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War, trade and piracy in the China Seas (1622-1683)

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TOWARDS THE WESTERN OCEAN
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First dip into the Western Ocean

The legalization of Iquan's Sino-Taiwan trade appears to have been a natural consequence of his own growing official status. In view of his personal involvement with the VOC in Taiwan and the mercenary character of his troops, it was a simple and efficient way to maintain the regional peace and keep the balance between the multiple interests of the imperial court, the VOC and the Fu-chienese. The burden of Iquan's song as he tried to convince imperial court was that the Dutch were the natural successors to the people of Kalapa since Batavia had been founded at the same place. Therefore the trade with Taiwan should be seen as the continuation of the former trade with Kalapa. The Taiwan trade should be categorized under the title of Batavia trade and as a matter of course be slotted into to the traditional 'Western Ocean' trading route of the Chang-chou or Hai-ch'êng merchants, rather than that of the Ch'üan-chou merchants represented by Iquan.

As mentioned before, for the years, 1630-1632 the VOC trade with Japan was interrupted because of the violent incident involving the Japanese merchant Hamada Yahei in Taiwan but the burgeoning trade between Taiwan and An-hai was substantially swelling the existing trade between Amoy and Batavia. Since Iquan's raids on the coast of Fu-chien in 1629, Chinese foreign trade had been either prohibited by the Chinese authorities or obstructed by pirates. Naturally, this upheaval also caused an interruption of the regular visits of the Chinese junks to Batavia. The Dutch records show

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that by the end of 1629 no junks had visited Batavia for two years.¹ The Chinese merchants who lived in Batavia had been doing their best to run the trade via the Batavia-Taiwan-Amoy axis. Limlacco had dispatched his junks with his son-in-law, Boyco, on board to Taiwan on private business.² Boyco and another Chinese merchant from Batavia, named Jancon, joined forces to purchase the pepper from the Dutch in Taiwan and then tried to sell it in Hai-ch'êng.³ Bendioc was also deeply involved in doing business with them. Later, owing to the restrictions of the Amoy authorities and the harassment inflicted by Ch'u T'sai-lao, the trade gradually shifted to An-hai and Jancon was the person who was dispatched by Governor Hans Putmans to examine whether the An-hai could offer the Company any useful commodities.⁴ As the partnership between Iquan and the Dutch was beginning to be constructed on a more solid foundation, these Chinese merchants from Batavia might have been seeking closer contact with Iquan's merchants with a view to doing business.

In the year 1631, because the pirate Ch'u T'sai-lao had been

¹ VOC 1098, Missive van Pieter Nuijts naer Amsterdam aen de Kamer Amsterdam, Batavia, 15 Dec. 1626, fos. 319^v-320^r.

² VOC 1101, Missive van Hans Putmans naer Batavia aen den gouverneur generael Jan Pietersz Coen, Chiu-lung River, 5 Oct. 1630, fo. 420^r; Resolutie des Comptoirs Taijouan, Taiwan, 27 Feb. 1630, Fo. 424^r. Because Governor Hans Putmans insisted, the Council decided to flout the instruction of Governor-General Jacques Specx, and lend Boyco and Jancon 400 piculs of pepper, accepting Limlacco's property in Batavia as surety.

³ VOC 1101, Missive van Paulus Traudenius naer Taijouan aen Hans Putmans, Chiulung River, 11 Apr. 1630, fo. 475^{r-v}.

⁴ VOC 1102, Resolutie in de rivier Chincheo gearresteert [Resolution Made on the Chi-lung River], 15 Oct. 15 Oct. 1630, fo. 511^v. About the activities of Chinese merchants in Batavia running this axis, Cf. Leonard Blussé, 'Chapter IV Testment to a Towkay: Jan con, Batavia and the Dutch China trade', in id., *Strange Company: Chinese settlers, mestizo women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia*, (Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 1986), 49-96.

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defeated by Iquan at the end of the previous year, the Chinese authorities decided to relax the maritime prohibitions and allow the Fu-chienese junks sailed to Southeast Asia again.⁵ According to the news passed on to the Dutch by Chinese merchants in Japan, five junks had been fitted out to sail to Batavia in the spring.⁶ Certainly, in July 1631 five junks returned to China from Batavia. One of them carried a cargo worth about 60,000 rials, double the value of the average cargo of junks visiting Manila.⁷ Perhaps the Chinese citizens in Batavia were lured by this sort of lucrative trade and this enticement to riches stimulated them to look for alternative channels to pursue the trade rather than merely sending junks under Dutch supervision. The solution was simple. All they had to do to run their business was to acquire Iquan's help which would enable them to use the junks which departed from Amoy. At this time the Dutch did hear rumours that there were two merchants in Haich'êng who had tried to obtain official Chinese licences for Batavia, probably via Iquan.⁸ In the spring of 1632, news came that Iquan had decided to dispatch junks to Batavia and these would be accompanied by those of other merchants.⁹ He had sent one of his nephews, Huang Liu-kuan (which is written in Dutch as 'Lacqua', 'Lacknio' or 'Lacknia'), on one of the three big junks bound for Batavia.¹⁰

⁵ Liang, 'Hai-ch'êng hsien-chih', 382.

