THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY'S  
TEA TRADE WITH CHINA, 1757-1781

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van  
de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,  
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus Dr. D.D. Breimer,  
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## ABBREVIATIONS

BGB	Archives of the Bookkeeper-General in Batavia ( <i>Archieven van de Boekhouder-Generaal te Batavia</i> ), NA
BHIC	Brabant Historical Information Centrum ( <i>Brabants Historisch Informatie Centrum</i> ), 's-Hertogenbosch
BKI	<i>Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië</i>
BL	British Library, London
CAS	Collection Atlas van Stolk ( <i>collectie Atlas van Stolk</i> ), HMR
CMD	<i>Canton-Macao Dagregister</i>
DAC	Danish Asiatic Company
dl.	volume ( <i>deel</i> )
EIC	English East India Company
ed.	editor or edited
eds	editors
GAA	Municipal Archives Amsterdam ( <i>Gemeentearchief Amsterdam</i> )
GAU	Municipal Archives Utrecht ( <i>Gemeentearchief Utrecht</i> )
HMR	Historical Museum Rotterdam ( <i>Historisch Museum Rotterdam</i> )
IOR	India Office Records, British Library, London
KITLV	Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies ( <i>Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde</i> ), Leiden
KPAC	Royal Prussian Asiatic Company in Emden to Canton and China ( <i>Königlich Preussischen Asiatischen Compagnie in Emden nach Canton und China</i> )
N. (or N)	number
NA	National Archives of the Netherlands ( <i>Nationaal Archief</i> ), The Hague
NA (UK)	The National Archives of the United Kingdom, London
NFC	Archive of the Dutch Factory in Canton ( <i>Archief van de Nederlandse factorij te Canton, 1742-1826</i> ), NA
PRO	Public Record Office, NA (UK)
VOC	Dutch East India Company ( <i>Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie</i> ); Archives of the Dutch East India Company ( <i>Archieven van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (1602-1795)</i> ), NA
Vol., Vols (or vols)	volume, volumes

## NOTES ON SPELLING

The *pinyin* system of romanization is applied throughout the text. However, titles of publications and proper names, normally written in other forms of romanization, have not been uniformly changed to the *pinyin* system. Other exceptions are made in regard to some historical names of places, such as Peking (rather than Beijing), Canton, Macao, Amoy, and Limpo, and the names of teas such as Bohea (rather than Wuyi), Congou, Souchong, Pekoe, Songlo, Hyson, and so on. The titles of some Chinese officials such as Tsongtu, Fooyuern, and Hoppo are transliterations from Dutch. To maintain consistency, however, these have been altered to the *pinyin* system and put within brackets.

## GLOSSARY

<i>ad valorem</i>	Latin, meaning “according to the value”. <i>Ad valorem</i> tax is a tax based on the estimated value of the goods or transaction concerned.
agar-agar	a gelatinous substance obtained from certain red seaweeds and used as a biological culture media and as a thickener in foods.
aloe	bitter juice from a succulent plant with a rosette of thick tapering leaves and bell-shaped or tubular flowers on long stems, used as a strong laxative.
arrack	Arabic <i>araq</i> , the strong spirits distilled mainly in South and South-east Asia from fermented fruits, grains, sugarcane, or the sap of coconuts or other palm trees.
<i>bankzaal</i>	the Bengali <i>bankasala</i> derived from Sanskrit, meaning “trade hall”. A large storage shed which European companies paid to be built on the sandbank at Whampoa.
Barra Fort	the southern fortification of Macao 澳門, of strategic importance in defending Macao’s inner harbour.
Batavia Committee ( <i>Bataviase commissie</i> )	the committee of the Dutch supercargoes for the China trade under the leadership of Batavia between 1735 and 1756, dealing with the Company’s business in Canton 广州.
Bay of Praia Grande	a bay south of the Macao Peninsula.
blue dye	a kind of well-known dyestuff of which a principal element is cobalt dioxide in the form of fine blue powder, used to colour something blue.
Bocca Tigris	a narrows, also known as the Bogue, meaning “Tiger’s Mouth” 虎门, thirty miles below Whampoa, at the estuary of the Pearl River 珠江.
calico	all-cotton fabric woven in plain or tabby weave and printed with simple designs in one or more colours. Indian calicoes had originated in Calicut by the 11th century, if not earlier, and in the 17th and 18th centuries were an important commodity traded between India and Europe (and China).
camphor	a white volatile crystalline substance with an aromatic smell and bitter taste, occurring in certain essential oils distilled from <i>Camphora officinarum</i> . Baros camphor, of a very high quality, originates from Baros on West Sumatra.
carat	a unit of weight. 24 carats of pure gold valued c. 373 guilders in the Netherlands Indies in the period under study.
Casa Branca	a large white fortress on top of the hill at Qianshan 前山 where the military garrison was stationed.
catechu	a vegetable extract containing tannin, especially one obtained from the heartwood of an Indian <i>Acacia catechu</i> , used for tanning and dyeing. Also called gambier.
Channel Islands	a group of British-dependent islands off the coast of Normandy, France, in the English Channel.
chickpea	an edible leguminous plant, <i>Cicer arietinum</i> , bearing pea-like seeds. It can be eaten in salads, cooked in stews, ground into a flour called gram flour, and also can be used as a green vegetable.
China root ( <i>Radix China</i> )	the dried root of the <i>Smilax China</i> , used for medicinal purposes. The root is astringent and slightly tonic; the parched and powdered leaves have been used as a dressing on burns and scalds.

