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## CHAPTER EIGHT

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#### IN SEARCH OF SILVER

#### IN A CHANGING WORLD 1640-1646

##### **The usurpation of the silver trade from Macao**

There can be no shadow of doubt that the primary goal of the Dutch in Taiwan was to usurp the places occupied by both Macao and Manila in the silk-for-silver trade run by the merchants of Fu-chien and Kuang-tung. In the year 1639, when the Shogunal Government decided to expel the Portuguese and banish them forever from Nagasaki, the Dutch finally had the opportunity they had been waiting for to replace the Portuguese in Japan once and for all. As they were still not in a position to access the Cantonese silk traders and weavers who supplied the Portuguese in Macao in person, they urged their Fu-chienese partners in An-hai to meet the Japanese silk order. These An-hai merchants had already been supplying most of the raw silk it required to the Dutch Factory in Taiwan, but now the Japanese merchants wanted more than just the raw commodity and were also putting in orders for finished silk products such as damasks and satins.<sup>1</sup> This expansion in silk exports was eventually accomplished in the south monsoon season of 1639-1640, but not without conflict. On account of the sudden increase in orders, the Dutch could not pay for the goods required with silver in time and, feeling hard done-by, the aggrieved An-hai merchants supplied inferior merchandise, although this was the sort of risk that the An-hai merchants

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<sup>1</sup> VOC 1131, The Report of Commissioner Nicolaes Couckebaker, [on board the ship] *De Rijk*, 8 Dec. 1639, fo. 298<sup>f-v</sup>; Pol Heyns and Cheng Wei-chung (eds), *Dutch Formosan Placard-book Marriage, and Baptism Records*, (Taipei: SMC Publish, 2005), 130; 132. The placards were issued on 6 April 1638 and on 13 August 1639 respectively

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could have expected to bear in this newly expanding commercial market.

Still able to hang onto his prominent status in town, the protector of the An-hai merchants, Cheng Chih-lung alias Nicolas Iquan, had other tasks to perform and was ordered to carry out his military duties in the the border area between Fu-chien and Kuang-tung provinces in his capacity as Regional Deputy-Commander of Nan-ao. Naturally, his duty required that he be with his men and therefore he found himself forced to reside on the border rather than in An-hai.

Around about this time it is said that the Emperor finally issued the passes required for the trade with Taiwan, as well as eight other destinations around the South China Sea.<sup>2</sup> With the issuance of these imperial passes, the deal reached between Iquan and the provincial grandees became something of a problem. Once the trade was formalized, the tax revenues would also have to be distributed in a normal way.

At this distance in time it is hard to fathom when exactly the An-hai merchants heard about the exclusion of the Portuguese from Japan. When Iquan received a message from Peking in September 1639 informing him that a Surveillance Commissioner (*An-ch'a-shih*[C] ) was on his way to Kuang-tung province to supervise the security on frontier, he left to join his forces on Nan-ao Island.<sup>3</sup> There, at the beginning of November, he encountered two Portuguese galliots which had run aground in these waters. Both ships had been turned back in August by the Japanese authorities. Iquan decided to confiscate both their cargoes and transported these valuable silk goods to An-hai. He gave orders that no one was permitted to send any goods to Taiwan until he had returned with the loot.<sup>4</sup> At her own peril, in defiance

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<sup>2</sup> Generale Missive, 12 Jan. 1639, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 182.

<sup>3</sup> VOC 1133, Missive van gouverneur Joan van der Burch naer Batavia aen gouverneur general Anthonio van Diemen, Taiwan, 28 Jan. 1640, fo. 185<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> VOC 1132, Missive van gouverneur Joan van der Burch naer Choromandel aen den

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of Iquan's advice, one junk did depart from An-hai around 27 November 1640 and was duly impounded by a local official on Quemoy.<sup>5</sup>

Informed that the Portuguese had been excluded from the Sino-Japanese trade, Iquan recognized that this was the perfect juncture to grasp the nettle and re-arrange his trading ventures. By giving orders to hold the junks up in An-hai, he eventually forced them to carry 10,000, 20,000 and 30,000 taels' worth of his own goods respectively. With the weight of advantage behind him, he not only ordered the Anahi merchants to advance him 20 per cent of the proceeds of successful sales but also to carry the risk of the loss should any accident befall the ships during their voyage across the Taiwan Strait.<sup>6</sup>

At that moment, Iquan's servants were also embroiled in quarrels with certain of the An-hai merchants, because they believed that their boss should receive a percentage for shipping their goods at the expense of those Nanking merchants who also wished to dispatch their goods on the ships of the An-hai merchants.<sup>7</sup> On 6 January 1640, the silk goods seized from the Portuguese galliots were taken to An-hai, where Iquan also arrived in person, on one of

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gouverneur Arent Gardenijs, Taiwan, 30 Nov. 1639, fo. 302; VOC 1132, Missive van gouverneur Joan van der Burch naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael Anthonio van Diemen ende raden van India, Taiwan, 10 Dec. 1639, fo. 284.

<sup>5</sup> VOC 1132, Missive van gouverneur Joan van der Burch naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael Anthonio van Diemen ende raden van India, Taiwan, 10 Dec. 1639, Fo. 285. The reason for this impounding was that the captain was not carrying the Emperor's pass. Other records show this captain was named 'Sualiangh' and that he usually paid for and carried a pass. Cf. VOC 1131, Report of Commissioner Nicolaes Couckebaker, [on board the ship] *De Rijp*, 8 Dec. 1639, fos. 297-8.

<sup>6</sup> VOC 1131, Report of Commissioner Nicolaes Couckebaker, [on board the ship] *De Rijp*, 8 Dec. 1639, fos. 297-8.

<sup>7</sup> VOC 1133, Missive van gouverneur Jan van der Burch naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael Anthonio van Diemen, Taiwan, 28 Jan. 1640, fos. 180<sup>v</sup>-181<sup>r</sup>.

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his vessels.<sup>8</sup> Under his personal supervision, three big junks loaded to the gunnels left for Taiwan under the leadership of the merchant Hambuan. Hambuan was also charged with transmitting a message to the Taiwan authorities, intimating that Iquan guaranteed to supply high quality silk products in the latest fashion (*exquize zijde stuckwercken op de nieuw moode*) according to the requirements of Japanese customers and that he also intended to attract weavers and merchants wooing them to move to An-hai from Kuang-tung.<sup>9</sup> Soon after he had settled these arrangements, Iquan returned to Nan-ao with his soldiers to take up his new military assignment which was to lead his troops to the mountain areas on the boundary between the provinces of Kuang-tung and Hu-kuang (nowadays Hu-pei and Hu-nan) to put down a rebellion of the aboriginal tribes.<sup>10</sup>

Ten days after his arrival in Taiwan, Hambuan paid a private visit to the Dutch Governor's house. Iquan had entrusted him with yet another task, namely to propose drawing up a contract so that 'this tremendous Chinese trade might have an eternal and durable basis.'<sup>11</sup> Iquan had made this proposal when he summoned Hambuan to meet him personally at night. Hambuan had asked for a written version of the proposal, but Iquan thought the Dutch would trust Hambuan's words since he had lent them so much capital in the past. In this proposal, Iquan suggested that:

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1. *He would supply the Company with fine silk and silk products on its own recognizance, in the same way as the Spaniards in Manila and the*

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<sup>8</sup> Ibidem, fo. 181<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., fos. 186<sup>v</sup>-187<sup>v</sup>. '...in order to take of them out of the clutches of the Portuguese...'

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., fo. 186<sup>v</sup>. According to the Chinese sources, it was located at Lienchou. TWYH(ed.), *Chêng-shih shih-liao ch'u-pien*, 178.

<sup>11</sup> VOC 1133, Missive van gouverneur Jan van der Burch naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael Anthonio van Diemen, Taiwan, 28 Jan. 1640, fo. 190<sup>v</sup>.

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*Portuguese in Macao had enjoyed the trade in earlier days.*

- 2. The Company loan would be renewed annually. The Chinese wares would never fall short, if the Company paid a monthly 2.5 per cent interest on the money borrowed.*
- 3. Since the Company would be able to sell the Chinese wares at a good profit, about 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 guilders in Japan, no matter what damage the Company might suffer, 200,000 guilders should be sent [to Japan] annually on Iquan's account.*
- 4. More than 250,000 guilders which would therefore come from this [above] estimated amount would be reserved for annual presents to the grandees.<sup>12</sup>*

On 2 November, after having taken care of the settlement of that season's trade, Hambuan brought a written contract with revisions made by the Taiwan authorities back to An-hai.<sup>13</sup> The revised version states as follows:

- 1. I, Iquan, shall send no more Chinese wares to Japan, although in the past I have fitted out junk cargoes amounting to 800,000 guilders' worth [of these goods] for that destination. Furthermore, I shall stop sending any vessels over there. I shall not send or order any ship to sail to Japan on my own account.*
- 2. I shall not only cease such ventures, but also impose extremely strict sanctions on any other grandees who engage in this trade, as proof hereof the Company will see that Chinese wares [to Japan] will be*

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., fos. 191<sup>v</sup>-192<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> *Dagregister Batavia*, 1640-1641, 112. 6 Dec. 1640; Generale Missive, 8 Jan. 1641, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 198. Unfortunately Hambuan perished in a shipwreck, therefore the letter was delivered by another merchant at a later date.