⁶ *Daghregister Batavia*, 1631-1634, 9. 28 Mar. 1631.

⁷ *Daghregister Batavia*, 1631-1634, 30. 18 July 1631.

⁸ VOC 1107, Missive van Hans Putmans naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael Jacques Specx, 9 Nov. 1631, Fo. 197^r. Iquan was then summoned by the new Grand Co-ordinator, Tsou Wei-lien, to defend Fu-chou after intelligence had reached there that the pirate Liu Hsiang was approaching.

⁹ VOC 1105, Resolutie genomen bij Putmans ende sijne presente raeden, Chiu-lung River, 7 Jan. 1632, Fo. 218^r.

¹⁰ VOC 1105, Missive van Iquan naer Lissuw[Lieh-yü] aen Hans Putmans, 23 Sept. 1632, Fo. 209^r. He is called a nephew (neef) of Iquan and therefore was quite probably Huang Chêng-ming, a sixth cousin of Coxinga's on his mother's side. Cf.

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The Huang family were probably among the Fu-chienese merchants residing in the vicinity of Macao, which was Iquan's step-mother's native place. It was said that Iquan began his overseas adventures when he ran away from his parents and went to see his step-mother's brother, Huang Ch'eng, in Macao. Huang Liu-kuan must have been related to a branch of this Huang family in Kuang-tung. He was one of the merchants frequently seen trading with the Dutch in An-hai, where he was almost as prominent as Biendiok and Gamsia.¹¹ The junk arrived in Batavia on 24 April and departed nearly two months later on 6 July carrying 300 picul of pepper with a large quantity of silver coins and some sandalwood.¹² Unfortunately the junk did not enjoy a smooth passage home. She had departed too late and the monsoon changed direction as she neared the coast of Kuang-tung. Unable to sail farther north, she entered the mouth of the Pearl River on 2 September. Her choice of destination violated the imperial regulation which did not tolerate any junk sailing into this river without prior permission. Huang Liu-kuan had probably dared to break this law because he knew Iquan's old friend, former Fu-chien Grand Co-ordinator Hsiung Wên-ts'an who had subsequently been appointed Supreme Commander of Kuang-tung and Kuang-hsi provinces. Although he had knowingly violated imperial regulations, he did possess a valid licence

VOC 1109, Missive van Hans Putmans naer Batavia aen den gouverneur generael Jacque Specx, Taiwan, 6 Nov. 1632, fo. 218^v; VOC 1105, Missive van Hans Putmans uijt het jacht der Goes liggende ter reede onder het eijlandt Lissuw[Lieh-yü] in de rivier van Chincheo aen Paulus Traudenius, Chiu-lung River, 14 Oct. 1632, fo. 202^v. This letter mentions that the previous Grand Co-ordinator of Fu-chien, Hsiung Wên-t'san, had issued three licences for Iquan's people. Although Liu-kuan is the person whose name best fits the transliteration, Lacqua, there is no direct evidence to indicate they are identical.

¹¹ VOC 1105, Resolutie genomen bij Putmans ende sijne presente raeden, Chiu-lung River, 9 Mar. 1632, fo. 220^v. The Dutch paid Hung-hsu and Cheng-Tai together 1,000 rials in advance for gold.

¹² *Dagregister Batavia*, 1631-1634, 73. 3 May 1632; p. 86. 6 July 1632; *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 76. 11 Sept. 1632.

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issued by the Grand Co-ordinator Hsiung personally in Fu-chien a year earlier.¹³ From this distance in time it is impossible to say with any certainty but family members living in Macao might have also had some useful connections with the local administration.