<i>chinoiserie</i>	refers to an artistic European style which reflected Chinese influence and is characterized by the use of elaborate decoration and intricate patterns. Its popularity peaked around the middle of the eighteenth century.
chop	Hindi <i>chhāp</i> , an official stamp or permit, by extension any official document bearing a seal-impression or stamp; a trademark, or mark of quality in East Asia.
clove oil	an aromatic oil obtained from the buds, stems, or leaves of the clove tree, used in flavouring and perfumery.
Co-hong ( <i>Co-hang</i> 公行)	the guild of Chinese merchants authorized by the Chinese authorities to trade with an exclusive privilege with Western merchants at Canton prior to the First Opium War (1839-1842). Such firms often were called “foreign trade firms” (or ( <i>Yang-hang</i> 洋行) and the merchants who directed them were known as “Hong merchants”.
comprador	a native-born agent in Canton employed by European traders to serve as a provisions purveyor in the Canton trade.
cubit	an ancient unit of linear measure. See the Explanation of the Units of Measurements.
ducat	gold coin.
Dutch Republic	also called the United Provinces. The Dutch confederation of seven provinces, which had their own independent provincial governments and were governed directly by the States-General between 1581 and 1795.
East Indies House ( <i>Oost-Indisch huis</i> )	the logistic headquarters of the VOC in Amsterdam where the board meetings took place, the administration was kept, the wages were disbursed, goods were sold, profits were calculated, and dividends were paid.
ell	a European measure of length, used in the Asian trade as a cloth measure. See the Explanation of the Units of Measurements
<i>en route</i>	on the way.
<i>Estado da India</i>	the Portuguese State of India that exercised the jurisdiction over Portugal's Indian colonies.
<i>Fooyuern</i> (抚员 or 巡抚)	Governor or Inspector, the subordinate colleague of the Viceroy in matters at the provincial level.
galingale ( <i>galinga</i> )	Arabic <i>khalanjār</i> , an aromatic rhizome of the ginger family; probably a distortion of Chinese “mild (or excellent?) ginger”, widely used in herbal medicine and cookery.
gamboge ( <i>gommegutte</i> )	a brownish or orange resin obtained from several trees of the genus <i>Garcinia</i> , used as a pigment (yielding a golden-yellow colour) or medicinally as a purgative.
<i>grijnen</i>	camlet, fabric made of a mixture of wool and camel or goat's hair or pure wool.
<i>guanxi</i>	Chinese social “connections” and “relationships”, describing the basic dynamic in personalized networks of influence.
Guia Castle	the castle built approximately in 1637 on the hill of Guia, the highest hill in Macao.
Hague Affairs ( <i>Haags Besogne</i> )	preparatory committee of the VOC directors, which met in The Hague.
Hanover	a kingdom and province in north-western Germany which was an electorate of the Holy Roman Empire from 1692 to 1805.
High Commissioner (钦差大臣)	namely the “Imperial Envoy” dispatched from Peking. He was delegated directly by the Emperor to put the latter's will into effect should the Viceroy or Governor hesitate or be unable to carry out the Imperial Orders.