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*reduced from the previous amount.*

3. *I shall supply the Company with fine silk and silk products on its own recognizance, on the same terms as the Spaniards in Manila and Portuguese in Macao have enjoyed in the past.*
4. *In time, I shall deliver to the Company such Chinese wares as His Honour [the Governor of Taiwan] thinks will be most profitable in Japan, or other destinations in Asia, or to Holland, and never neglect to satisfy its requirements.*
5. *I shall renew the Company loan annually, so that it will never be short of Chinese wares, if it pays 2.5 per cent interest, even to the extent that goods will be delivered to the amount of 1,000,000 guilders [and the period sustained] three months.*
6. *The Company will be able to sell and trade about 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 guilders' worth of Chinese wares in Japan. For its part, the Company will ensure that 50,000 rials in merchandise will be sent on Iquan's account and another 50,000 rials in merchandise on the account of the Company (on which the proper transportation fee will be paid here and which should consist of requested and assorted wares) to be sent to Japan on the Company ships. This solution will bring honour to Iquan and the Company will obtain good profits. After the completion of the voyage, the Company will still be responsible for paying Iquan, the above sum plus 40 per cent profit. Every 50,000 rials should return a guaranteed 70,000 rials in total, without any risk of loss.<sup>14</sup>*

The only difference between these two proposals was in fact the amount of Iquan's personal allowance. In Hambuan's version, Iquan demanded about

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<sup>14</sup> VOC 1134, Contract tusschen gouverneur [Paulus] Traudenius ende den Mandorijn Iquan getroffen anno 1640 [Contract between Iquan and the Governor of Taiwan Paulus Traudenis in 1640], Taiwan, 1640 [date not recorded], fo. 121<sup>r-v</sup>.

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200,000 guilders of his be carried annually by the Dutch ships. Reviewing the 800,000 guilders of goods which he had previously sent to Japan, he agreed to reduce his shipment to 25 per cent. But Governor Paulus Traudenius dug his toes in and would only agree to allow 50,000 rials (140,000 guilders) to be carried. On 21 December 1640, another letter from Iquan arrived in Taiwan in reply to Governor Traudenius' proposal. Iquan asked the Company to give a shipment of 100,000 rials (280,000 guilders) in goods, thereby rejecting Traudenius' proposal.<sup>15</sup> His reason was that this would have been only 35 per cent of his current shipment. Finally both parties failed to reach an agreement in 1640.

While these negotiations were going on, Iquan dispatched several junks to Japan laden with silk goods. Only two of them arrived, carrying the cargoes worth about 200,000 taels (or 660,800 guilders). In contrast the Dutch exported 5,164,371 guilders' worth of all kinds of goods including silk from Taiwan.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Daghregister Batavia*, 1640-1641, 175. 29 Jan. 1641.

<sup>16</sup> VOC 1136, Missive van den Ed. president Franchois Caron aen den gouverneur generael [Antonio] Van Diemen , Japan, 20 Nov. 1640, not foliated; *Daghregister Batavia*, 1640-1641, 111. 6 Dec. 1640. The total of the cargoes of the *Otter*, the *Oostcappel*, the *Broeckoort*, *De Rocht*, *De Rijk*, and the *Pauw* carried to Japan from Taiwan. It should include the silk goods and other commodities.

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**Table 8-1: Chinese raw silk exported to Japan directly and via Taiwan**

	Chinese raw silk exported to Japan by the Dutch in Taiwan. (in piculs)	Raw silk exported to Japan by the An-hai merchants (in piculs)
1639-11/1640-10	1,522.31	1,852.2
1640-11/1641-10	716.3	1,319.05
1641-11/1642-10	422.43	639.33
1642-10/1643-11	289.24	1,795.24

Source: Nagazumi Yoko, Liu Hsü-fêng (trans.), 'You Hê-lan shih-liao k'an shih-ch'i shih-chi tê t'ai-wan mao-i [The Taiwan Trade in the Seventeenth Century Based on Dutch Sources]', 37-57 at 42. Table 1; 46. Table 3.

The An-hai merchants exported slightly more raw silk than the Dutch, and Iquan's exports occupied about 34 per cent of the total export of the An-hai merchants. The Dutch chief merchant in Japan, François Caron, seriously considered the possibility of signing a formal contract with Iquan. He agreed that competition between both parties would reduce the profits, but he wondered whether Iquan would be able to really keep his promise and prevent any other Chinese junks sailing to Japan from China. If he could not live up to his end of the bargain, there was still the nagging possibility that he might trade under someone else's name. At this stage of play, the attitude of the Japanese authorities was still unpredictable since they had just banished the Portuguese and were adjusting their regulations deal with the Dutch, who had been ordered to demolish their factory at Hirado and to sell off their stores as soon as possible.<sup>17</sup> Placed under such stress and facing competition from the Chinese merchants, the Dutch discovered that their pure profits

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<sup>17</sup> VOC 1136, Missive van den Ed. president Franchois Caron aen den gouverneur generael [Antonio] Van Diemen , Japan, 20 Nov. 1640, fol. 771<sup>r</sup>-7<sup>v</sup>; *Daghregister Batavia*, 1640-1641, 147-8. 20 Aug. 1640;66. 13 Dec. 1641. The message was passed from Taiwan.

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declined to only 850,000 guilders, which means they only earned a 13.5 per cent profit instead of the expected 60 per cent.<sup>18</sup>

While the Dutch in Taiwan and the An-hai merchants were locked in their bargaining, the Japanese authorities had decided that the *pacando* system would be re-introduced. The upshot of this was that the Japanese merchants would be forced to trade with the Dutch collectively under the beady eye of the Shogunal authorities. This system precluded competition between the individual Japanese merchants at the public auctions and, as a consequence, the raw silk price dropped from 292 taels in 1639 to 204 taels per picul in 1641. Instead of an average profit of 67 per cent in 1639, the profits obtained on the sale of the raw silk dropped to a mere 21 per cent in 1641.<sup>19</sup>

The Dutch were not able to expand the Japan trade, because they did not have any large amounts of silver to take to Taiwan which would have enabled them to trade with the An-hai merchants. Although Iquan and his An-hai companions also suffered heavy losses, he still was able to dispatch three richly laden junks on his own account carrying cargoes of silk amounting to 1,600,000 guilders to Taiwan in the spring of 1641. Governor Paulus Traudenius required them to stay to wait for the silver cash transfer from Batavia to arrive. At this moment he was unaware that the Batavian

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<sup>18</sup> Oskar Nachod, *Die Beziehungen der Niederländischen Ostindischen Kompagnie zu Japan im XVII Jahrhundert* [The Relationship between the Dutch East India Company and Japan in the Seventeenth Century], (Inaugural Diss., Rostock University, 1897), 289. 850,000 guilders divided by the total import value of 6,295,367 guilders.

<sup>19</sup> Pieter W. Klein, 'De Tonkinees-Japanse zijdehandel van de Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie en het inter-Asiatische verkeer in de 17e Eeuw [The Tonkin-Japan Silk Trade of the Dutch East India Company and the Inter-Asian Trade in the Seventeenth Century]'. in Willem Frijhoff and Minke Hiemstra (eds), *Bewogen en bewegen: de historicus in het spanningsveld tussen economic en cultuur* [To Be moved and To Move: Historians in the Field of Tension between Economics and Culture], (Tilburg: Uitgeverij H. Gianotten B.V., 1906), 152-177 at 170. Tabel.2.

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authorities preferred to supply the Japanese silver to the Coromandel Coast because they thought that the Chinese trade was not as promising as its Indian counterpart.<sup>20</sup> The upshot of this stalemate was that, without being fed by a steady supply of silver, the Taiwan-An-hai trade came to a standstill. When Governor Traudenius again enquired what Iquan thought of his proposal, the latter remained silent.<sup>21</sup> Iquan knew the Dutch had exported almost 4 million guilders in specie from Japan, but most of that silver had not ended up in Taiwan But had been whisked away to Batavia.<sup>22</sup> After the Governor Traudenius had enthusiastically reported the High Government in Batavia about the rich cargoes of the three junks, he had to face the disappointment of having to return the goods back to An-hai because the silver needed to pay for them had been sequestered by Batavia for use elsewhere, namely in India.<sup>23</sup>

The Dutch records reveal that Iquan's Japan trade rapidly expanded after 1640. Although generally more than thirty Chinese junks visited Japan every season, the bulk of the trade revenues were gradually concentrated in Iquan's junks at this period. By the autumn of 1643, seven of Iquan's junks were carrying 66 per cent of the silk goods carried by thirty-four Chinese junks in total.

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<sup>20</sup> VOC 665, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 20 Mar. 1641, not foliated.

<sup>21</sup> *Dagregister Batavia*, 1640-1641, 59. 6 Nov. 1641. An extract of the letter sent from Taiwan on 17 March 1641.

<sup>22</sup> Nachod, *Die Beziehungen der Niederländischen Ostindischen Kompagnie*, appendix, ccii-cciii.

<sup>23</sup> VOC 664, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 4 May 1641, not foliated.

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**Table 8-2: Silk goods monopoly of Iquan in Sino-Japan trade Nov. 1639-Nov.1643**

	The number of Chinese junks arriving in Japan*	The Number of Iquan's junks*	Value of silk goods exported by the Iquan's junks to Japan (Japanese taels)	Estimated proportion in all Chinese silk goods exported to Japan, of Iquan's silk goods cargoes (percentage)
1639-11/1640-10	74	2	200,000 <sup>24</sup>	-
1640-11/1641-10	89	6	(561,403) <sup>25</sup>	-
1641-11/1642-10	32	3 <sup>26</sup>	500,000 <sup>27</sup>	(52.8) <sup>28***</sup>
1642-10/1643-11	34	7 <sup>29</sup>	850,000 <sup>30</sup>	66 <sup>31</sup>

<sup>24</sup> VOC 1136, Missive van den Ed. president Franchois Caron aen den gouverneur generael [Anthonio] Van Diemen, Japan, 20 Nov. 1640, not foliated.