On her homeward voyage, one of the other big junks from Batavia ran into a typhoon which forced her to take refuge in Quinam.¹⁴ The third changed her course to Patani and finally sailed to Shang-ch'uan Island (*Sancqan*[D.]), just off Macao in the estuary of the Pearl River where she was caught in the same trap as the first one.¹⁵

In the spring of 1632, these junks set sail on the north monsoon, while Iquan was called to Fu-chou to combat the raids of the pirate, Liu Hsiang, who had set foot in the Wu-hu Island. The defeat of Ch'u T'sai-lao had suddenly stirred up a fresh ambition to trade abroad when the maritime prohibition was lifted by the imperial authorities. The smuggling trade of Fu-chienese merchants, who bartered silks for Japanese silver, regained its prosperity. These route followed by these smuggling junks to Japan passed along the north coast of Fu-chien and the south coast of Chê-chiang. No doubt vendors in coastal villages also enjoyed some pickings. During the late summer of 1631, the pirate Liu Hsiang launched a raid on the Chiu-lung River before proceeding to the coast of Fu-chou, where his intention was to destroy Iquan's armada.¹⁶ This is the reason Iquan had been summoned to

¹³ VOC 1105, Missive van Hans Putmans uijt het jacht der Goes liggende ter reede onder het eijlandt Lissuw[Lieh-yü] in de rivier van Chincheo aen Paulus Traudenus, Chiu-lung River, 14 Oct. 1632, fo. 202^v.

¹⁴ VOC 1109, Missive van Hans Putmans naer Batavia aen den gouverneur generael Jacques Specx, Taiwan, 6 Nov. 1632, Fo. 218^v.

¹⁵ VOC 1105, Missive van Hans Putmans uijt het jacht der Goes liggende ter reede onder het eijlandt Lissuw[Lieh-yü] in de rivier van Chincheo aen Paulus Traudenus, Chiu-lung River, 14 Oct. 1632, fo. 202^v.

¹⁶ VOC 1105, Resolutie genomen bij Putmans ende sijne presente raeden, Nan-ao Island, 22 Aug. 1632, Fo. 224^r.

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Fu-chou and was finally granted permission to take up residence in the Wu-hu Island. Liu Hsiang was defeated at Hsiao-ch'êng near the Wu-hu with the help of the fishermen militia around the 7 December.¹⁷ Liu escaped and fled towards the south. Iquan was ordered by the Grand Co-ordinator of Fu-chien, Tsou Wei-lien, to chase after him and he was given the assistance of the Supreme Commander of Kuang-tung and Kuang-hsi provinces, his former superior, Hsiung Wên-t'san.¹⁸ A letter from Iquan dated 21 February 1633 mentions this trans-provincial assignment to eradicate Liu Hsiang from the coast of Kuang-tung once and for all.¹⁹ On the 22 March, Iquan wrote to the Dutch, informing them that he was about to depart on this long-range expedition.²⁰ He set sail and anchored at Chih-kang-t'ou, a place some 70 kilometres from Macao and 50 kilometres from Kuang-chou (Canton), strategically located in the estuary of the Pearl River, in between Macao and Liu Hsiang's base at Ta-hsing (which the VOC called 'Pedra Branca', 130 kilometers north of Chih-kang-t'ou). It is now impossible to say with any certainty but Iquan might have been more concerned about protecting his junks returning from Batavia than about his military assignment.²¹ On 25

¹⁷ *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 81. 17 Dec. 1632; Wan, 'Appendix I: Ch'ung-chên ch'ang-pien hsüan-lu', 165.

¹⁸ Anonymous, 'hai-t'ou liu-hsiang ts'an-kao i [Partial Remnants of a Letter referring to the pirate Liu Hsiang (I)]', in TWYH (ed.), *Chêng-shih shih-liao ch'u-pien*, 140.

¹⁹ VOC 1109, Missive van Iquan naer Taijouan aen Hans Putmans, Taiwan, [received on] 21 Feb. 1633, Fo. 237^r.

²⁰ VOC 1113, Missive van Iquan aen Hans Putmans, [received in] Taiwan, 23 Mar. 1633, Fo. 536^r.

²¹ About one year later, Iquan was accused of managing the foreign trade in Kuang-tung province under the pretext of earning profits to pay his troops. cf. The Minister of War, Chang Fêng-I, 'Yen-chin Min-ch'uan Ch'u-hai Chieh-chi Chêng-chih-lung Wu-yü Nan-ao 18 May 1634 [A strict ban on the provisioning of out going Fu-chien sea ships. Cheng Chi-lung should not move south of Nan-ao]', in: Ch'ên Yün-lin, *Ming-ch'ing Kung-ts'ang t'ai-wan tang-an hui-pien*, vol. 3, 299-313 at

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March 1633, Iquan's fleet defeated Liu Hsiang in the vicinity of this place.²² However, according to the news the Dutch heard from Chinese merchants one month later, Iquan's victory was by no means decisive. Initially it was he who had been attacked by Liu Hsiang, but, after he had detected Liu's next ambush, he was able to turn the tables and win. Despite his victory, in the course of the engagement, his fleet had suffered serious damage.²³ He probably thought this is a small price to pay because this victory would have been worth his while if he wanted to run his business on the Western Ocean route via Macao. Had he not been victorious, his junks would have run a great risk as long as the coast of Kuang-tung was not under his control.