<i>Hoppo</i> of Canton (粤海关监督)	the Imperial Commissioner of the Customs, with headquarters in Canton.
<i>Hoppo</i> of Macao (澳门关部行台旗员防御)	customs officer at Macao, sent by the <i>Hoppo</i> of Canton to levy dues on all in- and outgoing Chinese junks and Portuguese ships.
<i>imperialen</i>	a sort of high quality textile.
<i>ipso jure</i>	Latin, meaning “by the law itself” or “by operation of law”, used as an adverb.
<i>Jan Compagnie</i>	a servant of the Dutch East India Company.
kapok	a fine, silky fibre obtained from the fruit of the silk-cotton tree, used as padding in pillows, mattresses, cushions, etc.
<i>koban</i> (小判)	also called as <i>cobang</i> , <i>coubang</i> , <i>coupan</i> . Small 6.5x3.2 cm shaped gold coin in Japan, weighing 18 grams.
<i>Koxinga</i> (国姓爷)	the popular name of Zheng Chenggong 郑成功 (1624-1662), a prominent leader of the anti-Qing movement and a general who recovered Taiwan from Dutch colonial rule in 1662.
<i>laken</i>	woollen cloth, the major commodity of the Netherlands imported by the Dutch in Canton.
<i>Mexicanen</i>	Mexican silver coins. See the Explanation of the units of measurements.
mother-of-cloves	ripe clove fruit, containing one seed or rarely two seeds. The ovary and sepals constitute the specific part marketed as cloves.
musk	a substance with a strong, penetrating odour obtained from a small sac under the skin of the abdomen of the male musk deer, used in perfume and medicinally.
myrrh	a fragrant gum resin obtained from certain trees, used in perfume, medicine, and incense.
<i>nachoda</i>	from Persian <i>na-khuda</i> . Captain of an Asian vessel, especially Chinese junk. Also called <i>anachoda</i> or <i>annakhoda</i> .
Nanhai Court (南海县)	the Justice Court, which was called “Yamen” 衙门 in Chinese, of Nanhai County 南海县.
Nanking linen	a kind of finely woven, shiny linen.
old tea	tea left over from the past trading season, called “old tea” by the Dutch, was called “Yadong Cha” (压冬茶) in Chinese, and “winter tea” in English.
<i>olibanum</i>	an aromatic resin, yellowish in colour, obtained from trees of genus <i>Boswellia sacra</i> or <i>Boswellia carterii</i> , used in incense and perfume.
<i>op recognitie</i>	on recognition. The VOC received commission for the auction of teas on recognition.
<i>op vracht</i>	at freight. The VOC received commission for the auction of teas at freight.
<i>patria</i>	Fatherland or home country.
pearl dust (stampparel)	pearls of the smallest size, sometimes ground into dust and used as a cardiacum, a medicine for weak hearts.
<i>perpetuaan</i>	perpetuana (everlasting), a durable woollen fabric, imported by the Dutch in Canton.
<i>piaster</i>	silver coin.
pig	an oblong ingot of lead from a smelting furnace. The term was sometimes used for other metals such as iron and copper.
<i>polemieten</i>	durable, smooth woollen cloth.
principal shareholders (hoofdparticipanten)	Those who owned or held the principal shares of the VOC stock. Their representatives could be present at important meetings of the VOC management.
putchuck	Hindustani <i>pachak</i> , dried, fragrant, spicy root of <i>Saussurea costus</i> , a species of thistle, used for burning as incense or in medicine as a stomach tonic, diuretic, and expectorant.
<i>ras de Marocco</i>	twilled woollen cloth from Maroc, very glossily woven and shorn



rattan	so that the hair cannot be seen. Malay <i>rütan</i> , canes obtained from the long stems of the <i>Calamus</i> climbing palm throughout South-east Asia. More pliable than bamboo, they could be split and twisted to make thick ropes and hawsers for ships and woven into sails for junks, as well as a whole variety of building and domestic uses similar to bamboo.
red ochre	a red earth pigment containing ferric oxide, typically with clay. Ochres vary widely in transparency; some are quite opaque, while others are valued for their use as glazes.
<i>régulateur de la politique anglaise</i> rhubarb ( <i>rhabarber</i> ) Sadras	regulator of the English policy.  the dried, bitter-tasting rhizome and roots of <i>Rheum</i> grown in China, used medicinally as a purgative and laxative.
sago	a fortress town 70 km south of Chennai in Tamil Nadu state. “Sadras” is the anglicized form of the ancient town of Chadhura Pattinam. Malay <i>siügü</i> , the flour-like foodstuff produced from the stems of the palm genus <i>Mebroxylan</i> , found throughout South-east Asia. It formed a bulk commodity for the Dutch and in its round pellet form was often shot straight into the hold of a ship to fill all the spaces between other cargoes.
sampan	a small boat or skiff, possibly from Chinese <i>sanpan</i> , “three boards”.
sandalwood	the fragrant red wood of the <i>Pterocarpus santalina</i> , native to South India, used for carvings, cosmetics, and incense.
<i>sang-froid</i> sapanwood	self-confidence or self-assurance. the red dye-wood of the <i>Caesalpina sappan</i> , found in South-east Asia, used for medicine and for dying cotton products.
<i>schuitje</i>	ingots with the shape of a small boat. Silver, copper, gold, and tin cast in the shape of a boat for trade.
security merchant	Baoshang 保商 in Chinese. The merchant who was held responsible by Chinese authorities for the foreign ships, the crews, and the duties that were owed.
Senate of Macao ( <i>Senado da Camara de Macao</i> ) Spanish rial	the municipal council of Macao, the voting members of which comprised three councilmen ( <i>vereadores</i> ), two judges ( <i>juizes ordinarios</i> ), and a procurator ( <i>procurador</i> ). Spanish silver coin. See the Explanation of the Units of measurements.
spelter ( <i>spiauter</i> or <i>spiaulter</i> ) St Jan	zinc alloyed with small amounts of copper, lead and a few other metals, usually found in the form of ingots, slabs, or plates. Shangchuan Island 上川島, west of Macao.
star anise	also called Bajiao 八角 in Chinese. A small star-shaped fruit with one seed in each arm from the <i>Illicium verum</i> . It has an aniseed flavour and is used unripe in cookery.
States of Holland and West Friesland ( <i>Staten van Holland en West-Friesland</i> ) States-General ( <i>Staten-Generaal</i> )	the representation of the three estates: Nobility, Clergy and Commons to the court of the Count of Holland. After the United Provinces were formed they continued to function as the government of the Province of Holland (1572-1795). the supreme authority of the Seven United Provinces established in 1593 and seated in The Hague. It consisted of representatives of each sovereign provincial estate for the general government of the United Provinces. The VOC was under its general supervision.
storax	a rare fragrant gum resin obtained from an eastern Mediterranean tree, used in medicine, perfumery, and incense. Liquid storax is a liquid balsam obtained from the Asian liquidambar tree.
Taipa (氹仔) tare	island south of the Macao Peninsula. the deduction from the gross weight of commodities to allow for