<sup>25</sup> VOC 665, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 20 Mar.1641, not foliated. The return cargoes belonging to Iquan amounted to 1,600,000 guilders, which was equal to 561,403 Japanese taels.

<sup>26</sup> VOC 1140, Missive [van Johan van Elseracq] uijt het jacht Ackerslooth zeijlende door de straate Palimbangh aen den gouverneur generaal [Antonio] van Diemen, Strait Palimbang, 2 Dec. 1642, fo. 40<sup>v</sup>; VOC 1140, Missive [van den edelen Johan van Elseracq aen de edele heer gouverneur Paulis Traudenius] na Taijouan, Japan, 2 Oct. 1642, fo. 47<sup>t</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> VOC 1140, Missive [van Johan van Elseracq] uijt het jacht Ackerslooth zeijlende door de straate Palimbangh aen den gouverneur generaal [Antonio] van Diemen, Strait Palimbang, 2 Dec. 1642, 40<sup>v</sup>; VOC 1140, Missive [van den edelen Johan van Elseracq aen de edele heer gouverneur Paulis Traudenius] na Taijouan, Japan, 2 Oct. 1642, fo. 47<sup>t</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> VOC 1140, Missive [van Johan van Elseracq] uijt het jacht Ackerslooth zeijlende door de straate Palimbangh aen den gouverneur generaal [Antonio] van Diemen, Strait Palimbang, 2 Dec. 1642, 40<sup>v</sup>. It records that in all the Chinese cargo sold for a total of 947,200 taels. Since the most valuable wares were the silk goods, I have taken these as a denominator to estimate the percentage of Iquan's monopoly.

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Source:\* Nagazumi Yoko, *Tōsen yushutsunyūhin sūryō ichiran, 1637--1833-nen*, 330-2. Appendix A.

\*\*\* The value of all Chinese silk exports including other low-value coarse wares.

Although of the maritime ban (*Kaikin*[J.]) imposed by the Japanese authorities had opened the door for the Dutch to realize their ambitious plan of supplanting the Portuguese, their undisguised preference for the India trade made it impossible for Iquan to believe their sincerity about wanting to sign a reciprocal contract. The Dutch partiality for the india trade prompted the An-hai merchants under Iquan to decide to keep the silk-for-silver trade with Japan in their own hands and bypass the Dutch. All this happened just at a time that the strategic shift initiated by the Dutch in the direction of financing the India trade with Japanese silver and Chinese gold was actually forcing them to rely on the An-hai merchants for the supply of the relatively cheaper Chinese gold, which could be sold at a much higher price in India.<sup>32</sup>

Because Governor-General Antonio van Diemen and the Council of the Indies in Batavia made the critical decision to shift the investments to Coromandel and failed to supply Taiwan with an adequate supply of silver, the three large junks belonging to Iquan mentioned earlier were ordered to

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<sup>29</sup> *The Deshima dagregisters : their original tables of contents*[hereafter cited as 'the Deshima dagregisters'], Cynthia Viallé and Leonard Blussé (trans. from the Dutch and ed.), 12 vols, ( Leiden : Institute for the History of European Expansion, 1986-2005), XI:1641-1650, 112. 12-3 Aug. 1643.

<sup>30</sup> *The Deshima dagregisters*, XI 1641-1643, 112. 12-3 Aug. 1643.

<sup>31</sup> Generale Missive, 22 Dec. 1643, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 215.

<sup>32</sup> Tapan Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel, 1605-1690 : a study in the interrelations of European commerce and traditional economies*, ('s Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), 140. Raychaudhuri claims that the export of Chinese gold from Taiwan to India ushered in a new phrase in which the VOC rapidly began to enlarge its investment in the Subcontinent.

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sail on to Japan.<sup>33</sup> In a nutshell, Iquan made up his mind to initiate this trade even though it meant he was disobeying an imperial ban on direct trade with Japan. His hand had been forced because the Dutch in Taiwan had not turned out to be reliable partners. Another additional reason behind his decision might have been the massacre in Manila in 1639, an incident in which the Spaniards slaughtered thousands of the Chinese inhabitants of the city. This outrage obviously upset the trade between An-hai and Manila and this interruption brought the supply of Mexican silver to a standstill. In view of these developments, it became more urgent than ever to obtain silver from Japan. Finally, since the Chinese Court still required Iquan carry out a large number of military duties, he could feel pretty secure that the local mandarins would not be disposed to disclose his smuggling trade to Japan. Not only was Iquan still engaged in pacifying the tribes in the mountains, just at that moment in June 1642 the Imperial Court was even planning to assign him to a mission devised to resist the Manchu invasion on the Northeastern border.<sup>34</sup>

### **The Usurpation of the Pepper Trade of Macao in the South China Sea Region**

In the light of all the commercial setbacks it had to encounter, the original Dutch-Fu-chienese plan, which was to supplant the Kuang-tung-Portuguese alliance in Japan trade, ended in failure after a short bargaining period. The Macao silver trade with Japan was gradually taken over by Iquan alone but, as will be explained below, the export of Chinese gold from Macao was gradually taken over by the Dutch East India Company after the Dutch had seized Malacca from Portuguese in January 1641.<sup>35</sup> The Dutch began their

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<sup>33</sup> *The Deshima dagregisters*, XI 1641-1650, 5. 26 June; 7. 1 July; 8. 4 July 1641.

<sup>34</sup> TWYH(ed.), *Chêng-shih shih-liao ch'u-pien*, 174; Missive van Paulus Traudeniuss naer Amsterdam aen de Camer Amsterdam, Taiwan, 3 Nov. 1642, Fo. 451<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> For a general impact of the capture of Malacca, see: Veen, *Decay or defeat?*, 201. However, the situation in the Chinese gold exports from Macao to India still requires more study.

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siege of Malacca in 1639 and, as a result, the trade between Macao and India was cut off. At precisely the same time, in 1639, Governor-General Antonio van Diemen was demanding that the Taiwan Factory supply Chinese gold to provide the Coromandel factory with the financial wherewithal to purchase textiles.<sup>36</sup> Obeying his orders, Zeelandia Castle did indeed begin to transmit some Chinese gold to India via the route through the Straits of Malacca.<sup>37</sup> It is estimated that because of the difference in the purchase and sales price during the period 1636-1639, Chinese gold generated a 11-15 per cent profit in Masulipatnam and 35.5-38 per cent in Pulicat.<sup>38</sup> When the trade between Taiwan and An-hai ground to a halt in 1640, the Dutch commissioner, Nicolaes Couckebacker, even entertained serious doubts about whether China could really provide the large order for gold for which Batavia asked. His doubts were based on that fact that as far as he was aware there were no gold-mines in China.<sup>39</sup> The Dutch plan to take over the gold trade from Macao never became a realistic option until 1641 when Governor-General Antonio van Diemen asked the Taiwan Factory to ship the Japanese silver to Coromandel instead of using it as payment for Iquan's silk junks.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Generale Missive, 22 Dec. 1638, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 175.

<sup>37</sup> Generale Missive, 18 Dec. 1639, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 185-6.

<sup>38</sup> According to the research by Raychaudhuri, the Chinese gold from Formosa sold at a profit of 35 5/8% to 38% at Pulicat, and of 11% to 15% at Maulipatam during 1636 to 1639. The general profit of Chinese gold was 21% to 30% in 1643, which once dropped to 6% to 9 1/2 % in 1643. Cf. Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, 187. n 360; 190, n 363.

<sup>39</sup> VOC 1131, Rreport of Commissioner Nicolaes Couckebacker, [on board the ship] *De Rijk*, 8 Dec. 1639, fo. 300<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>40</sup> VOC 665, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 20 Mar 1641, not foliated. However, in order to retreat from Hirado, they were required to clear old debts and in return, the Japanese authorities offered them f. 638,689 in gold. The Taiwan authorities only shipped away f. 501,665, which was 50.2 % of the requirements of Coromandel.

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**Table 8-3: The demand and supply of gold for India shipped by VOC via Taiwan**

	Gold demand for India (f.)	Shipped gold (f.)	achieved rate (percentage)
1639	600,000 <sup>41</sup>	201,759 <sup>42</sup>	33.6
1640	800,000 <sup>43</sup>	500,000 <sup>44</sup>	62.5
1641	1,000,000 <sup>45*</sup>	501,665 <sup>46</sup>	50.2

\* This is a demand for cash, in either gold or silver

If the Dutch had also been able to occupy Macao after their seizure of Malacca, any further co-operation with the Fu-chienese/An-hai merchants

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<sup>41</sup> Generale Missive, 22 Dec. 1638, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 175; VOC 661, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 16 July 1638, no foliated.

<sup>42</sup> Generale Missive, 30 Dec. 1638, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 180. It recorded that 134,759 guilders' worth of the Chinese gold was shipped to Surat; VOC 662, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 1 Mar. 1639, not foliated. It recorded that f. 67,000 in Chinese gold was shipped to Coromandel.

<sup>43</sup> VOC 1132, Missive van gouverneur Joan van der Burch naer Souratta aen directeur Barent Pietersz, Taiwan, 30 Nov. 1639, Fo. 310<sup>r</sup>; *Generale Missiven van gouverneur-generaal en raden aan Heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, 11 vols., ed. W. Ph. Coolhaas, J. van Goor and J. E. Schooneveld-Oosterling ('s-Gravenhage: Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, 1960-2004), II:1639-1655, 60. 18 Dec. 1639. They expected that the Japanese silver sent from Japan via Taiwan plus the Chinese gold obtained in Taiwan would amount to 700,000 guilders in gold and 100,000 guilders in silver.