As mentioned earlier, while Iquan was leading his armada in his pursuit of Liu Hsiang, did not let this opportunity to slip to manipulate public opinion in the hope of persuading the stubborn new Grand Co-ordinator, Tsou Wei-lien, to legalize his trade with Dutch in Taiwan. However, just as he had almost succeeded, Governor Hans Putmans lost patience and attacked Iquan's armada in Amoy in July 1633 but luck was against him and he and his fleet ran into no fewer than two typhoons that summer and then had to endure the suicide attack of Iquan's fire-junks in October.²⁴ Although the Dutch did not achieve their goals, their raids had earned Liu Hsiang's fleet some time to recover and plan a new attack on Iquan.²⁵

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²² Anonymous, 'hai-t'ou liu-hsiang ts'an-kao i', 140.

²³ *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 91-2. 26 Apr. 1633.

²⁴ Leonard Blussé, 'The VOC as Socerer's Appentice', 87-105.

²⁵ *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 153. 21 Feb. 1634. Liu Hsiang and his men remained at the Pedra Branca and Brandsbaay, from where they captured 30 big junks and a city called Yen-chou (written in Dutch as 'Jamsieu'). Pedro Branco is 'Ta Hsing' and Brandsbaay is the bay outside Yen-chou (also written in Dutch as 'Kamptsou').. See picture 3.

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Kicked off the Kuang-tung pirates

When Governor Putmans returned from Batavia to T'ung-shan Island off the south coast of Fu-chien in the summer of 1633, he carried instructions to blockade all Chinese harbours and occupy either Amoy or Macao. In the hope of achieving these goals, he was advised to establish an alliance with the pirate Liu Hsiang. This strategy was thwarted because of the damage wrought by the two very powerful typhoons which hampered the co-operation between them. Later, when Putmans was chased away from Amoy Bay by Iquan, Liu Hsiang's fleet failed to offer him any constructive assistance either,²⁶ because the basis for this alliance between the Dutch and Liu Hsiang never really had a solid foundation. Furthermore, there were signs that the Chinese side did not take the Dutch raids seriously. A Dutch yacht from Japan arrived in Amoy Bay in December 1633 unaware of the conflict between Iquan and the VOC. Because of the typhoons in the earlier southern monsoon season, no Dutch vessel had been able to carry any message to Japan about the fresh hostilities. As matters stood, the Chinese would have had a very good reason to confiscate the yacht, but they did not. Instead, they sent several junks to escort the ship to the Pescadores. The Chinese merchant, Hambuan, also sent a message from An-hai, mentioning that the Chinese officials there had agreed to allow junks to trade in Taiwan.²⁷ Cogently, almost every mandarin reported to the emperor that the Dutch raid on Amoy was the direct result of adverse effects of the maritime prohibition. In other words, the views of Iquan's party had won fervent support among the local gentry and the mandarins. Indeed their backing was so strong the Coastal Defence Circuit of Hsing-hua and Ch'üan-chou prefectures, Ts'êng Ying, dared to issue three provisional passes to the An-hai merchants who ran the Taiwan trade. This gesture ameliorated the feelings of hostility among the Dutch and Putmans decided to declare a temporary cease-fire and then decide

²⁶ Generale Missive, 15 Aug. 1634, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 143.

²⁷ *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 149-50, 22 Jan. 1634.

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what steps to take.