	containers, wrapping, packing, etc; or to determine or indicate the tare of commodities.
tea <i>van particulieren</i>	tea owned by private individuals.
test-needle ( <i>toetsnaald</i> )	also called “touch-needle”. A small bar of gold and silver, either pure or alloyed in some known proportion with copper, for trying the purity of articles of gold or silver by comparison of the streaks made by the article and the bar on a touchstone.
Tiger Island	the island situated at the entrance to Bocca Tigris, commanding the entrance of the Pearl River.
touch	both gold and silver were rated according to their alloy content, or “touch”, as it was known.
trepang	a large sea cucumber ( <i>Holothuria edulis</i> ) from the southern Pacific and Indian Ocean which is eaten as an ingredient in soup especially in China. Also called <i>bêche-de-mer</i> .
<i>Tsongtu</i> (总督)	styled Viceroy (Governor-General), the highest civil official over the province.
turmeric ( <i>kurkuma</i> )	a widely cultivated plant of China ( <i>Curcuma longa</i> ), having yellow flowers and an aromatic, somewhat fleshy rhizome. The powder and fresh root of this plant is used as a condiment and a yellow dye.
Whampoa (黄埔)	the outer port of Canton, in the Pearl River, c. 15 km south-east of Canton.
Zoet-Zoet-Ham	an anchorage downriver from Canton and just above Bocca Tigris.

## EXPLANATION OF THE UNITS OF MEASUREMENTS

*Weights*

1 Chinese picul = 100 catties = 1600 tael  
 $\approx$  1 “Company” picul = 122½ pounds\*

*Lengths*

1 Dutch ell  $\approx$  69 centimeters  
 1 Indian cubit  $\approx$  70 centimeters

*Currencies*

1 Chinese tael = 10 maces = 100 candareens = 1000 catties  
 = 88 stivers = 4.4 guilders  
 1 guilder (*gulden*) = 20 stivers (*stuivers*) = 320 pennies (*penningen*)  
 1 Zeeuws pound (*pond*) = 20 shillings (*schellingen*) = 240 pennies (*groten*)  
 $\approx$  6.05 guilders  
 1 tael (of Spanish rial) = 72 or 74 Chinese candareens  
 $\approx$  2.5 guilders  
 1 mark *Mexicanen* = 9.13 Spanish rials  
 $\approx$  6.75 Chinese tael  
 $\approx$  23 guilders  
 1 mark piaster  $\approx$  1 mark *Mexicanen*  
 1 rix-dollar  $\approx$  2.4 guilders  
 1 Dutch Indies rupee = 1.5 guilders  
 1 Dutch gold ducat  $\approx$  5.25 guilders

\* “pound” used in this book is Dutch pound, unless otherwise indicated.

Sources: NA 1.04.02, VOC 4543-4547; M. Kooijmans & J.E. Oosterling, *VOC-Glossarium. Verklaringen van termen, verzameld uit de Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, die betrekking hebben op de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Den Haag: Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, 2000); K. Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*; H. Enno van Gelder, *De Nederlandse Munten* (Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 2002); *Het Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* (AND Electronic Publishing B.V., 1999).