<sup>44</sup> VOC 1132, Missive van gouverneur Joan van der Burch naer Choromandel aen den gouverneur Arent Garadenijs, Taiwan, 30 Nov. 1639, fos. 302-3; Generale Missive, 8 Jan. 1640, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 192.

<sup>45</sup> VOC 665, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 20 Mar. 1641, not foliated.

<sup>46</sup> Ibidem.

## IN SEARCH OF SILVER 1640-1646

would have been pointless. Had their efforts been successful, the Dutch could have entered into a trade partnership with merchants in Kuang-tung province and supplanted the privileged position of the Portuguese in the Chinese Empire, which had been their original plan before they had decided to cast their lot in with the Fu-chienese in the 1620s. No wonder the Dutch began to lose their faith in Iquan during this period in which they had set their sights on the conquest of Macao, but the goal which was almost within their grasp was snatched away when Portugal regained its independence in 1640. When Portugal pried itself loose from Spain, the Dutch were left without a legal leg to stand on to continue their attempts to conquer any Portuguese colony. On 7 October 1642, when message of this political change of circumstances was officially received in Batavia, the High Government there proclaimed a truce for a period of 10 years.<sup>47</sup> The government of Macao had actually dispatched a delegate to Batavia and demanded a cease-fire even before the formal order had arrived in Batavia from Holland in April 1642. When the Macanese asked to be allowed to trade in Batavia, resume their trade with Malacca and be exempted from paying customs duties for three years, the Batavian authorities rejected their requests but welcomed any further negotiations which would allow them to obtain Chinese gold.<sup>48</sup> At this point, because it had eventually not been possible to snatch the Macao gold trade by force, the persisting competition with the Cantonese-Portuguese alliance once again made partnership with the Fu-chienese merchants a feasible option. In a letter sent to Iquan, the Governor of Taiwan, Paulus Traudenius, asked his help in purchasing high quality gold:

*'Your Honour, be so good as to arrange good quantities of gold. Any alloy lower than 20-24 carat will not be acceptable. We shall pay at the intrinsic*

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<sup>47</sup> Veen, *Decay or defeat?*, 202. *Dagregister Zeelandia*, II 1641-1648, 146. 2 June 1643.

<sup>48</sup> VOC 665, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 11 Apr. 1642, fos. 60<sup>v</sup>-61<sup>v</sup>.

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*value accordingly. The gold will be paid for in the same way as when you have supplied it in the past, please put your mind at rest about this.*<sup>49</sup>

Therefore in contrast to the silk-for-silver trade which Iquan and the Dutch had decisively captured from the merchants of Macao, the gold trade of Macao still remained in Portuguese hands and the Dutch had to continue to rely on the An-hai merchants, who provided them with a steady supply of certain amounts of Chinese gold.

**Table 8-4: Chinese gold exported by the Dutch to India via Taiwan**

Chinese gold exported by the Dutch to India (f.)	
-1642.11	226,550
1642-1643	523,101
1643-1644	515,228
1644-1645	281,456
1645-1646	220,057

Source: VOC 1222, *Memorie der quantiteit en reductie van het becomene Taijouanse schuijt gout* [Memorandum of the Quantity of and Reduction in the Gold Received in Taiwan ], Taiwan, 25 Feb. 1657, fo. 15<sup>v</sup>.

The truce between the Dutch and the Portuguese reinforced these conditions because legally the Dutch could no longer intervene to cut off the Macao-India trade by force. Hence the truce had a wider significance for all the players in South China Sea region because it opened up room for free commercial competition.

As mentioned earlier, the tropical goods most in demand in China were elephant tusks and pepper. The traders around the South China Sea, no matter who they were - the Siamese King, the Portuguese in Malacca and Macao or the Fu-chienese merchants - were all involved in dealing in these two commodities. During the 1630s when the An-hai merchants were gradually

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<sup>49</sup> VOC 1146, *Missive van gouverneur Paulus Traudenius naer China aen den grooten Mandorijn Iquan*, 15 Oct. 1642, fo. 747<sup>v</sup>.

## IN SEARCH OF SILVER 1640-1646

expanding their trade as a consequence of their co-operation with the Dutch in Taiwan, they also tried to obtain those commodities under their own steam.

Iquan had been trying to build up a direct link between Chang-chou and Ayutthaya since 1636, but successful Siamese tributary missions to Kuang-tung had squeezed him out of this rich trade. The pepper trade was also at a low ebb because the civil war in Siam had wreaked devastation on most of the pepper plantations. In that same year, Iquan therefore decided also to dispatch junks to the pepper-rich port of Jambi in Sumatra. Although this destination was situated on the traditional Hsi-yang route, the VOC had cut the Jambi pepper trade off and re-directed it to Batavia. Consequently, as she left Jambi Iquan's junk was seized by a Dutch ship. The intention of the Dutch captain was to force the junk to visit Batavia, so he put some of the pepper, cash and crew on his own ship and transferred thirteen Dutch sailors to the junk to take charge of the Chinese crew. His plan came to naught when the junk and the ship encountered a typhoon on the way to Batavia and the Chinese crew cut the cable which connected the two vessels, killed the Dutch sailors and eventually succeeded in returning to China.<sup>50</sup> The thirty-two Chinese on board the Dutch ship still remained in Dutch hands. In the autumn of 1636, Iquan's agent Bendiok (Cheng Tai) sent a letter to Taiwan demanding the restitution of the booty by Governor Hans Putmans, and requesting that the captives be sent back, because some of the hostages were sailors belonging to Iquan's navy. For example, one National Squadron Leader (*Ch'in-tsung*[C.] *Sintiong*[D.]) was one of his own relatives. In the letter it was stated:

*‘ I assure your Honour this letter comes not from me (Bendiok) personally but was dispatched by the Mandarin Iquan who has been appointed Provincial Military Commander(Γ'i-tu[C.]) in Fu-chou, a rank which is almost the equivalent of that of Grand Co-ordinator. He is eagerly*

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<sup>50</sup> VOC 1120, Missive van jan van der Burch naer Batavia aen den gouverneur generael Anthonio van Diemen, Taiwan, 14 Nov. 1636, fo. 367.

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*enquiring for information and requires me to give the names, because the junk, her crew and goods belong to him. Furthermore, I know that two of these persons have earlier served as Iquan's war-junks.*<sup>51</sup>

The Dutch had taken only limited amount of pepper from the junk and it was uncertain whether the thirteen Dutch sailors on the Chinese junk had been slaughtered by the Chinese crew or had drowned when the junk foundered in the typhoon.<sup>52</sup> Whatever might have happened to them, neither Iquan nor the Dutch were keen to see this incident lead to a total war between the two sides just at a moment the An-hai-Taiwan trade had reached to its zenith. Hence, both sides were willing to practice self-restraint. Failure to have done so would have provoked another declaration of the maritime ban. The An-hai merchants made no further attempts to sail to Jambi during either 1637 or 1638. However, in the spring of 1639, when the Fu-chien authorities were offering the Chang-chou merchants passes to trade with the countries around South China Sea, Iquan's agent Bendiok (Cheng Tai) immediately submitted a request to Taiwan, requiring two Dutch passes which would allow them to sail to Palembang and Jambi in Sumatra to purchase pepper.<sup>53</sup> The High Government in Batavia refused the request and at the end of January dispatched two ships to intercept Iquan's junks. However, the Chinese had managed to steal a march and when the Dutch ships approached the coastal waters off Palembang, the two junks were already riding safely at anchor there. Since the Dutch were waiting outside the river estuary, the

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<sup>51</sup> VOC 1120, Missive van Jan van der Burch naer Batavia aen gouverneur generael [Antonio van Diemen] en raeden van India, Taiwan, 19 Nov. 1636, fo. 329. The surname of this lieutenant was recorded as 'Oiji', which sounds like the Chinese family name 'Wu' or 'Huang'.

<sup>52</sup> VOC 1120, Missive van Jan van der Burch naer Batavia aen den gouverneur generael Antonio van Diemen, Taiwan, 14 Nov. 1636, fo. 367. Two '*petack*' of pepper have been taken. A '*petack*' refers to two dividing bulkheads in a junk.

<sup>53</sup> VOC 662, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 24 Jan. 1639, not foliated.

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Chinese merchants decided to send delegates to Batavia to acquire free passes for their homeward-bound voyage to China. The High Government in Batavia knew that the An-hai-Taiwan trade was crucial to the VOC trade in the Far East and, in view of the fact that ‘ the above-mentioned junks have been fitted out by Iquan, who is very influential in our trade with the Chinese Empire,’ the authorities decided to grant the passes and allowed the junks to take on 5-600 last of pepper in Palembang, on the condition that they should return to Batavia the following year to purchase pepper there and would not visit any other harbours in the Archipelago.<sup>54</sup> Unquestionably, this really exceptional gesture was only made because just at the moment the VOC was expecting a huge expansion in the Taiwan trade.

When added to the 455 last of pepper purchased at Batavia, these 5-600 last from Palembang added up to a total of 955-1055 last, an extraordinarily large amount. The reason for the An-hai merchants’ sudden desire to procure such large quantities of pepper was that it was required to fill the gap in the market left open since the Portuguese in Macao had been forbidden to trade with the Kuang-tung/Canton merchants. The Dutch in Taiwan were informed from An-hai, that:

*‘The mandarins of Kuang-tung will not allow the Portuguese to reside in Macao any longer, even though the mandarins have pressed the Portuguese to pay the annual imperial tax (by which they have secured their residence there in the past).’<sup>55</sup>*

This piece of information tallies with the Chinese archival records. In

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<sup>54</sup> VOC 662, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 30 Apr. 1639, not foliated; Generale Missive, 18 Dec. 1639, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 185; Judith Schooneveld-Oosterling, Marc Kooijmans, *VOC-glossarium*, 67. A last equalled 20 piculs, about 1,250 kilograms.