Unfortunately just at this moment Liu Hsiang happened to seize the initiative again. After 30 December 1633,²⁸ Iquan had dispatched part of his naval force to the Kuang-tung coast where it was defeated by Liu Hsiang sometime between January and March. On 15 March 1634 Liu Hsiang's fleet anchored at the Pescadores bringing with it the richly laden trading junks it had captured off Quemoy (Chin-men, in the estuary of Chiu-lung River). Liu had been able to take these junks and their rich cargo, among them three which intended to sail to Batavia, one bound for Cambodia and six for Manila, without too much effort.²⁹ Liu Hsiang's bold move now put Putmans' design of blockading the whole Chinese coast into operation. To maintain his force, he made preparations to sell all the booty to the Dutch in Taiwan. Owing to a lack of cannon and gunpowder for the following raids, he needed Dutch supply in this aspect. On 22 March, Governor Hans Putmans wrote a letter in reply to Liu's statement of requirements for trade, accommodation and provisions. He neither agreed to purchase the booty Liu had taken from the Amoy junks nor did he give his fleet permission to remain in Taijouan or Wang-kang (a nearby roadstead).³⁰ He did not even react to the request for cannon and ammunition, declaring that the Dutch were honour-bound to respect a cease-fire while they awaited an answer from the Fu-chienese officials. This change of attitude caught Liu Hsiang on the back foot. Although he had assembled a fleet of eight big and thirty-five small junks, he did not dare to attack Amoy which was heavily guarded by Iquan's musketeers and cannon. Furthermore, his stolen goods would not bring any profit unless they were sold to Dutch. When he realized that the northern monsoon season had drawn to an end and the possibilities to ship these goods were ebbing away fast, he decided to try his luck again and see whether he

²⁸ Ibidem, 147-8, 30 Dec. 1633.

²⁹ Ibid., 150. 15 Mar. 1634.

³⁰ Ibid., 158-9, 22. Mar. 1634.

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could storm the Dutch fort successfully with his force of 600 pirates. At dawn on the 9 April Liu Hsiang tried to surprise the small Dutch garrison of thirty soldiers but failed. Not long afterwards, the pirates had to depart as they were threatened by starvation.³¹ They returned to Ta-hsing.

Around the middle of May, Liu Hsiang's smuggling trade partner in Japan, the son of Iquan's old boss Li Tan by the name of Li Kuo-chu (Augustin), decided to surrender to Iquan in Amoy.³² Liu Hsiang attacked Amoy again, but once again his attempt came to naught. Sometime later Iquan destroyed part of Liu's force in the vicinity of T'ung-shan Island but he was not able to reach the main force.³³ In between July and August, Liu Hsiang's fleet made another big capture: he intercepted five Portuguese galliots *en route* to Japan with a rich cargo of silks onboard, when they were blown off course by a typhoon. One galliot was captured but the remaining four sailed on.³⁴ Probably this capture astonished the Kuang-tung authorities because they offered Liu Hsiang a chance to be recruited as a naval officer just as Iquan had been in the past. Apparently he was not interested because, when the Supreme Commander of Kuang-tung and Kuang-hsi provinces, Hsiung Wên-ts'an, dispatched some mandarins to negotiate with Liu Hsiang, the latter took them hostage.³⁵

In the meantime, far from being at a stalemate the negotiations with the

³¹ Ibid., 162, 8 Apr. 1634.

³² TWYH (ed.), *Chêng-shih shih-liao ch'u-pien*, 139. *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 175. 20 May 1634.

³³ TWYH (ed.), *Chêng-shih shih-liao ch'u-pien*, 139; *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 183-4. 29 June 1634.

³⁴ VOC 1114, Missive van Hans Putmans aen de Camer Amsterdam, Taiwan, 28 Oct. 1634, fo. 14^{r-v}. Boxer C. R. *Fidalgos in the Far East*, (Hongkong: Oxford University Press, 1968), 111.

³⁵ P'êng, *Ching-hai chih*, 5; VOC 1116, Missive van Hans Putmans naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael Hendrick Brower, Taiwan, 9 Mar. 1635, fol. 329^v; *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 207. 10 Jan 1635.

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Dutch were also progressing. Although the Dutch were not satisfied with the conditions offered, they neither co-operated with the Chinese pirates nor did they intercept the junks from Manila. The reason the Dutch chose not to pursue their war with Iquan was that they simply did not have enough ships left to contemplate taking such a risk. Although the High Government in Batavia had decided to send several yachts to Taiwan as reinforcements, they could not take up a station between Manila and Amoy before the end of June when most of the Chinese junk would be returning, because the southern monsoon had begun late.³⁶ The last but not the least reason was the sudden change in Japanese maritime policy. After 1634, no Japanese junk ever visited Taiwan again. On the 12 July 1634, Governor Hans Putmans wrote a letter to all mandarins in Fu-chien, including the Grand Co-ordinator of Fu-chien residing in Fu-chou, the Coastal Defence Circuit of Fu-ning, the Coastal Defence Circuit of Hsing-Ch'üan, the Coastal Defence Circuit of Chang-nan, Assistant Coastal Defence Circuit of Ch'üan-chou, the Assistant Coastal Defence Circuit of Chang-chou, the Magistrate of Chin-Chiang, the District Magistrate of T'ung-an, the District Magistrate of Hai-ch'êng, the Mobile Corps Commander of Ch'üan-nan, the Mobile Corps Commander of P'eng-hu. The letter announced:

'We also intend to anchor some of our ships at the Pescadores(P'eng-hu) so as to be able to serve the Chinese empire (should Liu Hsiang appear there again) and offer security to the good inhabitants there and those merchants who wish to come to trade with us.[I am sending this letter] especially to make sure there is not any any trouble, should some malicious people appear and report to Your Honours that we have come with some ulterior motive. Your Honours should not believe them, because as you will have noticed we have never raised our hand against the Chinese Empire as long as the trade

³⁶ VOC 1116, Missive van Hans Putmans naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael Hendrick Brouwer, Taiwan, 28 Sept. 1634, fo. 338^v; Generale Missive, 15 Aug. 1634, in: Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 151-2.

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*was granted to us and everything was abundantly provided in Taiwan.*³⁷

Although this was not a formal guarantee that the Dutch would never again return to the Amoy Bay, Putmans had clearly agreed to trade with the Chinese merchants in Taiwan if they could provide enough cargo.³⁸ This claim fulfilled the conditions the emperor had told Regional Inspector Lu Chên-fei to impose when he asked for the legalization of the trade with the Dutch in Taiwan.³⁹ The newly arrived Grand Co-ordinator, Shên You-lung, now approved the three provisional licences issued by the Coastal Defence Circuit, T'sêng Ying and even issued an extra licence on his own authority in October.⁴⁰

Once the Sino-Dutch relationship had been placed on a firm footing, the An-hai merchants were falling over themselves in their eagerness to extend their trade to Batavia. Chinese merchant Hambuan and Iquan's servant, Cheng Tai, immediately asked Governor Putmans to issue each of them with a licence to trade with Batavia.⁴¹ The latter decided to sign these two licences, because 'they had offered the Company some services ...therefore we cannot refuse them.'⁴² In the middle of February

³⁷ VOC 1114, Missive van Hans Putmans aen diverse mandorijns van het coninckrijk van China, onder verscheijdene tijtels versonden [Letter written by Hans Putmans to Various Mandarins under the Chinese Emperor], Taiwan, 12 July 1634, Fo. 74^v.

³⁸ Tonio Andrade has correctly pointed out that the VOC authorities were always prepared to use violence strike up an alliance with new pirates in order to pressure the Chinese authorities to maintain this trade. This is the real meaning of above quote. Cf. Tonio Andrade, 'The Company's Chinese privateers: how the Dutch East India company tried to lead a coalition of privateers to war against China', *Journal of world history*, vol.15, no. 4 (2004), 415-44 at.440.

³⁹ Fan Hsien, *Ch'ung-hsiu tai-wan fu-shih*, 588.

⁴⁰ *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 196-7.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, 198.

⁴² VOC 1116, Missive van Hans Putmans naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael

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1635, three big and one small junk sailed to Batavia.⁴³

When the Fu-chien authorities found out that there were some mandarins who had been taken hostage by Liu Hsiang and were still being held by him, they arrested his mother who lived near Ch'üan-chou and it was not long before Iquan led his armada from Amoy bent on attacking Liu Hsiang. The two fleets met in T'ien-wei waters on 23 May 1635.⁴⁴ Seven thousand people including soldiers, sailors and fishermen militias found themselves pitched into the fighting. In the heat of battle Liu Hsiang blew up his own junk, jumped over board and drowned. Iquan was finally rid of with his greatest foe.⁴⁵

After this battle, the coastal routes were safe and the Fu-chienese merchants could again transfer their export commodities from Kuang-chou and Macao to Amoy. This happened just in time because the Portuguese-Japan trade was gradually tumbling into an irreversible crisis. According to Putmans' letter to Governor-General Antonio van Diemen in Batavia:

'Since the pirate Liu Hsiang was defeated and one of his adherents, Kouhan, surrendered, we have constantly submitted the list of what we need from there (namely ginger, China root, galanga, zinc, all sorts of coloured or black satin, silk velvet, camlet, chauls-silk and armous-silk and other goods) of the same quality and quantity as before. However, so far we have received no more than some silk goods and zinc. The merchant Hambuan promised us that, since the pirate has been destroyed, some junks will sail here, in this north monsoon season to bring above-mentioned goods without fail. This has

Hendrick Brouwer, Taiwan, 3 Nov. 1634, Fo. 309^f.

⁴³ *Dagregister Zeelandia*, I 1629-1641, 210. 7 Mar. 1635.

⁴⁴ TWYH (ed.), *Chêng-shih shih-liao ch'u-pien*, 110.

⁴⁵ VOC 1116, Missive van Hans Putmans naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael Hendrik Brouwer, Taiwan, 19 Sept. 1635, Fo. 374^v.

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*already been shown to be true by the news we received that some junks from Amoy Bay, said that they passed through the pirate's waters and brought some powder sugar from some nearby places.*⁴⁶

As mentioned before, these Ch'üan-chou rice transporting junks had permission to sail to the eastern border of Kuang-tung to load rice and sugar from Ch'ao-chou. The above records show that the commodities they were collecting were gradually including wares which meet the standard demanded in foreign trade. Since the Kuang-chou silk industry had been flourishing with the help of the money made on the import of Japanese silver to Macao, it could also supply the demand of Fu-chienese merchants once the transit trade route to Japan via Taiwan was established.

Stretching out to the terminals

Since the 1631 ban on foreign trade had been lifted, several Fu-chienese junks were being fitted out to visit the coastal countries around the South China Sea. Two junks were bound for Patani, one to Sangora, two to Siam, five to Cambodia and five to Quinam.⁴⁷ In totally thirteen junks were preparing to sail the Western Ocean Trade Route. No record survives to show whether all thirteen junks did indeed sail but, since the five junks bound for Batavia arrived, the others also probably reached their destinations. In the spring of 1632 Iquan dispatched three junks to Batavia and three big and nine small junks sailed to Quinam from Amoy Bay.⁴⁸ As one of Iquan's junks bound for Batavia actually changed course to Patani, thirteen junks in all had sailed as in the previous year. Quite possibly because Quinam was both the

⁴⁶ VOC 1120, Missive van den gouverneur Hans Putmans naer Batavia aen den gouverneur generael Anthonio van Diemen, Taiwan, 7 Oct. 1636, fo. 269.

⁴⁷ *Daghregister Batavia*, 1631-1634, 9. 28 Mar. 1631.

⁴⁸ VOC 1105, Missive van Hans Putmans uijt het jacht der goes liggende ter reede onder het eijlandt Lissuw[Lieh-yü], Chiu-lung River, 14 Oct. 1632, fo. 202^v.

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first and last port of call visited by trading junks on the Western Ocean Route after they departed from or returned to China, this record might have only reported that they were bound for Quinam instead of another destination. During these two years, Japanese junks also visited the same area. In the year 1631, three Japanese junks visited Quinam, Cambodia, and Siam respectively. One year later, another three junks sailed to Quinam and four to Cambodia.⁴⁹ This activity indicates that the traditional triangular Sino-Japanese trade revived in the countries on the Western Ocean Route at this time.

In the years 1630-1632 the most welcome tropical commodities exported from Taiwan to An-hai were pepper and elephant tusks. Their popularity reflected the demand of the Chinese market. During the Dutch blockade in the summer of the year 1633, five of the six junks which had sailed to Quinam were captured on their voyage home.⁵⁰ Governor Putmans compiled a pretty accurate invoice of the booty taken from these junks.

From his invoice (see Appendix I) it seems the cargo capacity of these junks varied between 25 and 148 last. With one exception, the junks were all small-sized, between 50 and 30 last. The list of the cargo carried by Junk A demonstrates that even a junk of the size of around 50 last could carry a cargo valued at approximately 13,760 rials. The bulk of the load of the largest junk of 148 last (B) was composed of rice and ebony and its cargo valued at only one-quarter of that of the junk with a 50 last capacity (A). Size did not necessarily decide the value of the cargo. The bulkiness of the cargo was the determining factor in whether it should be carried by a large-sized junk. These largest junks usually carried pepper and elephant tusks as the following table shows:

⁴⁹ Iwao Seiichi, *Nan'-yō Nihon-machi no kenkyū* [Study of Japanese Settlement around the South China Sea], (Tōkyō : Iwanami Shoten, 1966), 11. 'Genkan nendai tokoosen kazu hyōo.'

⁵⁰ VOC 1109, Missive van Hans Putmans naer Amsterdam aen de Camer Amsterdam, T'ung-shan, 30 Sept. 1633, fo. 229^v.

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Table 6-1: the percentage of Pepper plus Elephant's tusk in total value of the cargo

	Value	Value	Value	Value
	In Junk A	in Junk C	in Junk D	in Total
	(rials)	(rials)	(rials)	(rials)
Pepper	5419.5		9980	15399.5
Elephant tusks	2025	182.5	1283	3490.5
Total	13760.7	471.67	13694.2	27926.57
Proportion	54.1%	38.7%	82.2%	67.6%

Source: Table A, C, D.