<sup>55</sup> VOC 1133, Missive van gouverneur Jan van der Burch naer Batavia aen gouverneur general Anthonio van Diemen, Taiwan, 28 Jan. 1640, fos. 181<sup>v</sup>-182<sup>f</sup>.

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March 1639 the Portuguese had killed some Chinese soldiers.<sup>56</sup> An official report into what had happened depicted this incident as a rebellion because ‘the greedy mandarins required so many bribes, the Portuguese were forced to resist and killed some soldiers.’<sup>57</sup> No other records detail what measures were taken when the incident happened, but the same document points out that after 1640 the Portuguese were forbidden to enter the city of Kuang-chou (Canton). From that time, only Chinese merchants were allowed to convey goods down the Pearl River to Macao.<sup>58</sup> This incident brought the traffic between Kuang-chou and Macao to a temporary halt and created a wonderful opportunity for the An-hai merchants to capture this share in the lucrative pepper trade.

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<sup>56</sup> Sun Chia-chi, ‘Ping-pu wei chiu-ts’an t’ung-i na-hui chih kuan-yüen shih hsing-kaio[Accusation Written by the Ministry of War Levelled against Some Officials Who Have Accepted Bribes from Foreigners] 4 Mar. 1639’, in Chung-kuo ti-i li-shih tang-an kuan [First Archives of China], Ao-mên chi-chin hui [The Macao Foundation] and Chi-nan ta-Hsüeh ku-chi yen-chiu-so [The Research Institute for Ancient Documents of Chi-nan University] (Hereafter cited as CKTI et al)(eds), *Ming-ch’ing shih-ch’i ao-mên wên-t’i tang-an wên-hsien hui-pien*[Compilation of Official Documents concerning Macao during the Ming and Ch’ing Dynasties], 6 vols, (Pei-ching: Jên-min ch’u-pan-shê, 1999), I, 20-21.

<sup>57</sup> T’ung Yang-chia, ‘Liang-kuang tsung-tu T’ung yang-chia t’i-ch’ing chun-hsü hao-ching ao-jên t’ung- shang mao-i i-fu ts’ai-yung pên [Suggestions Made by the Governor of Kuang-tung and Kuang-hsi, T’ung Yang-chia, to Allow Foreign Residents of Macao to Trade with the Chinese in order to Raise Tax Revenues] 5 June 1647’, in CKTI (et al eds), *Ming-ch’ing shih-ch’i ao-mên wên-t’i tang-an wên-hsien hui-pien*, 22-3.

<sup>58</sup> T’ung Yang-chia, ‘Liang-kuang tsung-tu T’ung yang-chia t’i-ch’ing chun-hsü hao-ching ao-jên t’ung- shang mao-i i-fu ts’ai-yung pên 5 June 1647’, in CKTI (et al. eds), *Ming-ch’ing shih-ch’i ao-mên wên-t’i tang-an wên-hsien hui-pien*, 22.

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**Table 8-5: The amount of pepper sold by the Dutch to the An-hai merchants**

Year	Chinese purchase amount in Batavia (last)	Dutch ship carried to Taiwan (last)
1639	455 <sup>59</sup> +(500-600) <sup>60</sup>	
1640	300 <sup>61</sup>	
1641	170 <sup>62</sup>	
1642	450 <sup>63</sup>	303 <sup>64</sup>
1643	700 <sup>65</sup>	320 <sup>66</sup>
1644	300 <sup>67</sup>	
1645	150 <sup>68</sup>	
1646	0 <sup>69</sup>	
Sum	2525+(500-600)	623

The annual average amount of pepper imported by Fu-chienese merchants via

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<sup>59</sup> Generale Missive 18 Dec. 1639, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 184.

<sup>60</sup> Generale Missive 18 Dec. 1639, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 185.

<sup>61</sup> Generale Missive 9 Sept. 1640, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 196.

<sup>62</sup> Generale Missive 12 Dec. 1641, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 200.

<sup>63</sup> VOC 665, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 19 May 1642, fo.88<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>64</sup> Generale Missive, 12 Dec. 1642, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 202.

<sup>65</sup> VOC 666, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 3 June 1643, not foliated.

<sup>66</sup> Generale Missive, 22 Dec. 1643, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 211.

<sup>67</sup> VOC 667, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 8 June 1644, not foliated.

<sup>68</sup> VOC 667, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 29 May 1645, not foliated.

<sup>69</sup> VOC 669, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 11 June 1646, not foliated. The Chinese junks carried very few commodities and pepper was not recorded on their cargo manifests.

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the Dutch East India Company was about 346 last.<sup>70</sup> Two-thirds of this were imported on the Chinese junks which visited Batavia. The number of junks was not far from the quota for Batavia fixed by the Emperor.<sup>71</sup>

**Table 8-6: Chinese junks arrived on Batavia**

Year	Chinese junks arrived in Batavia	Chinese junk from An-hai arrived in Batavia
1639	7 <sup>72</sup>	3 <sup>73</sup>
1640	7 <sup>74</sup>	1 <sup>75</sup>
1641	2 <sup>76</sup>	1 <sup>77</sup>
1642	4 <sup>78</sup>	2 <sup>79</sup>
1643	5 <sup>80</sup>	3 <sup>81</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Two-thirds of the amount of pepper purchased from Batavia was lost at sea in 1643. This was not included in the number cited.

<sup>71</sup> According to the quota claimed in 1589, four junks were allowed to visit Bantam (the same area as Batavia) annually. Cf. Lin Jên-ch'uan, *Ming-mo ch'ing-ch'u Ssu-jên hai-shang mao-i* [Private Trade during the Late Ming and Early Ch'ing Dynasty], (Shang-hai: Hua-tung shih-fan ta- hsüeh, 1987), 262.

<sup>72</sup> Generale Missive, 18 Dec. 1639, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 184.

<sup>73</sup> VOC 662, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 11 Feb.; 25 Feb.; 5 Mar. 1639, not foliated.

<sup>74</sup> Generale Missive, 9 Sept. 1640, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 196.

<sup>75</sup> VOC 663 Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 9 Mar. 1640. This nachoda is son of An-hai merchant Bindiook.

<sup>76</sup> Generale Missive, 12 Dec. 1641, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 199.

<sup>77</sup> Generale Missive, 12 Dec. 1641, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 199. It belongs to Iquan.

<sup>78</sup> VOC 665, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 19 May 1642, Fo. 88<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>79</sup> VOC 665, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 8 Feb.; 12 Feb 1642, not foliated.

<sup>80</sup> Generale Missive, 22 Dec. 1643, in Cheng, *De VOC en Formosa*, 214.

<sup>81</sup> VOC 666, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 10 Feb.; 25 Feb.; 6 Mar 1643, not foliated.

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1644	7 <sup>82</sup>	-
1645	2 <sup>83</sup>	
1646	2 <sup>84</sup>	
Total	34	11

Obviously the Chinese Pepper trade in both Taiwan and in Batavia was running pretty smoothly around 1642-1643. In 1642 and 1643, the gold export to India also reached its first peak.<sup>85</sup> Although the Company missed out on the chance to establish a partnership with Iquan in the Sino-Japanese trade, it did succeed in making a link between the Chinese and Indian markets. In this respect at least the partnership between the An-hai merchants and the VOC in Taiwan was still useful.

### Chasing silver in a changing world in crisis

On the northeastern frontier, the Ming army had been fighting the Manchu tribes for decades, but it was gradually losing its advantage even though its soldiers still outnumbered those who could be put in the field by the Manchus. During the 1630s, the Manchu cavalry had managed penetrate the border and even invaded Shan-tung province and the coastline of Hê-bei province.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> VOC 667, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 8 June 1644, not foliated; *Generale Missiven*, II 1639-1655, 254. 23 Dec. 1644. It recorded eight big junks and one small *wankang*.

<sup>83</sup> VOC 668, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Cornelis van der Lijn ende raden, Batavia, 29 May 1645, no folio number.

<sup>84</sup> VOC 669, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Cornelis van der Lijn ende raden, Batavia, 11 June 1646, not foliated.

<sup>85</sup> Its zenith was around 1648, cf. Table 7-4.

<sup>86</sup> Frederick W. Mote, Michael Loewe, Paul Jakov Smith, Herbert Franke, Denis Twitchett, Willard J. Peterson, John K. Fairbank, Kwang-Ching Liu, Albert Feuerwerker, Roderick MacFarquhar (eds), *The Cambridge History of China*, 15 vols,

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Since this manoeuvre cut off the supply-lines of the Chinese frontier troops, fearing an inevitable outcome some of the Ming coastal defence troops decided to desert and join the Manchu side.<sup>87</sup> Their disloyalty meant that control over the Gulf of Po-hai fell into the lap of the Manchus like a ripe plum. This gift from the gods allowed them to acquire provisions from Korea by sea as they continued to raid the Chinese supply-lines on the northeastern frontier. In the early 1640s, the Peking court began to be seriously worried that the Manchu would launch an attack via the Po-hai Gulf. Some officials proposed calling in Iquan to halt the Manchu force at sea. Hence, during the summer of 1642 the Emperor summoned Iquan, who was still occupied pacifying the rebellious aborigines at Lien-chou in mountains of Kuang-tung,<sup>88</sup> and ordered him to dispatch two capable commanders to take charge of 3,000 newly recruited soldiers. Iquan replied immediately that he needed to have new guns cast and to build new war-junks if he were to be able to carry out this mission.<sup>89</sup> He lost no time in returning to Fu-chien at the end of October 1642.<sup>90</sup> Governor Traudenius in Taiwan had this to say about the matter:

*‘There were rumours that the Emperor had personally summoned him[Iquan] to the court for the purpose of enlisting his aid against the Manchus.... others have said that he will send his money north rather than go there himself, because he has little faith in the grandees of this Empire.’<sup>91</sup>*

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(Cambridge, Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1978-), VIII the Ming Dynasty 1368-1644, part I, 615-617.

<sup>87</sup> Frederick W. Mote and Denis Twitchett (eds), *The Cambridge History of China*, (Cambridge, Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1988), VIII the Ming Dynasty 1368-1644, part I, 688-9.

<sup>88</sup> TWYH(ed.), *Chêng-shih shih-liao ch'u-pien*, 174; 178. The battlefield is located at Lien-chou in Kuang-tung province.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 175; 181.

<sup>91</sup> Letter from Taiwan to Amsterdam Chamber, 1642-11-12, VOC 1140, Fol. 451<sup>f</sup>.

## IN SEARCH OF SILVER 1640-1646

As far as it can be pieced together, both the Grand Co-ordinator in Fu-chien and the Supreme Commander of Kuang-tung and Kuang-hsi were in a quandary as they tried to calculate how the expenses which were bound to be incurred could be paid from the empty treasury. It had been drained despite the fact that Iquan's own trade revenues had assumed ever larger proportions during 1643. Iquan replied to the Emperor informing him that the new guns would be ready around May 1643, but he himself was ill and would not be able to lead this campaign.<sup>92</sup> He suggested that his younger brother, Cheng Hung-k'uei, should take command but by that time the communications between Fu-chien and Peking had already been cut off by peasant uprisings. While bandits under Li Tzu-ch'êng plundered the cities in the area of the Yellow River, the Fu-chien authorities lost contact with Peking for about four months.<sup>93</sup> By the time communications were restored, the court had already shelved its previous plan. Nevertheless, the Emperor still needed the Cheng force to quell the rebellion and in November 1643 summoned the 3,000 soldiers under Cheng Hung-k'uei. This summons was soon followed by another asking for another 2,000 soldiers in February 1644.<sup>94</sup>

In April 1644 the rebels took Peking by storm and the Ch'ung-chêng Emperor committed suicide on Coal Hill just before they arrived. The news of this collapse reached the second capital, Nanking, in the middle of May. On 19 June 1644, the new Emperor, Hung-kuang was elected by senior grandees. As Nanking was surrounded by a loop of the Yang-tze River, the

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<sup>92</sup> Anonymous, 'Wei tsun-shang ch'ao-chang fu-tsung-ping chêng chih-lung têng-yüen yin-liang têng-shih [Report about Awarding Silver as a Prize to the Deputy-Commander of Ch'ao-chou and Chang-chou Cheng Chih-lung]', in TWSL (ed.), *Ming-ch'ing t'ai-wan tang-an hui-pien*, I 1621-1644, 438.

<sup>93</sup> *Dagregister Zeelandia*, II 1641-1648, 142. 23 May 1643; Frederick W. Mote (et al. ed.), *The Cambridge History of China VIII: the Ming Dynasty 1368-1644*, part I, 634-6.

<sup>94</sup> Anonymous, *Ch'ung-chên shih-lu*[Court Records of the Reign of the Ch'ung-chên Emperor ], TW, No. 294, 302; Wan, *Ch'ung-chên ch'ang-pien*, 64.

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new court summoned Cheng Hung-k'uei to station his soldiers at a strategic location to prevent either the bandits or the Manchus from crossing the river. Far away from the areas laid waste by the peasant uprisings and the Manchu invasion, Fu-chien and Kuang-tung provinces became the pillars of the re-organized Southern Ming Empire. To secure this backyard, the new Emperor awarded Iquan an aristocratic title and acknowledged his prominent status in Fu-chien province. After 31 October 1644, he was granted imperial permission to take charge of all coastal defences, including those in Chê-chiang province.<sup>95</sup> Henceforth Iquan controlled the coastal strip most strategically situated for running the silk trade between China and Japan. With an eye to the main chance, at that time he actually opened a direct link between Chê-chiang and Japan.

The disturbances at the heart of the Chinese Empire in the first few months of 1644 weakened any control the Court could exert over the illegal trade. Crucial evidence of this was provided when a group of Nanking and Fu-chou junks carrying silk goods visited Japan in the spring of 1644 during the north monsoon.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Li Ch'ing, *Nan-tu lu* [Court Records of the Reign of the Hung Kuang Emperor], (Chê-chiang: Chê-chiang ku-chi publisher, 1988), 95. There is a record that Cheng Chih-lung was granted the noble title of the count of 'Nan-an' on 26 September 1644. Later, on 30 October, he was appointed commander in charge of Fu-chien and somewhere else. In a preface to a newly published book, he had signed his full title as 'Ch'in-ming chen-shou fu-chien têng-ch'u ping chê-chiang chin-wên ti-fang tsung-pingp-kuan, t'ai-tzu t'ai-shih, ch'ih-tz'u mang-i nan-an-pa', which can be fully translated as 'Imperially Appointed Regional Commander of Fu-chien and Nearby Areas Including Chin-hua and Wên-chou at Chê-chiang, Grand Preceptor of the Heir Apparent, Earl-Pacifier of South, Wearer of an Imperidal Robe. Chêng Ta-yü, *Ching-kuo hsiung-lüeh* [The Great Plans for Re-invigorating the Empire], 2 vols, (Peking: Shang-wu yin-shu Kuan, 2003), I, 5.

<sup>96</sup> *The Deshima Dagregisters*, XI 1641-1650, 16 Feb./11 Mar./ 20 Apr./ 27 Apr./ 28 Apr./30 Apr. 1644, 159-60.

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The sudden increase in the number of Chinese junks visiting Japan during the north monsoon can also be construed as a reaction to the Dutch threats because, after the negotiations between Iquan and the Dutch about sharing the Sino-Japan trade had failed, the Dutch decided it was time to take some measures to lure Iquan back to the negotiating table. On 2 June 1643, the Governor of Taiwan, Maximiliaan Le Maire, told the Chinese merchants who were visiting Taiwan that:

*'The Governor-General does not understand why they [the Chinese] have created difficulties for the Company in Japan and have sent junks laden with all sorts of commodities to trade with our enemy in Manila, in direct contravention of the Emperor's ban. We have been suffering great losses because of those junks. In order to prevent further damage, he will dispatch a fleet to patrol the sea-routes between China and Japan. As you will have noticed, we have sent two junks and one Dutch ship to patrol the northern waters off Luzon. These actions will continue throughout the whole year; ... please make this known and warn every merchant in China that they should not try to visit these places.'*<sup>97</sup>

Taking a modicum of notice of this threat, Iquan sent some commodities on junks which departed at that time, notwithstanding the northern monsoon, to reduce the risk of vessels being captured by the Dutch fleets. The two Dutch junks sent to the Philippines from Taiwan did indeed manage to capture a Chinese junk near Luzon on 4 June, and confiscated all the silver on board, warning the crew never to trade with Manila again.<sup>98</sup> The High Government in Batavia attempted to deploy some yachts to patrol against Chinese junks again during the summer of 1642, but the typhoons and the generally bad weather conditions prevented them from putting this plan

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<sup>97</sup> *Dagregister Zeelandia*, II 1641-1648, 145-6. 2 June 1643.

<sup>98</sup> *Dagregister* gehouden door opperstuurman Simon Cornelissen Clos, 25 mei tot 30 juni 1643, 4 June 1643[diary kept by senior captain Simon Cornelissen Clos, from 25 May to 30 June 1643], in: *Dagregister Zeelandia*, II 1641-1648, 160.

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into action.<sup>99</sup> As the Dutch authorities were also wondering in the backs of their minds how the Japanese would react, in the summer of 1643 they informed the Japanese government of their plan. On 1 August, a letter written by Governor-General Antonio van Diemen was delivered to the Mayor of Deshima, Ebiya Shiōemon, in an attempt to consult him about the Japanese reaction to this plan to mount a patrol.<sup>100</sup> The latter answered ambiguously one month later saying that the Japanese would not intervene if the patrols did not take place in Japanese territorial waters but acts of piracy were out of the question.<sup>101</sup> Word of this request soon reached the ears of the local Chinese community and they protested furiously to the Governor of Nagasaki. Consequently, the Governor issued an order to the Dutch on Deshima warning them not to seize any junks sailing from China to Japan or Japan to China.

*'If the junks which sail from Nagasaki to Ch'üan-chou and other ports north of Ch'üan-chou return here next year and declare that some have not arrived in these ports and that some are missing, an investigation will be held here to find out if the Dutch have captured or destroyed them...'*<sup>102</sup>

Although this warning to the Dutch came only from the Governor of Nagasaki rather than from the Shogun himself, the message was clearly understood. Thereafter no Chinese junk was harmed by Dutch ships. This agreement developed into a tacit understanding between the Chinese and the Dutch which was honoured until the surrender of Taiwan in 1662.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> VOC 666, Resolutie van gouverneur-general Antonio van Diemen ende raden, Batavia, 10 Apr. 1643, not foliated.

<sup>100</sup> *The Deshima dagregisters*, XI 1641-1650, 106. 1 Aug. 1643.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibidem*, 118. 12 Sept. 1643.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 123. 29 Sept. 1643.