The sum of these two commodities amounted to about 67.6 per cent of the total value of four junks (Junk D listed in 2 junks). No less than 1,980. 24 piculs of pepper were sold to An-hai via Taiwan. The vast quantity of this was carried by Junk (A) and Junk (B), whose cargo amounted to 1,218.5 piculs. It seems that the amount of pepper which could be absorbed by the Chang-chou market was approximately 1000- 2000 piculs or 50-100 last per year. During the summer of 1632, Iquan had dispatched two junks to Batavia where he had purchased about 300 last of pepper via his nachoda Liu-kuan (*Lackquan*[D]). Supposing Iquan had also received the confiscated cargo from the Supreme Commander of Kuang-tung and Kuang-hsi after April 1633, he could have met the demand of the market for that whole year. The real victims of the Dutch blockade was not Iquan but those Chang-chou merchants who had dispatched junks to Quinam after the maritime prohibition was lifted because Iquan was not really deeply involved in the trade of Western Ocean as a few other clues reveal. In the autumn of 1634 two junks were confiscated by the Dutch in the vicinity of Quinam. Neither

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Iquan nor his servants showed any sympathy for those who had been affected by this incident, namely: the mandarins and gentry in Chang-chou who lodged a strong protest with the Dutch through the Chinese merchant Hambuan.⁵¹

The Sino-Quinam trade was part and parcel of the trade to the ports on the Indo-Chinese peninsula, the areas around the gulf of Siam and the Malay Peninsula. Some of the booty mentioned above had originally been purchased from the Siam. Two junks from Quinam arrived in Siam from where they returned to China with some wares ordered by the Chinese (sappanwood, deerskins and Cambodian nuts, for example) on 30 June 1633.⁵²

The pepper sold in Siam can be traced back to different sources, including Batavia. For example: there is a record that a junk of a Batavian Chinese sailed to Siam with pepper on 28 July 1633,⁵³ which indicates that Siam could be an alternative port to Batavia for those Chinese merchants who wanted to purchase pepper. Iquan might have learned about his Kuang-tung assignment from his merchant and nephew, Liu-kuan.

In these years of political disturbance, Japanese merchants fled from Siam to Quinam or Cambodia where their arrival contributed to the revival of the Sino-Quinam-Japan trade. Meanwhile, the absence of Japanese in Siam left a space which the new Sino-Siam-Japan triangular trade network could occupy. In the spring of 1634 two junks from Chang-chou carried copious

⁵¹ Generale Missive, 27 Dec. 1634, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 143,

⁵² VOC 1113, Missive [van Joost Schouten] aen den gouverneur generael [Hendrik Brouwer], Siam, 8 July 1633, fo. 344^v. VOC 1109, Extract uijt de journaelse aenteijckeninghe van 't notabelste, dat in 's Comps. affairen, onder de directie van mij Joost Schouten voorgevallen is[Extract from Remarkable Happenings concerning the Company Affairs under my, Joost Schoten's, command] (hereafter cited as Dagregister Siam), Siam, 29 May 1633, fo. 43^v. According to the diary, the two junks were returning to Quinam.

⁵³ VOC 1109, Dagregister Siam, 28 July 1633, fo. 46^v.

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amounts of rough wares to Siam. Both of them were aiming to make a handsome profit, but instead of heading back towards China, that winter the Chang-chou junks remained in Quinam because they were anxious to avoid the Dutch attacks.⁵⁴ In the same year, Liu Hsiang robbed junks bound for Batavia in the vicinity of Quemoy and consequently only one An-hai junk arrived in Batavia.⁵⁵ On 30 March 1636, a junk under the command of one of Iquan's naval officers arrived in the roadstead of Siam, just five days after another Chinese junk.⁵⁶ This junk was a sign that Iquan and the An-hai merchants wished to expand their trade there at the expense of the Chang-chou merchants. Their rowdy, intrusive tactics to expand their trade did more than simply disgust the Chang-chou merchants, the rudeness and ruthlessness of the newcomers was also bound to stir up trouble.

⁵⁴ VOC 1113, Missive [door den heer Joost Schouten] aen den gouverneur generael [Hendrik Brouwer], Siam, 26 July 1634, fo. 518^v.

⁵⁵ *Daghregister Batavia*, 1631-1634, 278. 27 Mar. 1634.

⁵⁶ VOC 1119, Missive [door Joost Schouten] aen d' E. Hans Putmans [in Taiwan], Siam, 20 May 1636, fo. 1396.