<sup>103</sup> Boxer correctly points out the attitude of the Japanese authorities was one of the decisive elements in warding off any VOC blockade of Iquan's monopoly of Sino-Japanese trade. Cf. Charles R. Boxer, 'The Rise and Fall of Nicholas Iquan

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Furthermore, it is impossible to overlook the fact that Iquan was still offering huge amounts of Chinese gold to Taiwan and was purchasing pepper from Batavia in the period 1643-1644. All these reasons made it possible to contain the conflict at a low level.

**Table 8-7: The Chinese junks arriving in Japan from harbours to the north of Ch'üan-chou.**

Year	Number of Chinese junks arriving in Japan*	Chinese junks arriving in Japan which departed from the harbours to the north of Ch'üan-chou **	Percentage
1642	34	6	18%
1643	34	2	5%
1644	55	18	33%
1645	82	32	39%
1646	54	39	72%
1647	31	8	26%
1648	20	11	55%
1649	59	23	38%

Source: \* Robert LeRoy Innes, *The door ajar*, 636. Table A. Shipping traffic between Japan and the outside world (excluding Ryukyu and Korea) from 1604 to 1715.

\*\* *The Deshima Dagregisters*, XI 1641-1650, XII 1650-1660, passim.

Despite the settlement about the Japan trade reached rather laboriously, there were still two different trading routes about which the Dutch and An-hai merchants were in conflict with each other: The first of these was the trade with Manila which the Dutch had patrolled seasonally from Taiwan since 1643. When one of Iquan's junks was captured in 1645, he flew into a rage and sent a letter in which he threatened the Chinese inhabitants in Taiwan that

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(Cheng Chih-lung)', *T'ien Hsia Monthly*, Apr.-May (1941), 1-39, at 33-5.

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they would run the risk of punishment if they assisted the Dutch when they patrolled in search of Chinese junks with hostile intent. The harsh tone he adopted was an expression of how powerless he felt in this matter.<sup>104</sup>

The other less important route in which both sides were involved was the deerskin trade to Japan. Since the end of the sixteenth century, the Japanese had imported large numbers of deerskins of which the chief purpose was to manufacture Samurai armour. Before the Shogun suppressed Roman Catholicism and virtually closed off the country in 1640, this trade used to be managed by Japanese residing in overseas ports and the Portuguese. The bulk of the deerskins originated from Taiwan, Siam and Cambodia. According to the records of the Dutch trade factory in Deshima (see table below), the deerskin trade gradually increased.

**Table 8-8: Junks from Quinam, Cambodia in Siam and Japan carrying deerskins**

Year	Junks from Quinam and Cambodia in Japan	Junks from Quinam and Cambodia in Siam	Deerskins imported by Chinese junks to Japan**
1638	-	3 <sup>105</sup>	-
1639	-	-	14,050
1640	-	1 <sup>106</sup>	23,890
1641	2 <sup>107</sup>	2 <sup>108</sup>	41,550

<sup>104</sup> *Dagregister Zeelandia*, II 1641-1648, 406-7. 7 July 1645.

<sup>105</sup> VOC 1127, Missive [van Henrick Nachtegael in Siam] aen den edelen Abraham Ducker in Couttchin-China, Siam, 3 May 1638, fo. 363<sup>v</sup>. One of the two junks brought 10,000 pieces of deerskin to Quinam and the other junk carried no deerskins.

<sup>106</sup> VOC 1139, Missive uit Siam[ van Reijner van Tzum ] aen den gouverneur generael[ Antonio van Diemen ], Siam, 7 Nov. 1641, fo. 744<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>107</sup> Nagazumi Yoko, *Tōsen yushutsunyūhin sūryō ichiran, 1637--1833-nen*, 36.

<sup>108</sup> VOC 1139, Missive uit Siam[ van Reijner van Tzum ] aen den gouverneur generael[ Antonio van Diemen ], Siam, 7 Nov. 1641, fo. 744<sup>y</sup>; VOC 1139, Rapport

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1642	3 <sup>109</sup>	2 <sup>110</sup>	183,216
1643	1 <sup>111</sup>	1 <sup>112</sup>	-
1644	3 <sup>113</sup>	2 <sup>114</sup>	67,832
1645	3 <sup>115</sup>	-	25,730
1646	3 <sup>116</sup>	1 <sup>117</sup>	54,270
1647	1 <sup>118</sup>	-	-

Source:\*\* Nagazumi, *You Hê-lan shih-liao k'an shih-ch'i shih-chi tê t'ai-wan mao-i*, 46. Table 3.

Earlier it was pointed out that Iquan had failed in his attempt to get a

van den commissaris Jeremias van Vliet aengaende sijn bevindinge in Siam ende bocht van Pattany [van Johan van Twist uijt Malacca aen gouverneur generaal Antonio van Diemen en raden van India in Batavia], Siam, 28 May 1642, fo. 803<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>109</sup> *The Deshima Dagregisters*, XI 1641-1650, 22 July; 17 June; 26 July 1642, 63; 69; 70.

<sup>110</sup> VOC 1139, Rapport van den commissaris Jeremias van Vliet aengaende sijn bevindinge in Siam ende bocht van Pattany [van Johan van Twist uijt Malacca aen gouverneur generaal Antonio van Diemen en raden van India in Batavia][Report written by Commissioner Jeremias van Vliet about His Experiences in Siam and the Bay of Patani, Sent from Malacca by the Said Johan van Twist to Governor-General Antonio van Diemen in Batavia], Siam, 28 May 1642, fo. 803<sup>f</sup>; VOC 1144, Missive van Reijnier van Tzum [in Siam] aen den gouverneur generael [Antonio van Diemen in Batavia], Siam, 13 Oct. 1642. fo. 619<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>111</sup> *The Deshima Dagregister*, XI 1641-1650, 112. 16 Aug. 1643.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibidem*, 108. 11 Aug. 1643.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 164; 169; 170. 8 July; 9 Aug ;27 Aug 1644.

<sup>114</sup> VOC 1151, Missive door het opperhoofd Reijnier van Tzum aen den gouverneur generael [Anthonio van Diemen], Siam, 25 Nov. 1643, fo. 661<sup>v</sup>; VOC 1157, Journaelse aenteeckening van 15 Januarij tot 8 September 1644 [The Ship's Log Signed between 15 Jan. to 8 Sept. in 1644], Siam, 23 Feb. 1644, fo. 658<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>115</sup> *The Deshima Dagregisters*, 208; 209. 16 July; 21 Aug, 22 Aug. 1645.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibidem*, 231; 234. 27 July; 18 Aug. 1646.

<sup>117</sup> VOC 1157, Missive [uit Jan van Muijden in Siam aan] aen Reijnier van Tzum president van Japan, Siam, 26 June 1646, fo. 494.

<sup>118</sup> *The Deshima Dagregisters*, 288. 7 July 1647.

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grip on the Sino-Siamese trade because the Siamese King was busy developing his own crown trade with China. The Siamese King was able to establish this crown trade with Kuang-tung on a firmer base after 1643, but his trade was not the only outlet for Siamese deerskins which were also exported to Japan via Cambodia and Quinam. After the disturbances in Siam during 1630s, many resident Japanese had felt unsafe and subsequently moved to Cambodia and Quinam, from where they continued to purchase deerskins from Siam. They sold these skins to Chinese merchants in Quinam and Cambodia because they themselves had been excluded from the Japanese trade by the bans on overseas trade (*Kaikin*) since 1636. In the period 1637 to 1640, the Dutch merchants in Ayutthaya complained constantly about the ‘Cochin-China Japanese’ who came to collect deerskins in Siam. Although there are no specific archival records about the number of Chinese junks which visited Quinam and Cambodia during those years (1636-1640), it is recorded that in 1639 the Chinese officials issued ten passes to junks allowing them to trade in Quinam (eight passes) and Cambodia (two passes). One of the consequences of a huge sea battle which was fought between Tonkin and Quinam in 1643 was that no deerskins were exported to Japan by Chinese junks that same year.<sup>119</sup> In 1642, two Dutch vessels which stranded on the coast of Quinam were captured by Portuguese vessels and their cargoes were sold as booty. The Dutch seized this opportunity also to declare war on Quinam and captured three Chinese junks which happened to be sailing to or from its ports in 1643.<sup>120</sup> According to the information the Dutch received in Taiwan, Chinese junks were being dispatched directly from Quinam to Japan in 1644. Knowing that the VOC had declared war on Quinam in 1643, Iquan also requested Dutch passes so as to be able to trade

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<sup>119</sup> VOC 1151, Missive door het opperhoofd Reijnier van Tzum aen den gouverneur generael [Anthonio van Diemen], Siam, 25 Nov. 1643, fo. 661<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>120</sup> *Generale Missiven*, II 1639-1655, 259. 20 Jan. 1644.

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with Quinam in 1644.<sup>121</sup>

Shortly after Iquan asked for these passes, after crossing the Yang-tze River on 3 June 1645, Manchu troops occupied Nanking. His position now untenable, Iquan's brother Cheng Hung-k'uei retreated to Fu-chou with his soldiers, bringing with him a Ming prince who had sought refuge under his protection. Iquan and Hung-k'uei decided to make this prince the new Ming Emperor with the title of Lung-wu and established the new Imperial Court in Fuchou on 21 August 1645. Iquan's son, Cheng Ch'eng-kung, was recruited by this new court as one of the Emperor's bodyguards. Aware of how crucial it was to keep the the old troops up to scratch and train fresh recruits to keep numbers up, the new court acknowledged the importance of the foreign trade as a source for raising the funds to accomplish this purpose, hence no maritime ban was to be promulgated during this period of crisis and direct trade was allowed between China and Japan.

*'The Grand Mandarin Iquan has opened up the trade and traffic with Japan because of the profit this brings in, on condition that a certain tax is paid. Previously this [trade] was forbidden under penalty of death, although he secretly kept it for himself by bribing the coastal grandees.'*<sup>122</sup>

*'The cargoes brought to Batavia [from China] were poor in respect of the orders from Batavia and from Patria, mostly because of the protracted huge war in China and the malice of Mandarin Iquan who tries to obstruct the trade in Taiwan and reinforce his own trade on account of the lucrative profits to be made in the Japan trade, which he intends to keep solely for himself from now on. In return for rich payments, he has permitted all the merchants to sail to Nagasaki, and has also assembled a huge cargo himself. Therefore last year [1645], seventy-six fully laden Chinese junks went to sea*

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<sup>121</sup> *Daghregister Batavia*, 1644-1645, 161. 11 Mar. 1645.

<sup>122</sup> VOC 1160, Missive van Francois Caron [naer gouverneur generael Cornelis van der Lijn], Taiwan, 31 Jan. 1646, fos. 166<sup>v</sup>-167<sup>r</sup>.

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*and exported more than 5,200,000 guilders' worth of goods. The prices of many commodities dropped causing the Company a serious loss. We cannot bear this constant competition with the Chinese.*<sup>123</sup>

The new court in Fu-chien also revived the tributary mission as an important channel for crown trade. For example, in September 1645 it opened negotiations with delegates from the Liu-ch'iu (*Ryūkyū*[J.]) Kingdom in expectation of setting up a tributary trade in silk-for-sulphur.<sup>124</sup>

Iquan even planned to build a formal alliance with the Japanese Shogun in the Emperor's name. He hoped to employ diplomatic means to persuade all the rulers around the South and East China Seas to acknowledge his rights and thereby obviate any armed intervention against his junks by the VOC. He allowed one of his naval general Ts'ui Chih, to send a message to the Shogun in which he solicited formal trade and military aid. The Dutch on Deshima

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<sup>123</sup> VOC 870, Missive van Batavia[van Cornelis van der Lijn] voor den oppercoopman Willem Verstegen ende de verdure opperhooffden van 't jacht de *Zeerobbe* ende de fluijt de *Salm*, waernaer hun in 't seijlen van hier tot de Pescadores ende Taijouan sullen hebben te reguleren [Letter from Batavia Written by Governor-General Cornelis van der Lijn to Chief Merchant Willem Verstegen and Other Chief Men on the Yacht *The Zeerobbe* and the Flute Ship *de Salm*, Assigning Them Tasks during their Voyage from Batavia to Taiwan and the Pescadores], Batavia, 18 June 1646, fo. 180.

<sup>124</sup> Ts'ai To (comp.), *Li-tai pao-an*[Tributary Documents Preserved in Liu-ch'iu], in Yang Yün-p'ing, cited in 'Nan-ming shih-tai yü liu-ch'iu kuan-hsi chih yen-chiu [A Study of the Relationship between the Southern Ming Court and the Liu-ch'iu Government]', in id., *Nan-ming yen-chiu yü t'ai-wan wên-hua*[Studies of the Southern Ming and the Culture of Taiwan], (Taipei: T'ai-wan fêng-wu, 1993 ), 307-40 at 316-28. 18 Oct 1645; Moreover, the Liu-ch'iu had ceased their trade with South-East Asian countries around the 1570s. Later, because of the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations in the first few decades of the seventeenth century, the Liu-ch'iu tributary mission was discouraged by the Ming court. After their final attempt to revive the trade in 1637 proved a failure, the tributary trade between China and Liu-ch'iu was also ruined. Cf. Chang, 'Maritime Chinese Trade', 195-7.

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found out that one delegate from Iquan had sent a letter to the *Bakufu* on 26 January 1646 requesting military assistance against the Manchus.<sup>125</sup> This semi-official letter to the Japanese authorities was dated 28 January 1646.<sup>126</sup> The letter was rejected by the Council of Elders (*Rōjū*[J.]), because by then the 'national isolation policy' (*sakoku*[J.]) had been implemented and squeezed out any possibility of a tributary trade between China and Japan.<sup>127</sup> Undeterred Iquan persisted in his attempt. In July 1646 he required the permission of the Lung-wu Emperor to mount a formal diplomatic mission to Japan. He personally wrote a letter to both the Japanese Emperor and the Shogun and delivered the documents attached with the express permission of the Lung-wu Emperor. This time the message reached the Shogun but he and the Council of the Elders still repudiated the request.<sup>128</sup> News of this affair even reached the ears of the Dutch on Deshima because the Shogun dispatched some courtiers to reject Iquan's requests, a gesture which attracted public attention.<sup>129</sup> Whatever the Japanese side might have felt, the trade with Japan had been legalized by the Emperor Lung-wu.

In May and June 1646 a Chinese envoy, said to have been dispatched by Iquan, also presented himself at the Tonkin Court. The delegation which accompanied him brought silk goods valued at approximately 20,000 taels. The envoy declared that his mission was to remind the King of Tonkin not to forget to pay tribute to the new Emperor in Fu-chien. They actually

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<sup>125</sup> *The Deshima dagregisters*, XI 1641-1650, 231. 13 Apr. 1646.

<sup>126</sup> Hayashi Gaho, Hayashi Nobuatsu, Ura Renichi (eds), *Kai Hentai*[The Change of Dynasty from Ming to Ch'ing], 3 vols, (Impressum Tokyo: Toyo bunko, 1958), I, 11-14; Ishihara Michihiro, *Nihon kisshi no kenkyū*[Studies of Cheng's Request for Military Aid from Japan], (Tokyo: Fuzanbo, 1945), 32.

<sup>127</sup> Yang Yün-p'ing, 'Nan-ming shih-dai yu Jih-pên de kuan-his [The Relationship between the Southern Ming and Japan]', in Id., *Nan-ming yen-chiu yü t'ai-wan wên-hua*, 279-306 at 283-288.

<sup>128</sup> Yang, 'Nan-ming shih-dai yu Jih-pên de kuan-hsi', 283-288.

<sup>129</sup> *The Deshima dagregisters*, XI 1641-1650, 245. 9 Nov. 1646.

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exchanged 600 taels of gold and some muskets, lances, and swords before leaving on 3 July 1646. The gift of gold for the Lung-wu Emperor was handed over with the ulterior motive of being granted a higher title in China.<sup>130</sup> Iquan also wrote a personal letter to the King of Tonkin couched in such terms ‘ as if he (Iquan) was his (the Tonkin King’s) brother.’<sup>131</sup>

These missions to Japan, Ryukyu and Tonkin during 1645 and 1646 all issued invitations to enter into a new tribute trade centred on Fu-chou. Iquan’s project was to re-affirm the diplomatic bonds with these vassal kingdoms and to utilize these diplomatic means to monopolize all Chinese trade. He had devised it as a blunt instrument which he could wield to break up all the privileges the Dutch had won at the expense of the Chinese merchants. He was bound for disappointment because the new Emperor was not convinced that Iquan’s project was of crucial importance to his new Court and ordered him to make himself ready to wage war against the Manchu force as quickly as possible. Iquan knew that it was impossible for him to provide finance and troops for such a mission without first securing an economic base and he chose to secure his own navy and property at the expense of that of the Lung-wu Emperor. When the Manchu force approached Fu-chien province, he ordered his troops to retreat city by city, because he was convinced that his new trade-system in the making would also be valuable to the Manchu rulers. Iquan introduced himself to the

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<sup>130</sup> VOC 1160, Missive uijt Tonquin [door Antonio van Brouckhorst] aan François Caron gouverneur van Taiwan, Tonkin, 31 July 1646, Fos. 177<sup>v</sup>-178<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>131</sup> VOC 1160, Missive uijt Tonquin [door Antonio van Brouckhorst] aan François Caron gouverneur van Taiwan, Tonkin, 31 July 1646, Fos. 177<sup>v</sup>-178<sup>v</sup> The Chinese record about this mission is very ambiguous and obscure. It says that the Lung-wu Emperor had dispatched a mission to Tonkin in January or February 1646. It had returned to Fu-chou in June or July without even landing on the Vietnamese soil. Chü Chi-mei, ‘Yüeh-you chien-wên [Journal of a Journey in Kuang-tung]’ in Liu-yün chi-shih (ed.), *Ming-chi pi-shih hui pien* [Compilation of Unconventional Historical Sources of the Ming Dynasty], 12 vols, (Shang-hai: Sao-shê shan-fang, 1900), IX, 1.

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Manchu Emperor some years later in a letter, in which he unintentionally revealed how he defined his career in the last phase of his life:

*'Your Humble Servant was granted title of "duke" (P'ing Kuo-kung) when I was serving the Ming court, because I pacified the bandits in the mountains and the pirates on the high seas off Chê-chiang, Fu-chien and Kuang-tung, and because I also defeated the red-haired barbarians (the Dutch) and showed foreign kingdoms the right way to pay tribute to China.'*<sup>132</sup>

A mercenary could hardly achieve more than this while serving a Chinese dynasty.

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<sup>132</sup> Cheng Chih-lung, 'Chêng-chih-lung t'i-wei tsun-chih chao-fu shih-pên [Cheng Chi-lung's Reply to the Royal Command Summoning Cheng Chengkung] July 1651' in CKTI (ed.), *Ch'ing-ch'u chêng-ch'êng-kung chia-tsu man-wên tang-an i-pien* [Compilation of the Manchu Archives Referring to the Cheng Family during the Early Period of the Ch'ing dynasty], T'ai-wan wên-hsien hui-k'an (hereafter cited as TWH), 7 vols, (Peking: Chiu-chou Publisher, 2004), I no 6, 5.